



SETTLEMENT
ORIENTATION
SERVICES

Making a refugee claim in Canada: Covid-19 changes

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Topics we will cover:

- Introducing SOS
- How to begin a Refugee Claim
- Changes to the process due to Covid-19
- How to apply for Legal Aid
- Resources available during the claim process
- What to do if your claim is denied
- What to do if your claim is accepted

Changes during Covid-19

Due to Covid-19, many IRCC offices have closed to the public and in-person appointments are limited

The Canadian government and immigrant service organizations are changing their procedures to continue to support Refugee Claimants and people intending to make a Refugee Claim.

ISSofBC and SOS continues to provide support for our clients on-line and by phone, with some in-person services available by appointment only for clients facing multiple barriers

What is SOS?

- SOS is the program at ISSofBC that serves refugee claimants and protected persons to help them integrate into Canadian society
- Our staff can help you in 7 languages: Arabic, Dari, Farsi, French, Spanish, Somali and Swahili
- Our house search team can help you find emergency shelter and long-term rental housing
- Health supports
- Locations in Vancouver and Surrey

What we do - Settlement

Settlement Services include:

- Orientation and guidance through the refugee claim process
- Assistance with filling out government forms
- Support in accessing health care and Legal Aid
- Orientation and cultural adjustment counselling
- Support finding housing, employment and language training
- Connections with local community services and resources

What we do: Housing & Health

Housing Services include:

- Information on the Greater Vancouver rental market
- Housing search assistance based on client's needs and budget
- Connections with landlords and rental building managers
- BC Housing applications

Health Supports include:

- Support for refugees and newcomers living with HIV
- Creation of wellness plan and information on healthy living

What is the refugee claim process?

- You can make a refugee claim if you are inside Canada and you fear or face danger in your home country for a variety of reasons
- You can make a refugee claim at a port of entry (airport, border) or by email
- You will eventually have a hearing with the Immigration Refugee Board which will decide if your claim is accepted or rejected
- If your claim is rejected, you can appeal this decision

Seeking legal help...

- You should contact a lawyer as soon as possible! You can do this before or after making your claim
- If you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer on your own, you can apply for a free lawyer through Legal Aid
- You will eventually have a hearing with the Immigration Refugee Board which will decide if your claim is accepted or rejected
- If your claim is rejected, you can appeal this decision
- If your claim is accepted, you can apply for Permanent Residence for you and your family

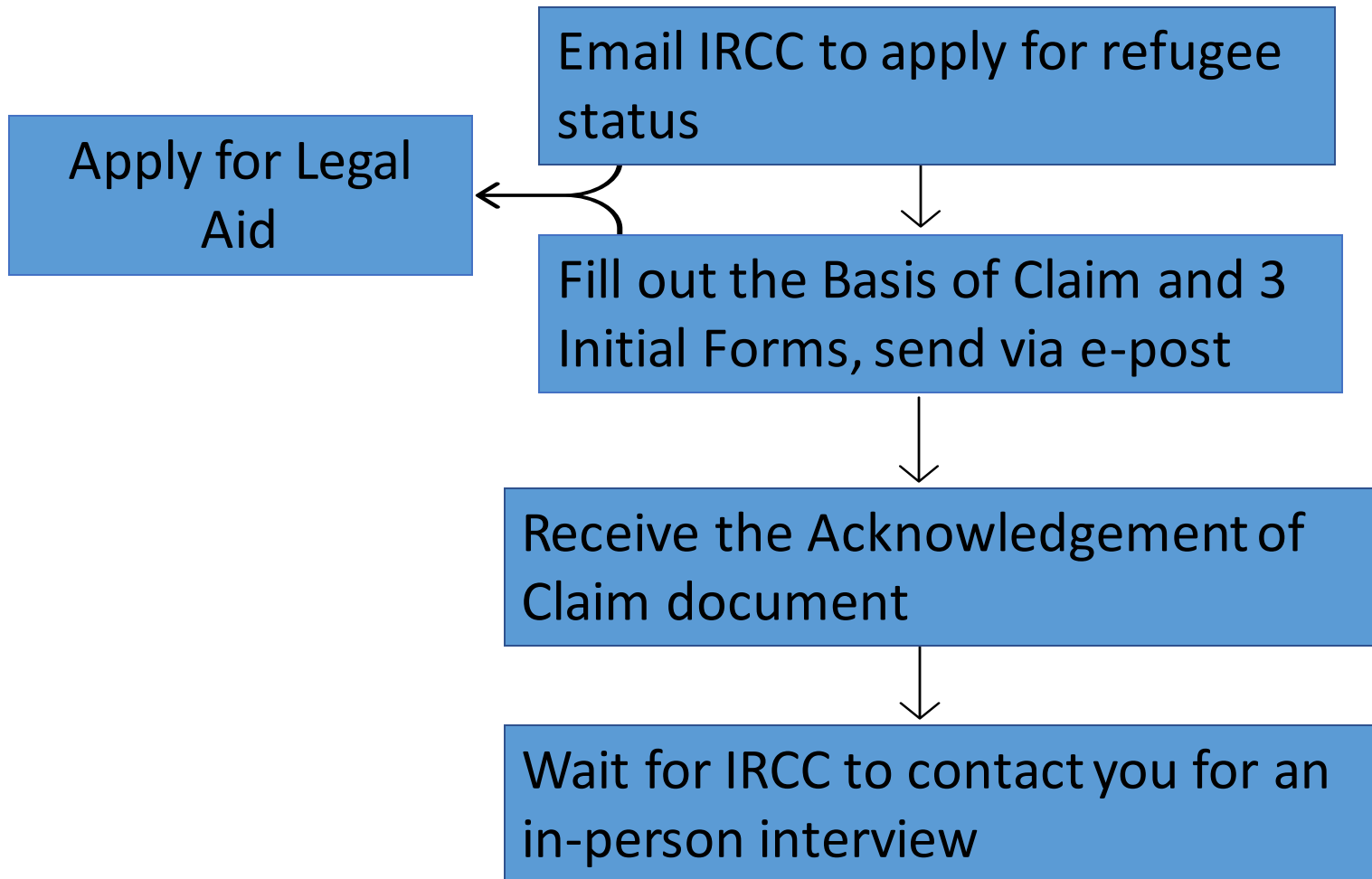
How to apply for Legal Aid?

- If you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer, you can apply for Legal Aid
- They will determine whether you qualify based on your financial needs and the details of your case
- They have interpreters in various languages
- You can apply for Legal Aid by phone:
1-866-577-2525 / 604-408-2172
- Provide any evidence that you may have to support your claim (photos, police reports, hospital records, messages, witness testimony)
- If your application is denied, you can appeal that decision

The initial steps of refugee claim process:

- You will have to fill a **Basis of Claim** form to explain why you need protection in Canada
 - Ideally should be filled out with a lawyer
- You have to fill out 3 background information forms
 - Can be filled out with a lawyer, by yourself or with the help of an SOS worker
- You will have an eligibility interview with IRCC
- You will have to complete an immigration medical exam

To make a Refugee Claim during Covid-19:



How to begin a Refugee Claim

- You can now begin your refugee claim by email
- Simply let IRCC know that you want to apply for refugee status at:

IRCC.RefugeeClaim-Demandedasile.IRCC@cic.gc.ca

What to say in your initial email?

- No need to provide any details or evidence about your case at this point
- Keep your first email simple. For example:

“Dear Immigration Officer, my family and I are want to apply for refugee status in Canada”

“To IRCC, my name is _____.I am starting a refugee claim”

- IRCC will reply with the following automated email reply to confirm they got your message.

Sending documents to IRCC:

- IRCC will **only** accept forms and documents by E-post, you must create an account online:
- You'll get an email from Canada Post asking you to sign up for an account.
 - **Check your spam folder to make sure you don't miss it.**
 - **Add this email domain to your safe sender list:**
connect@md-hs.epost.ca
- Follow the instructions to set up your account.

Important Documents

- Once you provide IRCC with the completed Basic of Claim and background information forms, you will be issued an “**Acknowledgement of Claim**” document (AOC)
- Once you have an in-person interview with IRCC, they will issue a **Refugee Protection Claimant Document**
- With either of these documents you can:
 - Apply for income assistance (welfare)
 - Have medical coverage through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFH)

Your AOC:

UCI:
Application Number:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CLAIM AND NOTICE TO RETURN FOR INTERVIEW

Family Name: _____
Given Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____ YYYY/MM/DD

This notice acknowledges that the Government of Canada received your **refugee claim** on 2020/04/14 YYYY/MM/DD.

You are now eligible for health care coverage under the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP). You are required to undergo an Immigration Medical Examination as part of your refugee claim. The IFHP will cover the cost of this examination. Please present this notice and your IMM 1017 form to the panel physician at your appointment.

You are required to return for an interview with respect to your refugee claim. The details are as follows:

Date:
Time:
Address:

You must bring the following with you:

- This original appointment letter
- 4 original passport-sized photographs

If you are under 18 years of age, you must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian if he or she resides in Canada.

IMPORTANT:

If you do not appear for your interview, your IFHP coverage may be terminated. In addition, your refugee claim may subsequently be determined to have been abandoned in which case you will be subject to removal from Canada.

Note – If you pay for any medical services or products, you will not be reimbursed.

Health care providers in Canada **MUST** verify the eligibility of the individual with the IFHP claims administrator, Medavie Blue Cross, before providing services. Medavie Blue Cross may be contacted by telephone at 1-888-614-1880, by facsimile at 506-867-4651 or through their website at <https://www.medaviebc.ca/en/health-professionals>.

Refugee Protection Document


 Citizenship and Immigration Canada / Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada


 CANADA IMMIGRATION

PROTECTED WHEN COMPLETED / PROTÉGÉ UNE FOIS REMPLI - B

CANADA

BB092 612 575
 M902416712

TEMPORARY RESIDENT PERMIT
 CASE TYPE : 89

TRAVEL DOC : PASSPORT 9999999
 IMP. CAT :
 TRANS WARRANT NO. :
 FEE STATUS : EPC TEST*

PERMIT IN FORCE FROM : 15 NOV 2002
 THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE PERSON(S) NAMED HEREIN IS/ARE HEREBY ALLOWED TO COME INTO CANADA OR BEING IN CANADA, TO REMAIN HEREIN FOR THE PERIOD DURING WHICH THIS PERMIT IS IN FORCE. THIS PERMIT SHALL COME INTO FORCE ON THE DATE SPECIFIED AND SHALL, SUBJECT TO THE IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE PROTECTION ACT AND REGULATIONS, 2001, REMAIN IN FORCE UNTIL THE DATE SPECIFIED.

SURNAME, GIVEN NAMES - NOM DE FAMILLE, PRÉNOMS		TESTNADA, EXEMPLAIRE	
BIRTH DATE - DATE DE NAISSANCE		SEX - SEXE	
01 JAN 1970		MALE	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH - PAYS DE NAISSANCE	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP - CITOYEN DE		
LIECHTEN	ARAB EMI		
OFF. FILE NO. - N° DE RÉF. DU BUREAU	CLIENT ID. - ID DU CLIENT		
	5231 - 8649		
DATE SIGNED - SIGNÉ LE	VALID UNTIL - DATE D'EXPIRATION	EXT. NO. - CODE PROLOG	
15 NOV 2002	30 DEC 2002	00	

AUTHORIZED TO LEAVE AND RE-ENTER

CANADA

REMARKS: THIS IS WHERE THE OFFICER'S REMARKS WOULD APPEAR.

Immigration Canada
 15 NO 2002
 247



CIC: HULL 2104 **Canada**

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
 LE PRÉSENT DOCUMENT EST LA PROPRIÉTÉ DU GOUVERNEMENT DU CANADA

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While you wait for your hearing, you can...

- Open a bank account
- Attend primary and secondary school for free, take English classes
- You can get a job once you receive your work permit and volunteer if you wish to
- Apply for income assistance if you cannot work, have a low income or if you have a disability
- You can apply for BC's free medical insurance (MSP)

SOS Can help assist you with all of this!

Prepare for your hearing

- Download the Kinbrace Refugee Hearing Preparation Guide – available in 11 languages!
- Register for Ready Tours (currently conducted online)



Kinbrace Ready Tours

- Register for Ready Tours currently conducted online
- Information session with Refugee Appeal division on Sep 29th.
- Contact Sophia Underhill, Accessing Refugee Protection Coordinator:

M 604.328.3132

T 604.255.9691

sophia@kinbrace.ca

SOS Workshops

- As part of our effort to support refugee claimants online, we hold weekly information sessions on a variety of topics relevant to claimants
- Workshops are conducted in English, Arabic, Farsi and Spanish
- We feature speakers from partner organizations that help refugee claimants and protected persons

SOS Workshops

Our speakers have covered topics on:

- health and medical services
- mental health support and counselling
- nutrition of young children and babies
- Ready Tours
- Family, adult/senior programs
- employment supports
- legal services

Sign up online to get notified

Email: sos@issbc.org

Contact us

Email: sos@issbc.org

Call: 604-255-1881

Receive text messages from SOS

[Sign Up Now](#)



SOS Videos

- As part of our effort to support refugee claimants online, SOS has created a series of videos on different topics:
 - Information on Medical Services Plan (MSP) and Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)
 - How to fill out and submit Work Permit applications
 - How to fill out a Travel Document application
 - How to fill out and pay for Permanent Residence applications
- You can find them at <https://issbc.org/>

Applying for permanent residence

- It is a long process, can take up to 2 years
- You can include your spouse/partner, children, step-children, adopted children (must be under 22 years of age) dependent grandchildren
- Fill out 4 forms (2 of which you also filled out at the beginning of your claim)
- Make a payment - \$550 for you and your spouse, \$155 for children
- SOS video or contact your settlement worker

Language	Staff	Title	Contact
Spanish	Elizabeth Galvez	Settlement Worker	M: 236-989-9124 elizabeth.galvez@issbc.org
Farsi	Mojgan Radfar	Settlement Worker	M:604-351-0675 mojgan.radfar@issbc.org
Dari/Farsi	Sadiq Mohibi	Settlement Worker	M: 236-985-7365 sadiq.mohibi@issbc.org
Spanish, French	Carolina Villa	Settlement Worker	M: 236-989-4344 carolina.villa@issbc.org
Farsi	Maryam Forouhar	Settlement Worker	M: 604-351-3035 maryam.forouhar@issbc.org
Arabic	Maher Kutielah	Settlement Worker	M: 604-318-0265 maher.kutieleh@issbc.org
Spanish	Katya Quintanilla	Settlement Worker	M: 604-351-3021 katya.quintanilla@issbc.org