
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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April 4, 2022

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

B.C. continues building support network to welcome Ukrainians

VICTORIA – With thousands of displaced Ukrainians expected to relocate to British Columbia over the coming months, the Province is expanding services and supports to connect individuals and families to the help they need.

“Ukrainians fleeing their country from Russia’s invasion have sacrificed so much in their pursuit for health and safety,” said Nathan Cullen, Minister of Municipal Affairs. “Our government’s priority is to ensure that every newcomer who arrives in B.C. has access to the services and supports they need as they adjust to life in Canada.”

A new, dedicated Welcoming Ukraine portal, gov.bc.ca/WelcomingUkraine, is operational and provides information to Ukrainians who are moving to the province, as well as for British Columbians who want to volunteer or donate to show their support. The website, which is also available in Ukrainian and Russian, complements Service BC’s phone line and is part of a series of supports the Province will be rolling out over the coming months. Service BC’s phone line is available at 1 800 663-7867.

Ukrainians using the website can connect to free services to find housing, sign up for health-care coverage, look for a job, sign children up for school and learn about other community services, among other supports. In addition to supporting displaced Ukrainians, the website can be used by British Columbians who want to offer support to Ukrainians fleeing violence, including offering housing, employment opportunities or donations.

Ukrainian community organizations in major urban centres and regional hubs have indicated they are overwhelmed by the generosity of British Columbians and need help managing calls and offers of support. This webpage, along with updated Service BC supports, will assist with these pressures.

Most Ukrainians coming to B.C. are expected to arrive through the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) program. Under this new federal program, Ukrainians and their family members will be allowed to stay in Canada as temporary residents for as long as three years, and Ukrainians will be allowed to apply for a three-year open work permit.

As of March 30, 2022, Canada has received more than 91,000 applications from Ukrainians under this new emergency travel program. The federal government has not limited the number of people from Ukraine who are eligible to apply for the program. When Ukrainians arrive, they may settle in any province they choose. B.C. is estimated to receive approximately 17% to 20% of arriving Ukrainians.

“We appreciate the steps government is taking to support Ukrainians once they arrive in the

province,” said Katie Crocker, CEO of the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC. “This is a crucial moment for Ukrainians as they try to build a new life in Canada. Our members are pivotal to the successful integration of newcomers in B.C., and we are working hard with government, businesses and communities to ensure that Ukrainians feel safe and supported on their settlement and integration journey.”

As the situation in Ukraine evolves, which affects the number of Ukrainians that may arrive, B.C.’s response will also evolve. The Province is working across ministries, with the federal government and with the Ukrainian community to ensure the right supports are in place when they are required. Additional supports will come online in the weeks ahead.

Learn More:

English: gov.bc.ca/WelcomingUkraine

Ukrainian: gov.bc.ca/WelcomingUkraine-UKR

Russian: gov.bc.ca/WelcomingUkraine-RU

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BACKGROUND

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Supporting Ukrainians

- The federal government has some expanded settlement program services, which are typically only available to permanent residents, for Ukrainians that arrive under the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel Program.
- In addition to support from the B.C. government, key services that will be available to Ukrainians in the coming weeks through the federal government include:
 - information about and orientation to life in Canada, such as help with enrolling children in school;
 - information and services to help access the labour market, including mentoring, networking, counselling, and skills development and training;
 - activities that promote connections with communities;
 - assessments of other needs Ukrainians may have and referrals to appropriate agencies;
 - services targeted at supporting the needs of women, seniors, youth and 2SLGBTQ+ persons; and
 - other settlement supports.

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