

Breaking Barriers

Responding to community needs

**Services
and resources for
undocumented
Torontonians and
precarious migrants**

2019/2020



FCJ Refugee Centre

Walking with Uprooted People

FORWARD

The FCJ Refugee Centre recognizes that all uprooted people have strengths and capacities to contribute to the host country where their migration status is irregular. We understand and empathize with the experiences of precarious migrants who are viewed as disposable/temporary labour in Canada. The Centre strives to offer holistic support and find ways and means to help people formalize their status where possible.

Thus the intention of this tool kit is to share information with people with precarious status about access to services, what are the possibilities to regularize their immigration status, and what are their rights.

Precarious migrants refers to those that hold some form of uncertain migration status

- Refugee claimants
 - Refused refugee claimants
 - Temporary foreign workers
 - Students with a student visa that may be expiring
 - Visitors with a visitor visa that may be expiring
 - Victims and survivors of human trafficking
 - Undocumented people involved in sponsorship breakdown
- There are approximately 20,000 to 500,000 undocumented people living in Canada, with as many as 50% estimated to reside in Toronto.
 - The City of Toronto defines an undocumented Torontonionian as an immigrant without full status or full status documents.

You are not alone!



What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality considers the different layers that people are affected by, such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, disability, gender and in this case, immigration status or the lack of status. Intersectionality acknowledges that these different layers do not exist separately but are interwoven together.

Those who have become Torontonians have come to the city with different layers impacting on their identity, such as their country of origin or the different languages they speak. On top of that is the complication of their immigration status. More layers result in more challenges for people - this places them in a more vulnerable position where they need more support.

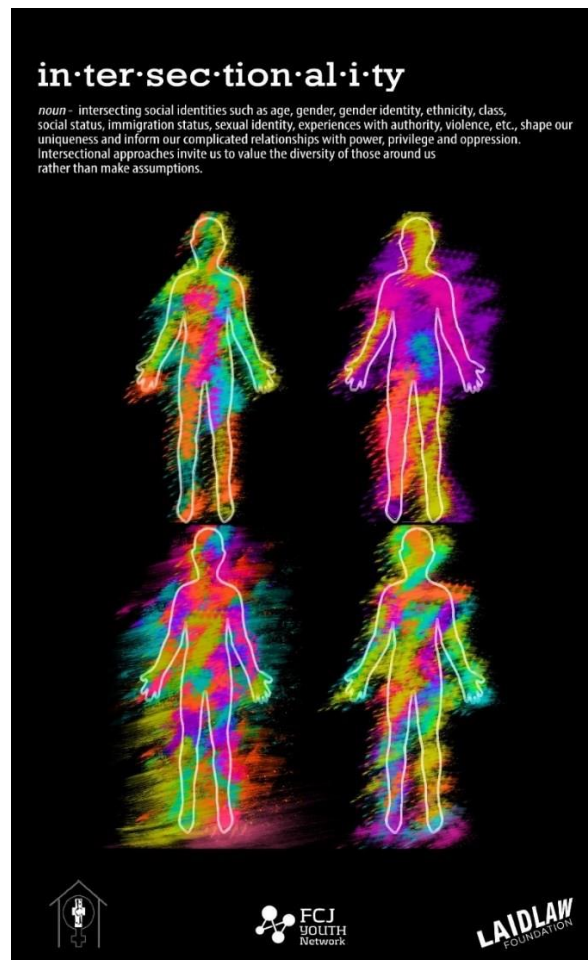


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SECTION A.

IMMIGRATION



What are some options for regularizing one’s status in Canada?

H&C - Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds

People who would not normally be eligible to become permanent residents of Canada may be able to apply on humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) grounds.

The applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis, based on these factors:

- a) How settled the person is in Canada
- b) Best interests of any children involved
- c) How would the applicant be impacted if they were to be forced to return to their country of origin

To be successful, the application has to show HARDSHIP

- ▶ It would cause the applicant(s) hardship to leave Canada since they have established themselves here.
- ▶ It would cause the applicant(s) hardship to return to a country where they are no longer established and may face threats.
- ▶ It would cause Canadians hardship if the applicant(s) were to leave Canada.
- ▶ Hardships the child(ren) would face if the applicant(s) have to leave Canada

To show that you are settled in the country:

- ▶ Are you doing any volunteer work or helping out in your neighbourhood or community? If you were to leave, how would the community stop benefitting from your contribution?
- ▶ Are you financially established, meaning that you have been working or running a business and paying taxes?
- ▶ Have you been taking courses, studying English or enrolled in other activities that will help you settle in Canada and find gainful employment?

- ▶ Do you have family ties to Canada? Have any of your family members already settled in Canada and have permanent status?
- ▶ Would it be very difficult for you to separate from your family members who are here? Are some of them elderly or sick and rely on you for assistance?

If you have children here with you, it is important to try to demonstrate that staying here would be in the best interest of the child or children. Relevant information to include:

- ▶ The age of the child
- ▶ Are they established here? Meaning did they grow up here, are they going to school, are they involved in after school activities, do they have their friends and community here?
- ▶ Is the child a Canadian citizen but the parents or one of the parents is not and therefore the family would be split up
- ▶ Do the children have any special medical needs that need to be taken into account?
- ▶ What are the conditions in the country of origin that could impact the child? For example, safety concerns, possible harassment or discrimination, barriers in accessing education or health care due to their gender, etc.
- Would removing the child from Canada have a negative impact on them? If for example they are separated from a family member who is very close to them and has been key in their development.
- Are there *any other children* that would be negatively affected? For example, children that are living outside of Canada but rely on the income of the parent who is working in Canada for support.

To show how challenging life would be for you if you returned to your country of origin

- ▶ What are the conditions in your country of origin - is there instability or conflict due to war? Are there safety concerns that affect all citizens?
- ▶ Discrimination - are you a member of a group that is discriminated against in the country of return? If so, include information on this
- ▶ Harassment - would you be subjected to this type of treatment due to your gender, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age or for any other factor?
- ▶ Economic hardship - are the conditions such that it would be very difficult or impossible for you to find gainful employment? Have you been away from the country for a long time and have no supports that can help you re-establish yourself?
- ▶ Barriers to establishment - if you have been away from your country of origin for a very long time and no longer speak the language well, or you never learned the language

- ▶ Medical inadequacies - This is relevant only if you have a medical condition for which treatment is not adequate in your country of origin.
- ▶ Hardship related to a disability - If the types of services that you receive in Canada are not available in your country of origin

What to include in an H&C application?

Background facts

- ▶ Who is included in the application?
- ▶ Where are they from?
- ▶ Why did they come to Canada?
- ▶ Why did they stay in Canada?
- ▶ What is their status in Canada?

Demonstrating that one is established in Canada

- ▶ **Property and Assets in Canada**
 - Bank accounts in Canada, property ownership (car, home, investments, etc.), life insurance
 - Supporting documents: bank statements, ownership papers, policy papers
- ▶ **Residence**
 - Explain why one is in Canada esp. if favourable (i.e. beyond applicants’ control)
 - Where are the applicants living? Are they good tenants?
 - Supporting documents: rent receipts, letter of support from the landlord
- ▶ **Work**
 - Include information about employment
 - If the person is not authorized to work in Canada, would someone be willing to hire them if they had authorization?

- Do they pay taxes?
- Supporting documents: pay stubs; letters of support from: bosses, supervisors, and co-workers, potential employers, clients; articles of incorporation, financial papers, tax returns

▶ **Family Connection**

- Include information about family members of the applicant(s) who have permanent status in Canada
- Supporting documents: letters of support from family members, proof of status, proof of relationship

▶ **Education**

- Include information of education/improvement in Canada - ESL, training, diploma courses, etc.
- Supporting documents: certificates, attendance sheets, letters of support from teachers/classmates

▶ **Community**

- Religious community, volunteering, friendships, helping, community events
- Supporting documents: letters of support from religious community leaders, parishioners, event organizers, volunteer coordinators, other volunteers, friends, people you’ve helped, certificates, photographs

▶ **Health**

- In special cases where this is a factor
- Supporting documents: letters of support from a doctor or psychiatrist/psychologist; hospital records; costs of medication and treatment, etc.

TIP: It is very helpful to include in your application support letters from people in your community who can attest to how important your contribution is.

For example...

- Friends or family members who can talk about how you have helped them
- Landlords who can attest that you are a reliable tenant
- Coworkers or employers who can state that you are hardworking, considerate and a reliable employee
- Religious leaders of your congregation or individuals connected to a Community Centre or a charity who can talk about how you help the community by volunteering.

Supporting documents:

Letters of support

- ▶ Should contain specific information, how do they know the applicant(s)? What do they do together? How would life be worse without the applicants?
- ▶ General information is not helpful - not up to the letter writer to decide that “they would make a great Canadian”
- ▶ One letter saying that the applicant is ‘kind and generous’ is as good as 10 letters
- ▶ Information about country conditions is not helpful, but specific information is helpful (e.g. “The political situation in Xanadu is really bad right now” vs. “They have no family in Xanadu”)
- ▶ Letters from institutions or organizations should look official - e.g. on letterhead
- ▶ Letters in other languages are fine if translated
- ▶ Quote the letters in the submission

Other documents

Country condition documents

- ▶ National Documentation Packages – for example U.S. Department of State reports
- ▶ Publications from NGOs

- ▶ Journal Articles (peer reviewed)
- ▶ Newspaper articles

If a child is involved, either in Canada or abroad

- ▶ Birth certificate
- ▶ Drawings and photographs
- ▶ Medical records and letters from health care professionals
- ▶ Letters from teachers and report cards
- ▶ Letters from adults about the child/children

Legal Aid Ontario (LAO)



- A program that provides legal assistance for economically disadvantaged persons
- All low-income families are able to apply for legal aid
- Legal Aid provides a set of CLT and CE numbers, through which the applicant can search for a lawyer
- Organizations like FCJ Refugee Centre can help someone make the call to Legal Aid and then refer them to a lawyer who can help them with their BOC form.

TIP: There are a number of community legal clinics in Toronto and organizations such as the FCJ Refugee Centre who can provide information for free and refer you to lawyers.

For an updated list of Community Legal Clinics, please refer to the Legal Aid website.

<https://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/contact/contact.asp?type=cl>

You may not qualify for Legal Aid if you are in a good financial situation. Nevertheless before you hire a lawyer to assist you, try to get a referral to a reliable practitioner who has experience with immigration matters.

Another possible option for regularizing your status in Canada

Submitting a refugee claim

If you have faced persecution or violence in your country of origin, or fear that you would face these if you were to return, it may be possible for you to submit a Refugee Claim - assuming you have not done so in the past.

To apply, you need to fill out certain application forms that provide the government with information on your background, your family and why you want to submit a refugee claim - in other words why you would be at threat or persecuted if you returned to your country of origin.

For more information on how to submit a refugee claim from inside Canada →

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/claim-protection-inside-canada/apply.html>

If you have submitted or are in the process of submitting a Refugee Claim, you can

- Contact Legal Aid Ontario, find out if you are eligible and find a lawyer who can help you
- Apply for Ontario Works and receive economical support
- Apply for a Work Permit which allows you to seek employment
- Register your kids in school
- Take the YMCA Language Assessment test and be referred to an ESL class

Refugee Hearing

Some time after you have submitted your refugee claim, you will be called to attend a Refugee Hearing where Immigration and Refugee Board officials will review the evidence connected to your case.

NOTE: Due to the backlog of cases that the Canadian government has received and is reviewing, the current wait time for a Refugee Hearing is around 2 years. This can sometimes be much longer, extending to 3 to 5 years, while some exceptional cases have taken over 10 years.

What to expect at your Refugee Hearing

- Most of the hearings last half a day
- Decisions are based only on evidence presented
- You can request breaks if needed
- Restate your narrative - be prepared to relive your experiences
- Anxiety, nervousness, shock, information overload, and confusion are expected
- Have documents in order - you will be asked for all your paperwork several times
- Lengthy process - the adjudicator will do an in-depth interview and may ask similar questions several times using different wording
- The decision may be given at the end of the hearing or sent later by mail
- Be aware of interpreters who use words that put you in a bad light, or even mistranslate. If that happens, talk to your lawyer about your options

Before the Refugee Hearing

Take part in a Ready Tour!!!

If you are a refugee claimant, this is a unique opportunity to be better prepared for your hearing, see an actual refugee hearing room and learn what happens during the hearing.

For registration visit the FCJ Refugee Centre website:

<https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/ready-tour-registration/>

During the Refugee Hearing

The decision maker will ask difficult questions that include specific dates and may bring up traumatic experiences.

She/he will expect you to be able to answer a number of important questions at your hearing, such as:

- ▶ What do you fear will happen to you if you return to your country of origin?
- ▶ Do you think you will be harmed if you return to your country of origin?
- ▶ Did you seek help from authorities, including police or any other organizations, in your country?
- ▶ Did you try to move to another part of your country?
- ▶ If Canada was not the first country where you applied for refugee status, you will also be asked a lot of questions about this

Are you a refugee claimant?



You are invited to participate in a tour of one of the IRB-RPD refugee hearing rooms in Toronto!



LEARN

- ▶ How to navigate the refugee hearing process
- ▶ What is a refugee hearing
- ▶ What to expect at the hearing
- ▶ Who might participate at the hearing

READY tours take place twice a month at 74 Victoria Street, Toronto, on the 4th Floor.
Registration: [contact](#)
[Carolina Teves](#)
cteves@fcjrefugeecentre.org

After the Refugee Hearing

Positive Decision

- ▶ If a claim is accepted... that person is granted protected person status in Canada.
- ▶ Protected persons can apply for Landing (Permanent Residence) and begin the family reunification process
- ▶ When eligible, permanent residents can apply for Canadian Citizenship

Negative Decision

- ▶ The process of appealing a negative decision can last much longer than the wait for the initial hearing, so this is something to be prepared for mentally
- ▶ You have a limited amount of time to appeal the decision
- ▶ It is important to connect with a lawyer and find help as soon as you receive the decision (deadlines are short). Unfortunately, as of April 2019, legal aid does not provide assistance with appeals
- ▶ You could also take part in a **Refugee Appeal Division (RAD)** information session
- ▶ RAD info sessions will provide refugee appellants with a free opportunity to be better prepared for the presentation of their appeal before the RAD.
- ▶ Rejected refugees will learn the steps to follow and how to document your appeal before the RAD



Are you in Canada under a Temporary Foreign Workers’ Program?

The FCJ Refugee Centre’s *Migrant Workers Mobile Program*

Was created to:

- 1) Prevent instances of labour exploitation by informing migrant workers about labour and immigration laws, policies and available community supports;
- 2) Identify at-risk or potential labour exploitation cases with the support of peers, and offer holistic case management support services;
- 3) Collect information about the extent of labour exploitation as well as the complex experiences of migrant workers exploited within the spectrum

The FCJ Refugee Centre provides free and confidential services, like information and referrals to other organizations, to support migrant workers in Ontario. Through this program, the FCJ Refugee Centre aims to support migrant workers in Ontario through a holistic manner who may be exploited, by working in partnership with other organizations. You can seek support if you are a migrant worker and have issues like....

- If you are being paid very little, underpaid or not at all
- If you are working long hours, with little or no breaks
- If you are facing challenging health and safety conditions
- If you don’t have access to healthcare
- If you are being forced to do dangerous work
- If you are not given the proper equipment, safety gear, or training to work with machinery
- If your employer ended your contract without notice
- If your employer is taking unlawful deductions from your pay
- If your employer has taken your personal documents away, like your passport or any other identification you have
- If you are harassed, bullied or being treated disrespectfully



You still have rights as a worker, even if you don’t have immigration status! As a worker, even without status, you can have rights under the:

- Employment Standards Act
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Human Rights Code
- Employment Protections for Foreign Nationals Act

You may be able to attend one of the migration and support clinics held by FCJ at various locations across the GTA and Ontario.

<https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/category/human-trafficking/>



Helpful Organizations and Resources

Workers Action Centre

<https://workersactioncentre.org/>

Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)

Your Rights as a Worker (Fact Sheet):

https://www.cleo.on.ca/sites/default/files/book_pdfs/work-en.pdf

Migrant Workers Alliance for Change

<https://migrantworkersalliance.org>

Caregivers’ Action Centre

<https://caregiversactioncentre.org/>

Migrante Canada

<http://www.migrante.ca/>



Are you at risk of human trafficking or in an abusive or exploitative situation?

A person’s rights are being violated if that person:

- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Owes a large and/or increasing debt and is unable to pay it off
- Was recruited through false promises
- Is not free to leave or come and go as they wish
- Employer didn’t cover part of their expenses (travel, living cost) as per the contract
- Their pay is deducted or manipulated (to cover food, housing, recruiter or other expenses)
- Lost their immigration status because work conditions were different than their contract/work permit or what they were promised
- Not in control of their own money
- Is not in control of their own identification documents (e.g. ID, passport, or visa)
- Does not have a lot of information about their rights under the law or access to social supports
- Threats of deportation or some other kinds of threats against themselves or their family members

Helpful Organizations and Resources

The Toronto Counter-Human Trafficking Network



The Toronto Counter-Human Trafficking Network is a diverse group of individuals, agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that work together to provide a comprehensive response to eliminating human trafficking. This includes providing services and protection to trafficked persons, including domestically trafficked persons and non-citizens trafficked in or through Canada, through a holistic approach based on human rights and the needs of each individual.

Information and Support

- Referral to legal aid, lawyers
- Appeals to legal aid
- Help with forms which include: H&C or spousal sponsorship, family reunification
- To book an appointment or to get in touch with the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network, please contact the FCJ Refugee Centre at **416-469-9754**

FCJ Refugee Centre

The FCJ Refugee Centre offers direct services to people who have been trafficked, taking into account the range of supports needed. Walking with survivors through legal processes, immigration procedures, settlement and recovery, the FCJ Refugee Centre uses a holistic approach to ensure people are informed and empowered to steer their own course out of the trafficking experience. The Centre ensures trafficked persons have access to orientation, legal assistance and referrals, information about their immigration options, appropriate housing, employment support, counselling and other forms of psycho-social support. The path out of human trafficking may take time, and we ensure that we walk with people the whole way.

<https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/our-programs/human-trafficking/>



Barbara Schilfer Clinic

<https://schliferclinic.com/>

Victim Services Toronto

<http://victimservicestoronto.com/>

To learn more about resources that can help you and organizations that provide various supports, call the 24/7 Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline

HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE:

1-833-900-1010

You may be eligible for certain services and programs.

○ Housing

- People who have been involved in international cases have access to rental allowance if they are receiving social assistance through Ontario Works.
- The City of Toronto has a **Special Priority Program (SPP)** housing program for Survivors of Domestic Abuse or Human Trafficking. This Program provides survivors with priority access to Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing or Portable Housing Benefits.
 - An application must be submitted and Housing Connections in assessing the individual’s eligibility for the program

○ Education

- Recipients also have access to public education for foreign students without fees, up to post-secondary education and to certain information programs.

○ Employment

- No access to federally funded settlement programs, including LINC, and Job Search Workshops. This is the biggest barrier.

○ Financial

- Victim/survivors of human trafficking can be eligible for Ontario Works.

○ Immigration

- Victim/survivors of human trafficking who have precarious immigration status can get immigration support through the FCJ Refugee Centre in regularizing their immigration situation.

Are you a woman who is being abused and fearful about going to the police?

- You have certain rights under Canadian law
- You may be eligible to access Legal Aid and be referred to a lawyer
- You may have received inaccurate or incomplete information about your rights. Seek help from trusted organizations and call the Assaulted Women’s Helpline at -866-863-0511 or TTY 1-866-863-7868

I am sponsored but am still waiting for my Permanent Residence application to be approved...

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada **does not** expect an abused woman to live in danger. **Safety First!**
- Get legal advice right away! It is not recommended that you get legal advice from your partner’s/abuser’s lawyer
- Do not accept “no” re listing your children in the application... because “we can do it after”
- You can access a single women’s shelter and/or family shelter if you have children
- You may be eligible to apply for a legal aid certificate to speak with a lawyer
- Immigration options for victims of family violence: temporary resident permit (TRP) <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/family-sponsorship/fees-permits-victims.html>

I am a refugee claimant and wish to leave an abusive situation

- While you are a refugee claimant you have the same rights as a permanent resident
- You cannot lose your claim based on leaving an abusive relationship
- Your abuser cannot have you deported
- **Safety First!** Access shelter services or alternate living arrangements
- You may be able to access a single women’s shelter and/or family shelter if you have children
- You are entitled to Ontario Works social assistance
- Speak to an immigration lawyer or immigration/refugee centre to help clarify your entitlements

What if I have a joint refugee claim with my spouse?

If you are a refugee claimant and have made a claim for refugee protection based on your spouse's situation, it may be difficult to succeed with your claim if you separate from your spouse/partner.

You may be able to make your own claim for refugee status in Canada based on your own fear of persecution in your country. If you are in this situation, you should consult an immigration lawyer right away because it is important that you make your own refugee claim before any admissibility hearing

What if my refugee claim has been denied?

You may be able to make an application based on ‘Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds’ (refer to the section on H&C in this toolkit).

Immigration officers are required to take H & C applications based on domestic violence seriously and also look at the ‘best interest of the child’ if any are involved.

Making an application for H & C grounds does not guarantee you will be able to stay in Canada while a decision is being made. If you have a removal order you can apply to the Federal Court to ‘stay your removal.’ –**Get legal advice!**

In most cases if you are under a removal order you can apply for a ‘Pre-removal Risk Assessment’ (PRRA). **Get legal advice!**

PRRA: An evaluation done by the Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to determine the risk to a person if removed from Canada. A person must not be removed to a country where their life would be at risk. Any person under a removal order can apply to the Minister of the IRCC for a PRAA.

Denied refugees need to wait for a ‘notice to appear’ from the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) to go into one of its offices and receive the PRAA application.

For the PRRA, an officer will review the documents relating to your case and any other documents you provide. If you have already made a refugee claim, only new or different evidence supporting your case will be considered. You cannot use the same evidence from your initial hearing. **Get legal advice!**

I came to Canada under a Sponsorship situation and I am being abused by my spouse (or the person who sponsored me)

A sponsor cannot force the Canadian government authorities to remove you from Canada.

Safety First! Sponsorship agreements say that if you and/or your family members are being abused by the sponsor, you should go to a safe place.

The sponsored spouse may be eligible to file an application for child support or spousal support.

I am being abused and have temporary status. Or I am being abused and do not have status

Temporary status includes: those who are here on a visitor visa; those who are here on a student visa; or on a temporary work permit.

I am being abused and do not have status

It is recommended that you seek legal advice and follow through with what you are advised to do. There are some options but the outcome is not guaranteed.

Calling the police in an emergency puts people with no status at risk of deportation, because the police have authority to arrest or detain someone on behalf of Immigration.

If your partner is charged with assault this could be problematic for you,

Without status, you cannot easily access medical services - however, please refer to the section below on services for undocumented Torontonians in the City (for example the clinic at the FCJ Refugee Centre)

ASSAULTED WOMEN’S HELPLINE

TOLL FREE: 1-866-863-0511



**FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE
MIGRANT WORKERS PROGRAM
WhatsApp 647-971-2153**

SECTION B

SETTLEMENT

LIVING IN A “SANCTUARY CITY”



Accessing services in the City of Toronto as a person without status

The City of Toronto is a Sanctuary City



In January 2017, the City Council re-affirmed Toronto as a Sanctuary City where all residents have full rights to access all city services and city-administered services without fear, regardless of their documentation status.

According to the City Council directive immigration/citizenship information should only be collected where specifically required by either Provincial or Federal legislation, policies or agreements.

This means that if a service is provided by the City, you should not be asked about your immigration status. The one complication that may be confusing is figuring out if a service is provided by the Province of Ontario instead...

To assist undocumented Torontonians in accessing services, the City:

- publishes a searchable list of [identification requirements to access City services](#), along with four ways to make a complaint for those who may be dissatisfied with a service or feel wrongfully excluded from receiving a service
- informs undocumented Torontonians about [how the City protects their privacy](#)



Finding Information

You can find some relevant information online on the City’s website under the **Moving to Toronto** tab <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/moving-to-toronto/>

TIP: There is a Translate option at the bottom of the City of Toronto website. This allows you to use Google Translate to translate the information into 51 different languages.

The **Access T.O.** page lists what Identification you will need to access a City Service

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/moving-to-toronto/after-you-arrive-checklist/identification-requirements-to-access-city-services/>

Identification Requirements to Access City Services

Print

If you have any questions about identification requirements for any service provided by the City of Toronto, **call 311**. You do not need to provide any personal information when asking for information.

The City of Toronto does not collect personal information unless there is a legislative or operational requirement to do so. In many cases, City services may be accessed with proof of identification only. Proof of identification or residency is not necessarily an official government document. It can be as simple as a telephone bill that shows your address depending on the service that is being accessed. Learn [how the City protects your privacy](#).

Below is a searchable list of common City services that details what information will be required to access the service.

Show entries

Search:

Identification Requirements for Commonly Accessed Services

Service	Identification Required	Name	Address	Date of Birth	Income or Assets	Immigration Status
AIDS and Sexual Health Info-line / General Health Referral Line / Online Referral	No**	No	No	No	No	No
Basic Needs Allowance for shelter residents	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
By-law enforcement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Child care fee subsidy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dental clinics	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Early learning and child care services	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes***	No	No
Emergency dental services	No	No	No	No	No	No
Emergency Energy Fund	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Emergency shelters	No	No	No	No	No	No
Employability application for Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

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IN THIS SECTION

After You Arrive

Newcomer Services Kiosks

Settlement Workers & Locations

Identification Requirements to Access City Services

Contact Information

Newcomer Services Kiosk
City Hall
100 Queen St W
Main Floor Rotunda
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Telephone: 416-338-0688

@TONewcomer

Related Information

City Council Report on Access to City Services for Undocumented Torontonians

You can also find out about programs through the Newcomer Welcome Brochure (though not all are open to people without status)

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/853e-newcomer-welcome-brochure-english.pdf>

You can also ask for information in person by meeting with a **Settlement Worker** or visiting one of the **Newcomer Services Kiosks**.

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/moving-to-toronto/after-you-arrive-checklist/?accordion=get-support-from-a-settlement-worker>

A. Accessing Services – Housing and Shelter

Respite Centres and Drop-in Centres -
*immigration status is irrelevant,
undocumented Torontonians can access
these*



Emergency and Transitional Shelters -
Immigration status is irrelevant, undocumented Torontonians can access these.

The general process for accessing shelter space is by calling the **Central Intake Line**, of the City of Toronto, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration. The number for Central Intake is **416-397-5637**. All shelter and organizations that have a space available have to inform Central Intake by a certain time, it is a way of centralizing the information.

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/housing-shelter/homeless-help/>

**Need shelter? Call Central Intake
416-397-5637**

TIP: It is not always easy to access shelter space through the Central Intake line, due to the shortage in availability.

It is always best if a Housing Worker makes the call to Central Intake on your behalf, as they are familiar with the system and know when the best times to call are.

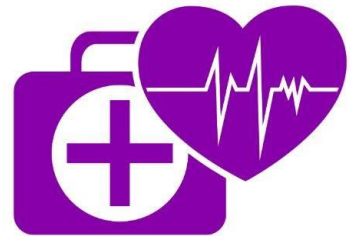
Moreover, even though immigration status is irrelevant, FCJ and other organizations have noted incidents where people are asked about their immigration status and situation by the worker at Central Intake. Again for this reason, it is best if a Housing Worker can act as an intermediary on your behalf.

Subsidized Housing – *refugee claimants are eligible but undocumented Torontonians are not eligible (due to funding sources). Generally to qualify one must be a Canadian citizen, landed immigrant, applicant for permanent resident status, convention refugee or refugee claimant.*

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/community-partners/emergency-shelter-operators/about-torontos-shelter-system/see-our-shelters/>

B. Accessing Services – Health and Wellness

Most health services in the City, such as hospitals, clinics, etc. are funded by the province and don't fall under the Sanctuary policy. To see a doctor or receive treatment you will need to present an OHIP card (Ontario Health Insurance Plan) - or you will need to pay for services and this can be quite expensive.



If you are a refugee claimant, you can get health care by showing your Refugee Protection Claimant Document

<https://refugee.cleo.on.ca/en/health-care-refugee-claimants>

If you don't have any of those documents you can still access many free programs and services that do not require a health card from **Toronto Public Health**.

For example: dental, vaccination, pregnancy, afterbirth, breastfeeding, sexual health, healthy eating, etc.

Toronto Public Health also has a fully-equipped Mobile Dental Clinic that travels to agencies across the city. Provides free dental care for eligible clients who have difficulty accessing dental services.

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/health-programs-advice/>

NOTE: You may still need to go to the hospital (where you will be charged for services) for more serious treatment. However the Inner City Health Associates (ICHA) clinics and other Community Centres can provide basic primary health care.

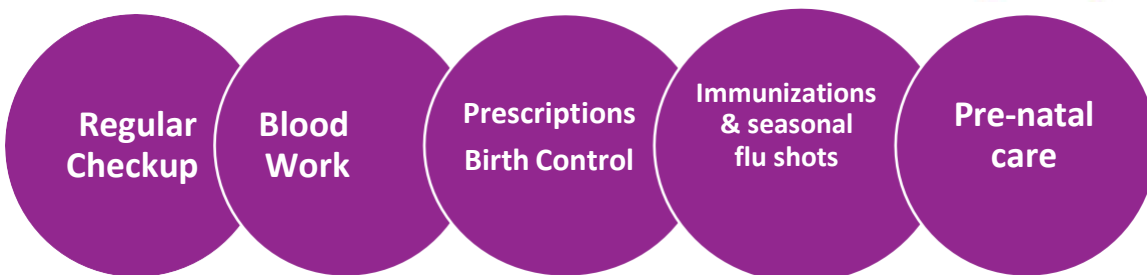
Alternatives provided by the Community

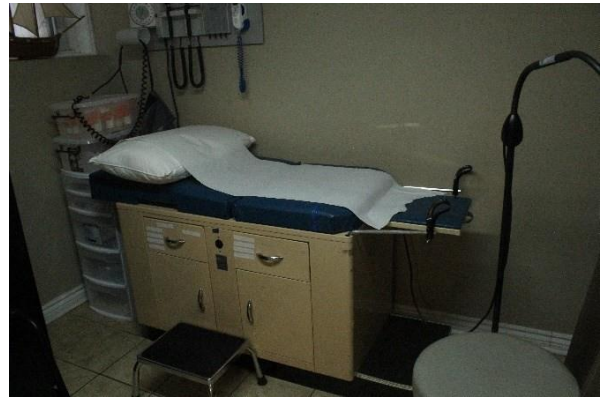
ICHA clinics – providing free basic services for uninsured clients

The Inner City Health Associates is a group of over 80 physicians working in shelters and drop-in centers in Toronto. Some of the clinics on the ICHA list will also accept people who are here on visitor visas. The primary health clinic at FCJ is one such clinic.

FCJ’s Primary Care Clinic:

- ▶ 2 family doctors
- ▶ 1 psychiatrist
- ▶ 1 registered nurse
- ▶ 1 clinic coordinator





For a full list of ICHA clinics, check this list. Anyone is welcome at FCJ's clinic (you just have to call for an appointment). There may be a clinic closer to your neighbourhood that is more convenient

<http://www.icha-toronto.ca/who-we-are/our-sites>

Resources at a Glance



Other resources

List of Medical Clinics in Toronto, Mississauga and Scarborough for Non-Insured Clients

(Compiled by the Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services Health with Dignity Program October 2017)

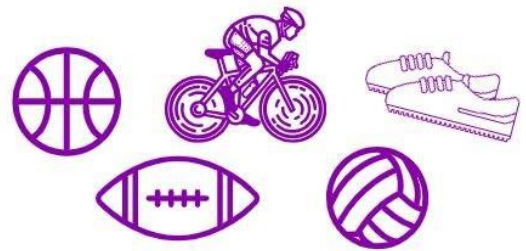
<http://accessalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/GTA-Free-Clinics-for-Uninsured.pdf>

You can also check this list of Toronto Community Health Centres and Sexual Health Clinics that serve people without insurance, available in [English](#), [Spanish](#) and [Portuguese](#). (Last Updated April 2014)

C. Accessing Services - Parks, Forestry and Recreation

The City provides a number of recreation and after-school programs of interest to families.

- ▶ For programs that require a **FEE**, one can register without a credit card
- ▶ A number of **FREE** programs are available



<https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/recreation/how-to-register-for-recreation-programs/>

If you can't afford the fees, a recreation subsidy is available through the Welcome Policy to help low-income individuals and families participate in City-run recreation programs. You may be eligible for this.

- Proof of immigration status is not required
- However, the application process requires verification of identity, address, and proof of income

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/employment-social-support/child-family-support/subsidy-for-recreation-programs/>

C1. Accessing Services - Toronto Public Library

The Library is a wonderful resource, there are 100 branches all over the City of Toronto and they have a lot of free programming.

“The public library is free for anyone who lives, works, goes to school or owns land in the city of Toronto”

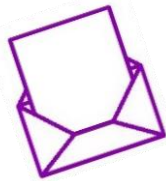
<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/using-the-library/>

The library also makes special allowances for people who are “People without a Permanent Address”, “Non-Residents”, “Visitors”.



Concerned about the ID requirements?

You can check out the list of **Identification Requirements** needed before you approach a branch. You will not be asked about your immigration status but you will be asked for a **proof of address**, such as a bill, or rental lease.



If you cannot provide this, do not worry. They have a solution, which is to send a letter to your home. Once you receive that letter you can return with it to the library branch and that way get access to a library card.

TIP: The Toronto Public Library is one of the most welcoming services in the city with resources, online videos and books in many different languages. And many free programs. Don't hesitate to start using them.

TIP: Many libraries are also part of a Museum + Art Pass (MAP) program, which gives free admission to Toronto museums and cultural attractions

<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/museum-arts-passes/>

D. Accessing Services - Financial and Employment Support

Refugee claimants can receive social assistance from Ontario Works but unfortunately if you are an undocumented Torontonionian, you won't be able to receive this support.

HOWEVER, Ontario Works, as a result of a lot of advocacy from civil society, does provide some Emergency Funding for those who are newly arrived without status and are planning to file a refugee claim.

And in some specific cases, settlement organization workers have been able to advocate for their clients without status with Ontario Works.

You may also be able to get some support from the City of Toronto Hardship Fund:

Available to pay for certain medically based items/services such as eyeglasses, emergency dental work, medication, medical items (walkers, hearing aids, hospital beds and more) or funeral expenses. Low-income Toronto residents who are not receiving assistance from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) may receive help from Toronto's Hardship Fund regardless of their immigration status in Canada.

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/employment-social-support/support-for-people-in-financial-need/assistance-through-ontario-works/policies-and-procedures/hardship-fund/>

Speak to a settlement worker or an organization like FCJ Refugee Centre for advice!!



Employment support

You will not be eligible for some of the special training courses provided by the City. But you can go to one of the Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS) Centres which are open to anyone, and get help with services such as: job search, resume and letter writing, interview skills etc.

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/employment-social-support/employment-support/toronto-employment-and-social-services-locations/>





Food Banks

You can find a list of food banks through the 211 Toronto website



<https://www.211toronto.ca/topic/Central%20Region/ORGANIZATION/fht142/Central%20Region>

Or through the Daily Bread Food Bank site

<https://www.dailybread.ca>



Clothing and Furniture

The Furniture Bank collects gently-used furnishings from the community and transfers them to families transitioning out of homelessness and displacement.

<https://www.furniturebank.org/>

Clothing donations can be accessed through some organizations such as FCJ Refugee Centre, or search the 211 site for listings.

<https://www.211unitedway.org/search-category/clothing/>

E. Accessing Services – Education

There are a few options for receiving training, improving your English and moving closer to employment!

- ▶ Some City training courses, such as First Aid, are open to all residents

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/employment-social-support/employment-support/training-courses/>



- ▶ As we mentioned under the Parks and Rec section, you can access some of the recreation programs through community centres. Under the General Interest section, there are courses in cooking, computers, craft workshops and others that may be of use.

<https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/recreation/art-dance-general-interest/general-interest/>

- ▶ If you are looking for an English as a Second language class that is open to undocumented Torontonians look for those that say “**Open Access**”

An example is the Saturday morning English Language at FCJ Refugee Centre, open to anyone!

<https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/our-programs/settlement-programs/english-classes/>

- ▶ There are also English classes offered through the Toronto District School Board.

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Adult-Learners/Learn-English>

Refugee claimants, convention refugees and live-in caregivers can attend the classes for **FREE**. Visitors and others may have to pay a fee.

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Adult-Learners/Learn-English/-ESL-Programs>

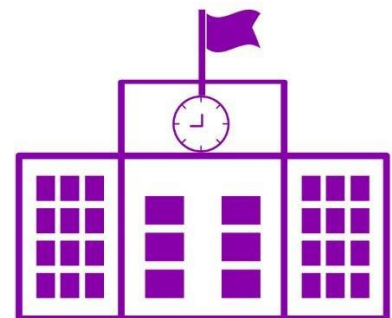
- ▶ And of course there are many language schools in the City open to visitors or whoever can pay, some of these tend to be quite expensive.

Education for children

Currently children of parents who are here on a visitor visa are not eligible for school programs (for example visitors from Mexico who arrive with an eTA). They have to wait for the 6-month waiting period, until the tourist visa expires.

In that case, they can access programs at the Toronto Public Library

<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/programs-and-classes/kids-and-families/>



Otherwise, all children have the right to go to school!

Access to post-secondary education for youth

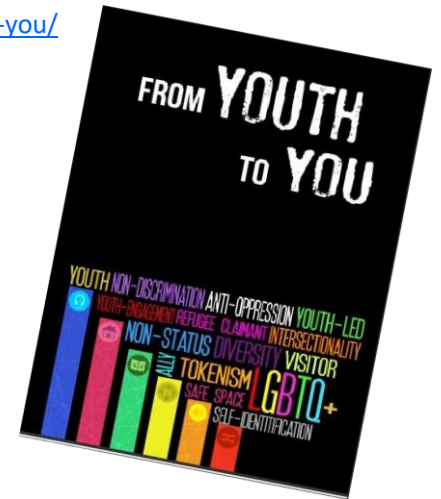
A couple of years ago, the FCJ Refugee Centre started an innovative program in partnership with York University, which created a bridging program to post secondary education AND enables youth without status to pursue university degrees while paying domestic fees.

This was the first program of its kind in Canada! FCJ is trying to expand the program to other universities and colleges, to open the door to education. **Speak to the FCJ Access to Education Coordinator!**

You may also be interested in these special resources, created by the FCJ Youth Network.

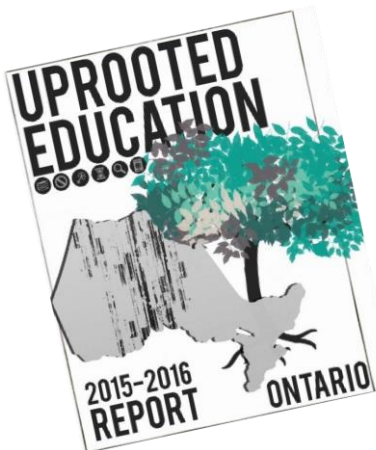
From Youth to You <https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/2015/11/from-youth-to-you/>

- This is a toolkit for a growing need for youth, and particularly newcomer and precarious migrant youth, to feel more valued and included in various services that they access in the City of Toronto.



Uprooted Education https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Report-Card_webFinal_2016.pdf

The Uprooted Education 2016 Ontario Report explored how the unique trajectories and social locations of migrant youth with precarious immigration status intersect with access to, and involvement in, Ontario high schools



REPORT CARD	
GETTING IN On Ontario's secondary school boards, the diversity of education and other outcomes (including programs, new programs, practices, and other school risks) facilitate or impede newcomer youth, particularly those with precarious immigration status, from getting into high school in Ontario.	F
EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION To what extent do newcomer and refugee youth have equal access to and participation in Ontario's secondary schools and programs, and how does participation impact their participation in school?	F
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION How do Ontario's anti-discrimination policies and practices impact newcomer and refugee youth? What are the barriers to their participation in school? What are the barriers to their participation in school? What are the barriers to their participation in school?	C-
SUPPORT What support services are available to newcomer students in Ontario's secondary schools? How do these services impact their participation in school? How do these services impact their participation in school?	D
MOVING ON How do Ontario's secondary schools support the transition of newcomer students to post-secondary education? How do these services impact their participation in school? How do these services impact their participation in school?	C+
MOVING ON How do Ontario's secondary schools support the transition of newcomer students to post-secondary education? How do these services impact their participation in school? How do these services impact their participation in school?	D-

ANNEX: OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATION LISTINGS

A. Quick guide to access to various services

	Permanent residents	Refugee Claimants	Undocumented / Non-status	Visitors
Ontario Works	Yes	Yes	No (some emergency funding for those planning to file refugee claim)	No
Housing Subsidy	Yes	Yes	No	No
Emergency Shelters	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Child Care Fee Subsidy	Yes	Yes but need proof of income	No	No
Hospitals and Medical Care		Yes	No	No
Toronto Public Health	Yes	Yes	Yes (various services don't require a health card)	Yes (various services don't require a health card)
911 & Paramedics	Yes	Yes	Unclear. OHIP card required for some services	Fee for services
Toronto Public Library	Yes	Yes	Yes (can get library card. Various services accessible without a library card)	Yes (may pay a fee for temp card. Various services accessible without a library card)
Settlement Workers in libraries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
City of Toronto Newcomer Kiosks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Employment Centres	Yes	Yes	No (can only get basics like resume help. Not eligible for programs)	No (can only get basics like resume help. Not eligible for programs)
Licences & Permits (businesses, trades, vehicles,	Yes	No, many need PR card or Canadian citizenship	No	No
Taxi Licences	Yes	No, need PR card or citizenship	No	No

B. Programs provided by the FCJ Refugee Centre

SETTLEMENT PROGRAM:

- Shelter for women and kids
- Support with the Social Assistance/Ontario Works application
- Support with accessing shelter space through Central Intake and the housing search
- English classes on Saturdays
- Primary Care Clinic
- Youth Program
- Clothing/Food bank
- Diapers

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SUPPORT

- Migrant Workers Mobile Program
- Anti-Human Trafficking Program
- General Orientation
- Humanitarian and Compassionate application
- Refugee Process orientation
- Refugee Hearing Preparation
- Support with the Work Permit application
- Support with the Student Permit application
- Support with the family reunification process
- Support with contacting Legal Aid Ontario

C. Other organizations providing support

Parkdale Community Legal Services

They do a lot of work with migrant workers, caregivers and others with precarious status.

<http://www.parkdalelegal.org/>

Link of **community legal clinics** that can provide free legal advice, education and in some cases representation.

<https://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/contact/contact.asp?type=cl>

<https://www.torontocentralhealthline.ca/listServices.aspx?id=10459>

An advocacy group, **Rights of Non-Status Women Network (RNSWN)**

<https://rnswn.wordpress.com>

The 519, serves the people of Toronto by supporting happy, fulfilling LGBTQ2S lives

<http://www.the519.org/>

Justice for Children and Youth, they provide legal services for youth under 18 and homeless youth under 25 in Ontario

They have a number of useful publications such as, “Teen Street Guide 2017”, “Human Rights and LGBTQI2S”, “Know your rights” etc.

<http://jfcy.org/en/online-resources/print-publications/>

D. Lists of services for newcomers and immigrants (individuals without status, and in some cases even refugee claimants, will not be eligible for some of these services)

Community listings

City of Toronto Newcomer Brochure

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/93ae-newcomer-welcome-brochure-english.pdf>

Toronto Neighbourhood Office, Newcomer Programs and Services

<https://tno-toronto.org/newcomer-programs-and-services>

Access Alliance, Multicultural Health and Community Services

<http://accessalliance.ca/>

OCASI, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

<http://www.ocasi.org/>

LINC, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Adult-Learners/Learn-English/Language-Instruction-for-Newcomers-to-Canada>

Canadian Council of Refugees (CCR) member organisations

Across Canada

<http://ccrweb.ca/en/members#zoom=3&lat=52.26816&lon=-96.50391&layers=0T>

Resources on Mental Health from the CCR

<https://ccrweb.ca/en/mental-health>

Province of Ontario Services for Newcomers and Refugees

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/services-newcomers-and-refugees>

E. RESOURCES

BOOK: Seeds of Hope, FCJ Refugee Centre

Creating a future in the shadows: A window onto experiences that are so rarely shared, highlighting voices that are too often silenced

<https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/2017/08/4247/>

VIDEO: My voice, FCJ Refugee Centre

The video reflects the challenges that non-status and refugee claimants face in Canada such as mental health

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3vfiFkVStc&feature=youtu.be>