

# Refugee Claimants: Services and Provincial Challenges



Refugee claimants are considered temporary residents and currently not eligible for most of the federal supports reserved for permanent resident newcomers. Newcomer serving agencies, therefore, support refugee claimant clients on a case management basis by working directly with clients and referring them to a variety of local third-party resources.

Services for refugee claimants are usually funded by municipal and provincial governments, United Way programs, and private donations



## Language

Since refugee claimants are ineligible for IRCC funded services, agencies rely on a referral based system to provide for client's needs:

- Community conversation circles
- Pairing volunteers with clients
- Interpreters to Alberta Works

## Housing

Some agencies also help clients identify evidence for their Refugee Board Hearing

- Local shelter referrals
- Social housing referrals
- Advocacy for clients' housing rights

## Legal Aid

Currently, there are no temporary accommodations dedicated to refugee claimants in Alberta

- Referrals to Ready Tours
- Referrals to Legal Aid Alberta
- Support filling out essential documents

Ready Tours are available in multiple languages and have interpreters available upon request

## Employment

- Navigating Alberta Works website
- Support filling out Work Permits
- Advocacy for clients





Smaller and more rural agencies worry about potential liability and lack resources to provide direct legal support services to refugee claimants, so they often refer clients to larger agencies in Edmonton and Calgary that have programs designed specifically for refugee claimants.

Some of the main programs dedicated to refugee claimants:

### Newcomer Community Integration Project

- Offered by the Edmonton Immigrant Services Association
- Referrals to community resources
- Translation and interpretation services
- Supportive counselling

### Refugee Claimants Transitioning into the Community

- Offered by the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- One-on-one support
- Referrals to community resources
- Assisting in preparing essential documents
- Supportive counselling



Larger agencies in urban centers receiving referrals are strained because they also lack financial resources and tools to train staff

Agencies need resources to help train staff on:

The Immigration Refugee Protection Act prohibits agencies from filling out Basis of Claim documents. Agencies only help newcomers navigate the documents for their claims\*

Best practices for supporting clients with work permits and Basis of Claim documents

Complex and basic workings of refugee claimant case management

Access to more third-party legal and community resources

Training on common legal terminology



More info can be found on [AAISA's Toolkit](#)



More info can be found on the [EISA website](#)



More info can be found on the [CCIS website](#)



\*The data in this infographic was derived from interviews conducted with representatives from various rural and urban newcomer serving agencies across the province in the summer of 2020.