



BC Refugee Hub



**BC SAFE HAVEN**  
Resource Network

# Introduction to the BC Safe Haven Program and Safe Haven Resource Network

**WEBINAR**

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**October 29, 2024**



# Land Acknowledgement

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I am joining you from the unceded traditional territory of the Kwikwetlem First Nation, which lies within the shared territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Katzie, Musqueam, Qayqayt, Squamish, and Sto':lo Nations.





# Agenda

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- Welcome and introductions
- Presentations from BC Safe Haven Resource Network Partners
  - AMSSA
  - MAP-BC
  - ISSofBC's BC Refugee Hub / VAST
- Closing Remarks





# AMSSA

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- **SABRINA DUMITRA**
  
- **SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS**



# Introduction to the BC Safe Haven Resource Network

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October 29, 2024

# Land Acknowledgement

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As a provincial umbrella association, AMSSA acknowledges that B.C. is on the unceded homelands of First Nations who have stewarded this land since time immemorial. We recognize the privilege that we have as settlers on this land and acknowledge that AMSSA's operations is on the unceded traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy'əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl'ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations. As an organization, AMSSA is committed to creating a safe space for indigenous voices.



# BC Safe Haven Resource Network

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The indirect Safe Haven program provides capacity building and coordination support to organizations funded through the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs' Safe Haven program. This program aims to provide settlement and integration support to refugee claimants. The network enhances the capacity of the settlement sector to deliver programming effectively by supporting the coordination of partners, organize meetings and produces resources for and maintains connections with BC service providers.





# The BC Safe Haven Resource Network consists of four initiatives with the following partners:

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BC Safe Haven  
Capacity Building  
Services & Sector  
Support Website

- BC Refugee Hub (Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia, ISSofBC)
- Multi-Agency Partnership of British Columbia (MAP BC)

BC Safe Haven Mental  
Health Services  
Coordination & Support

- BC Refugee Hub (Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia, ISSofBC)
- Multi-Agency Partnership of British Columbia (MAP BC)
- Vancouver Association for the Survivors of Torture (VAST)

BC Safe Haven  
English Language  
Training & Curriculum  
Coordination

- Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISSofBC)
- DIVERSEcity
- ICA

Public Support  
Gathering (initiative  
begins January 2025)

- Through AMSSA's charitable arm, ACES
- United Way of BC







# Capacity Building Services & Sector Support Website

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## Purpose

- Improve organizational capacity
- Build connections and foster collaboration
- Develop key resources addressing agency needs
- Collect resources in an accessible, easy-to-use location
- Disseminate timely and relevant information
- Expand sectoral knowledge about refugee claimants and services.

## AMSSA's Role

- Coordinate and facilitate collaboration between project partners
- Convene working groups
- With the Province and the sector, collaboratively develop:
  - Humanitarian response planning
  - Shared monitoring & evaluation framework



# Capacity-building activities – AMSSA-led

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## Safe Haven Providers Working Group

- Open to all Safe Haven providers
- Meets quarterly
- Space for collaboration and sharing
- Practices and partnerships
- Opportunity for program feedback
- Discuss challenges and emerging concerns
- Subgroups meet on an ad hoc basis

## Subgroups

### Housing

- To respond to and address ongoing pressures for emergency, short-term, and long-term accommodations
- Share successful practices and partnerships
- Discuss challenges and emerging concerns

### Mental Health

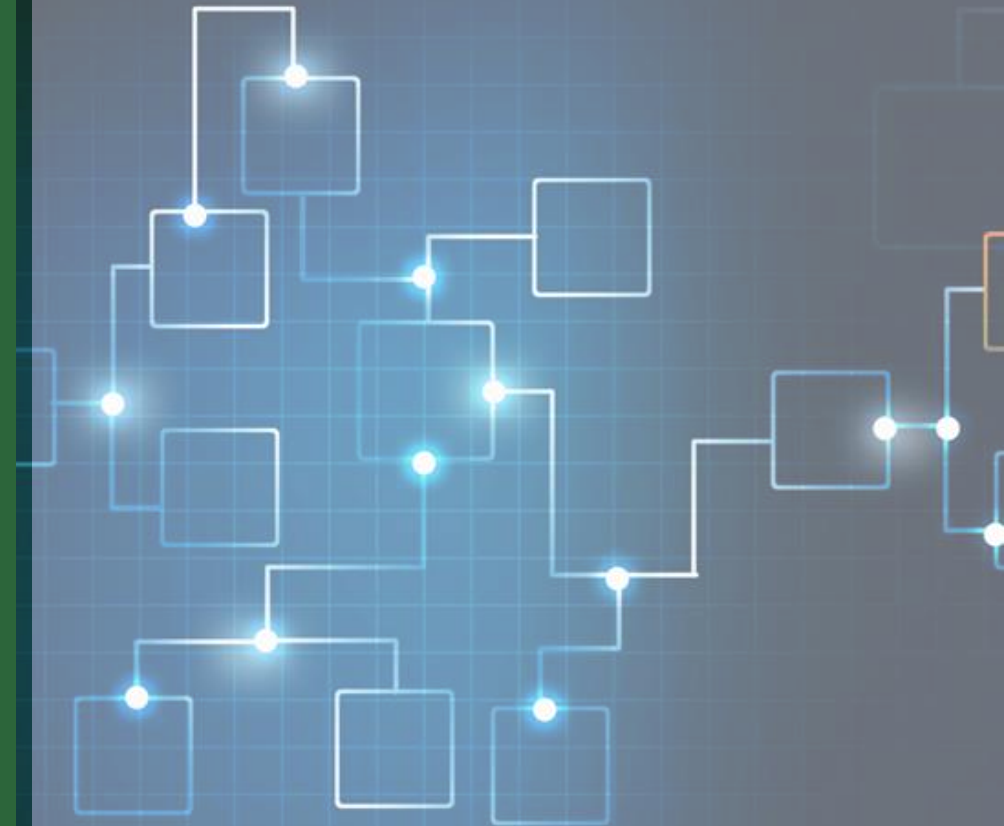
- Consider needs of clients *and* staff
- Share successful practices and partnerships
- Discuss challenges and emerging concerns

# Capacity-building activities – AMSSA-led

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## Humanitarian Movement Planning

- Responding to influxes in refugee claimants and other humanitarian pathway newcomers
- Support organizations to develop a response plan
- Help develop training for organizations and providers
- *Currently:* Environmental scan
- *Upcoming:* Consultations with Safe Haven service providers



# Capacity-building activities – AMSSA-led

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## Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

- Develop a shared framework for consistency and comparison
- Identifying areas for program improvement
- Tracking success of interventions
- Improve understanding and build capacity
- *Currently:* Environmental scan
- *Upcoming:* Consultations with Safe Haven service providers





# Mental Health Coordination & Support

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## Purpose

- Build connections and collaboration between organizations
- Support the mental health and well-being of front-line service providers
- Strengthen capacity to address the mental health needs of Safe Haven clients

## Activities

- Working group focused on mental health
- Toolkit, workshops, and e-learning on mental health topics
- Groundwork for Cross Cultural Immigrant and Refugee Mental Health Conference
- Provincial Mental Health Coordinator
  - Phone: 778-653-8278
  - Toll-Free: 1-888-619-8636
- Quarterly Mental Health Focused Information Sessions for Frontline Staff



# English Language Training and Curriculum Coordination

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## Purpose

- Explore curricula currently in use
- Build shared understanding of the language learning needs of refugee claimant students and their instructors
- Design materials responsive to needs of ELT instructors and refugee claimant students
- Create a repository for resources and materials

## Activities

- ELT Providers Advisory Group (ELT PAG)
- Curriculum guidelines
- Trainings and workshops
- Website hosting ELT material
- Professional development
- Ongoing curriculum enhancement



# Public Support Gathering

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## Purpose

- Build public support for refugee claimants through communication and outreach
- Support development of welcoming communities
- Enhance efficiency of donations and volunteer systems
- Facilitate communication and collaboration

## Activities

- Centralized intake and distribution system
- Leveraging Existing Expertise
- Donation Data Insights
- Facilitating Effective Communication and Collaboration

# Follow AMSSA on Social Media

@amssabc on X and Facebook

AMSSA on LinkedIn



Visit our website:

[www.amssa.org](http://www.amssa.org)





# MAP-BC

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- **KATYA AVALOS**
  
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR**





# MAP BC

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- Network of over 60 nonprofits, government and non-government organizations that work with and for refugee claimants
- Members include settlement agencies, emergency and transitional housing providers, Legal Aid and other legal service providers, counselling and mental health service providers, faith-based organizations and churches, libraries, Settlement Workers in Schools and education service providers, food banks, etc
- Government partners include IRCC, IRB, CBSA, MUNI and MSDPR
- Independent community members – volunteers, interpreters, lawyers, researchers





# What MAP does for the community

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- Foster collaboration and partnership building to identify common issues and work towards solutions
- Act as a connector between service providers
- Information sharing, weekly news bulletins
- Communicate with IRCC on specific cases
- Deliver capacity building sessions and presentations on topics relevant to refugee claimants
  - at MAP meetings and through virtual workshops
- Acts as community partner for research, support funding applications
- Amplify the voices of refugee claimants through public engagement events like World Refugee Day





# Examples of MAP collaborations

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- 2018 BC Refugee Housing Forum
  - BC CHARMS - BC's Refugee Claimant Housing Referral System
  - MAP BC Immigration Holding Centre (BCIHC) Support program
  - Community partner on research projects:
    - Racism in Detention research project - UBC School of Law
    - UBC Immigrant Women's Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health in BC Research
    - City in Colour Cooperative - Growing Roots: Refugee-Centric Housing Solutions in Metro Vancouver
  - World Refugee Day
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# MAP supports for Safe Haven providers

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- Capacity Building – helping with content creation and expert speakers for webinars
- Information sharing – government updates, workshops/programs for clients, learning and capacity building opportunities for staff
- Meetings, community connections, presentations on refugee claimant topics
- Moving to integrate service providers from outside the Lower Mainland into our network
- Assessing the needs of service providers in different regions of BC
- Quarterly mental health focused presentations for frontline staff





# Contact Information

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- [Mapbc.org](http://Mapbc.org)
- [info@mapbc.org](mailto:info@mapbc.org)
- 604-761-2465





# ISSofBC's BC Refugee Hub

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- **BAHAR TAHERI**
  
- **PROJECT CONSULTANT**




BC Refugee Hub





# What is the BC Refugee Hub?

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- Started in 2015 with the arrival of Syrian refugee families
  - Program of ISSofBC, created with funding support from the Province of BC
  - To assist and empower individuals and refugee-serving organizations to help in the resettlement process by providing capacity building tools, trainings and resources.
  - Currently funded by the Province of BC – BC Safe Haven program
    - Focus on refugee claimants
  - Resources center: publications, statistics, factsheets
  - Training session: In person and online workshops and webinars
  - Stories of refugees and refugee claimants with lived experience
  - Promoting services and programs of organizations in regions in British Columbia
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# What is planned for this fiscal year?

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- General survey for the BC Refugee Hub
  - Service Directory for all BC Safe Haven service providers – will be updated quarterly
  - Training webinars – 4 this fiscal year
  - Statistical Factsheets
  - Online Toolkit on the refugee claim process
  - Mental Health Toolkit, Workshops and E-Learning - In person training session in partnership with VAST in Vancouver Island, Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Interior and North regions
  - Mental Health environmental scan – will inform activities for next fiscal year of BC Refugee Hub Mental Health Forum
  - Refugee claimant service mapping – will be posted on the BC Refugee Hub and updated regularly
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# BC Safe Haven Service Directory



- Updated quarterly
- BC Safe Haven Service Providers programming
- Contact information for direct referrals
- If you have updates for your organization's information, send to **[refugeehub@issbc.org](mailto:refugeehub@issbc.org)**

# Weekly and Monthly Activities

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BC REFUGEE HUB  
E-NEWSLETTER



Webinar

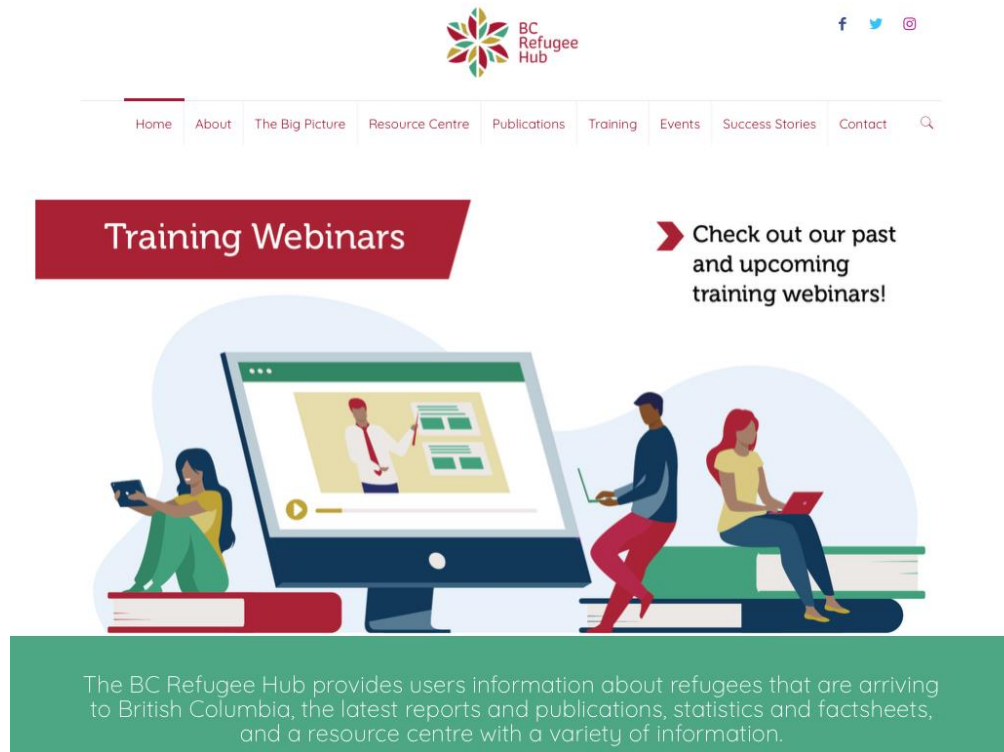


- Weekly updates with new programs, services, resources and bulletins
- Monthly e-newsletters
- Regular planning and collaboration meetings with partners at VAST, MAP-BC and AMSSA
- Partner and working group meetings led by AMSSA

**Please send me your workshops, events, services to promote on the BC Refugee Hub and on our newsletter:**

**Send to: [refugeehub@issbc.org](mailto:refugeehub@issbc.org)**

# Website Update – Coming Soon!



- Revamping the BC Refugee Hub!
- New branding and overall look
- Thank you for providing your feedback on our general survey!
- We will unveil the new look and navigation in the new year.
- Send us your feedback anytime to [refugeehub@issbc.org](mailto:refugeehub@issbc.org)



# Provincial Refugee Mental Health Information and Support Line

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- The Vancouver Association for the Survivors of Torture (VAST) offers a local phone and a toll-free support line for professionals and people supporting newcomer survivors of forced migration, war, and torture in BC.
- This non-crisis support line is available **Monday through Friday, 9:00AM - 5:00PM**, providing support to frontline primary care and mental health professionals, managers, settlement workers, social service providers, and private sponsors of refugees. VAST offers information, referrals, resources, and consultations for those working with refugee claimants, and government-assisted or privately sponsored refugees.
- The **service is free of charge**, and users can expect a call back within 2 business days. While direct client services are not offered at this time, **the focus is on staff training and capacity building to improve support for refugees and refugees claimants**.
- VAST is the leading organization in BC offering trauma-informed mental health services to refugees and refugee claimants dealing with psychological trauma from torture, political violence, and persecution.
- Phone: 778-653-8278 / Toll-Free: 1-888-619-8636 / Website: <https://www.vastbc.ca/>E-mail: [referrals@vastbc.ca](mailto:referrals@vastbc.ca)





# THANK YOU!

- Next year will mark 10 years of the BC Refugee Hub
- Thank you all for your continued work with refugees and refugee claimants
- Thank you to the Province of BC for support and funding
- Excited for collaboration with MAP-BC, AMSSA and all other partners!



Join our E-newsletter List

Visit our website:

[BCREFUGEEHUB.CA](http://BCREFUGEEHUB.CA)





# BC SAFE HAVEN

Resource Network



BC Refugee Hub

