

## First Weeks Checklist<sup>13</sup>

The following checklist, while not exhaustive, gives a broad overview of orientation tasks that your group should aim to complete within a month of when the refugee(s) arrive to Canada. We recommend that you review this list while you are putting together your Settlement Plan and again when your group receives the Notification of Arrival Transmission (NAT).

### Immediate

- Ensure that the following documentation was received at airport:
  - Confirmation of PR (paper document)
  - Interim Federal Health Program (paper document)
  - Social Insurance Number (paper document - depends on arrival time and ability to provide final destination address in Canada)
  - Travel document/passport
- Provide food staples/pre-made meals
- Provide a phone card with instructions to allow contact with family and friends
- Provide emergency contact names and numbers.

### Within First Week

- Discuss the private sponsorship program and the role of the sponsoring group
- Discuss rights and responsibilities of sponsored refugees (see RSTP resource for more information: <http://bit.ly/2pumon8>)
- Apply for provincial health coverage and card
- Arrange for internet to be set up
- Provide access to cell phone or landline and explain phone plan
- Apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN) at a local Service Canada location
- Make photocopies of arrival documents and other important documents
- Provide basic orientation to life in Canada:
  - Using local public transit
  - Using of 911 and role of police in Canada - see <http://bit.ly/2pugjXW> for examples of what information to share

<sup>13</sup> Adapted from the “Refugee Sponsorship Training Program” <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3BgZ5H0aUw-NXR2cnVCeE43bGRUU2FhSHRHnkldmEzVGZz/view>

- Shopping for groceries
- Navigating around the neighbourhood (See **APPENDIX: “[Neighbourhood Orientation](#)”**).

## Finances

- Open a bank account
- Review how funds will be transferred to the newcomer
- Assist the newcomer in setting up an itemized budget
- Apply for a provincial photo ID card
- Apply for Canada Child Benefit (if applicable): <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/cctb/>.

## Health

- Find a family doctor
- Find a local dentist. Note that routine dental care is not covered by IFHP. In some provinces there may be full dental coverage for children. You may be able to access subsidized dentistry through Canadian Dentists for Refugees. For more information, visit <http://canadiandentistsforrefugees.net/patients> (see **APPENDIX** for the “[IFHP Dental Benefit Grid](#)”)
- Complete vaccinations for children and adults
- Find out about counselling and mental health services in the community, if needed.

## Education

- Explore public education options for children, if applicable
- Contact school board to schedule an appointment for assessment
- Visit the local public library for academic support
- Schedule a meeting with a School Settlement Worker at the local school with the child and parent, if applicable
- Review the guide to elementary/secondary education for newcomers, if applicable
- Liaise with School Social Worker to obtain school supplies and subsidies, if needed

## Language

- Schedule an appointment at the local Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) assessment centre (more info: <http://bit.ly/2ptHDFN>)
- Sign up for a LINC/ESL course
- Look into English conversation circles.

## Daily Life

- Visit the local public library and ask about programs for newcomers
- Find out where to shop
- Discuss what to do in case of an emergency
- Explore computer class options, if needed
- Talk about the effects of culture shock, differences in Canadian culture/customs and those of the country of origin, as well as dreams and wishes for their future in Canada

## Housing

- Find a permanent place to live (prepare letters of support, if needed)
- Learn about rights and obligations as a tenant
- Purchase tenant insurance

## Recreation

- Find the closest community centre and/or recreation centre
- Find out about available recreational subsidies
- Enroll children in swimming classes
- Show Canada's nature, beauty, and outdoors activities