



VOLUNTEERING WITH UKRAINIAN ARRIVALS

WHO ARE UKRAINIAN ARRIVALS?

The Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) program was designed to provide relief for Ukrainian nationals affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Through CUAET, Ukrainians and their families in Canada can apply to extend their stay for up to 3 years, after which they can apply for permanent residence. This includes the temporary resident (visitor) status, work and study permits, and allows people to leave and return to Canada at any time while their visa is valid.

While they are subject to security screening, Ukrainians applying through the expedited program don't have to meet any specific work experience, language or education targets to be approved.

In Canada, the majority of Ukrainian arrivals are single mothers with young children. With adult men fighting in Ukraine, the women are alone. With low English levels and little access to social networks, they often struggle with challenges like finding a job, paying for housing, finding childcare, furnishing their homes, and providing food for their family.

ARRIVAL IN CANADA

Ukrainians arriving under the CUAET program are responsible for arranging their own transportation to Canada. While some Ukrainian arrivals are being received by friends and family, others need a place to stay. They can get assistance with emergency housing through the [Canadian-Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society \(CUIAS\)](#), and Ontario arrivals can register for the [Housing Assistance for Newcomers to Ontario](#) program available through a partnership between COSTI Immigrant Services with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

Settlement agencies provide free services to newcomers, including Ukrainian arrivals. While the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), CUIAS, and many Ukrainian churches are providing Ukrainian arrivals with information, resources, and cultural and community support, here are a few more settlement agencies providing support to newcomers in the areas where Together Project operates:

- **Toronto and Mississauga:** ACCES Employment, COSTI Immigrant Services, North York Community House, Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services
- **Ottawa:** Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI), Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO)
- **Surrey, BC:** DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society, MOSAIC, Options Community Services and the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS)



COMMON PRIORITIES FOR UKRAINIAN ARRIVALS

Here is a quick breakdown of common needs that Ukrainian households may have:

*Please note that the information for Ukrainian arrivals is always being updated. For the latest resources on housing, employment, Ukrainian organizations, education, childcare, support groups, healthcare, and more, please visit [Dopomoha.ca](https://dopomoha.ca) and the [Ukrainian CUAET Newcomers' Ontario Resource Package](#) by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

Childcare: With many Ukrainian arrivals consisting of households with a single mother and small children, there is a high need for childcare. CUAET visa holders do not get free access to daycare services, however, depending on income, newcomers may be eligible for municipal resources like the [Toronto Childcare Fee Subsidy](#), provincial resources like the [Ontario Child Benefit](#) or the [Affordable Childcare Benefit in British Columbia](#), and the nation-wide [Canada Child Benefit](#).

Counselling: For mental health, trauma-informed counselling and culturally-responsive support to students and families, this is available through various Ukrainian-specific mental health workers across the settlement sector.

-Toronto and Mississauga: Organizations like [Ukrainian Canadian Social Services Toronto](#) provide a range of social and support services, including counselling and mental health services, to Ukrainians across the Greater Toronto Area.

-Ottawa: [Catholic Centre for Immigrants \(CCI\)](#) and [Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization \(OCISO\)](#) provide free mental health services to newcomers.

-Surrey, BC: The [Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture \(VAST\)](#) provides trauma-focused psychological counselling to refugees and newcomers. Also, by calling 310-6789 or 2-1-1, Ukrainian and Russian interpretation is available.

- Nationwide: Children across Canada can access free Ukrainian and Russian-language support through [Kids Help Phone Canada](#).

Dental Care: Ukrainian arrivals are eligible for free dental care through the [Ontario Healthy Smiles Program](#) for children aged 17 and under, and the [Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program](#) for free dental care for low-income seniors aged 65 and up. In British Columbia, Ukrainian children are eligible for free dental care through the [Healthy Kids Program](#).

Education: Ukrainian children may enter any publicly-funded elementary and post-secondary educational institution without paying international student fees. CUAET visa holders seeking adult classes can access free Literacy and Basic Skills classes, study at an Adult Learning Centre.



For college and university students, some schools are offering domestic tuition rates to Ukrainian arrivals. In addition, there are also special scholarships for Ukrainians based on merit and financial need, such as the [Ontario-Ukraine Solidarity Scholarship](#) from Ontario's publicly-assisted colleges and universities. For more post-secondary aid, The Ukrainian-Canadian Students' Union compiled "[Support Offered by Post-Secondary Institutions](#)"— a list of institutions offering special support for Ukrainian students.

Employment: Ukrainian arrivals are eligible for a Social Insurance Number (SIN), and after passing a medical exam as required by the federal government, they can apply for a 3-year open work permit after arrival.

Ukrainians are eligible for employment services across Canada. They can also look on the [Government of Canada: Jobs for Ukraine](#) site for a list of Canadian employers who are seeking to hire Ukrainians.

If they would like further training to continue their career in Canada, they can look into the [Ontario Bridge Training Program](#), Ontario's [Second Career Program](#), or the [Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants \(BC\)](#).

Family Sponsorship: In consultation with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and other stakeholders, the IRCC created a [special family reunification sponsorship pathway](#) for permanent residents.

Financial Support: CUAET holders must open Canadian bank accounts to access emergency funds. Most banks will ask for a SIN to open an account. Here are three funding programs available to Ukrainian arrivals:

-Canada-Ukraine Transitional Assistance Initiative (CUTAI): This is a universal payment from the Canadian government to all CUAET visa holders, adults and children. They can access this payment until June 30, 2023. Eligible adults (18 years and older at the time of the transitional financial assistance application) will receive a direct deposit of CAD \$3,000 each, and CAD \$1,500 per child (17 years and under at the time of the transitional financial assistance application). Parents or guardians can apply for their entire family. While a SIN is not required to apply, it may be required to open a bank account.

-Emergency Assistance: For those who have arrived or are remaining in Ontario under CUAET, they can apply for temporary financial support through [emergency assistance](#). This provides temporary financial support for basic needs and shelter in crisis situations. If they are in need of prescription drugs, applicants will be issued a drug card to pay for drug costs. Ukrainians entering British Columbia can apply for the [Temporary Hardship Assistance for People from Ukraine](#) to receive a monthly payment from the provincial government.

Food Banks: Ukrainian CUAET arrivals are eligible for free food bank support. For our list of food banks, click [here](#).



Healthcare: While Ukrainians are not eligible for the Interim Federal Health program, all CUAET arrivals are eligible for provincially-funded health care. They can access health professionals such as doctors, nurses, and nurse practitioners at community health centres for free.

-**Ontario:** Ukrainian arrivals can apply for the [Ontario Health Insurance Plan \(OHIP\)](#). OHIP coverage normally becomes effective three months after the date they have established residency in Ontario. For residents who are not covered during the OHIP waiting period, they are encouraged to purchase private health insurance.

-**British Columbia:** CUAET arrivals in BC are eligible for the [Medical Services Plan \(MSP\)](#) for provincial health insurance. For CUAET arrivals who urgently need prescription medicine but have not yet enrolled in the Medical Services Plan, BC PharmaCare will fully cover the eligible costs of the first fill of emergency drug coverage in B.C.

Housing: Ukrainians who need housing counsellors can contact settlement agencies like CUIAS or JIAS, where staff can provide one-on-one help and can conduct Welcome to Canada information seminars about housing and more.

Household Goods: While Welcome Groups will not be asked to find emergency housing for newly-arrived Ukrainian households, they may need to assist a household with finding furnishings for their home. On top of the many Ukrainian Facebook groups, clothing banks, and furniture banks, these might help:

-**Toronto and Mississauga:** [Clothes and household items for Ukrainian refugees in Toronto and GTA](#) and [Parachute Storefront](#) are two Ukrainian-specific places to find items in Toronto.

-**Ottawa:** Ottawa newcomers can get referrals from settlement agencies for them to access furniture banks like [Helping with Furniture](#) or [Matthew House Ottawa Furniture Bank](#).

-**Surrey:** [Surrey Reuses](#) is a website where people post things for free or at a discount, and refugees can get referrals for free household goods at places such as [HomeStart Foundation](#).

Language Support: Ukrainian CUAET arrivals are eligible for free LINC and ESL courses. Many of them may also be interested in English Conversation Circles which are often offered in public libraries and community centres.

Legal Aid: Ukrainians can contact CUIAS for free information sessions on legal services in the community, including government programs and legal clinics that offer legal help at free or reduced rates. Through the Law Society of Ontario, there is a [list](#) of Ukrainian-speaking lawyers and paralegals nationwide.



Resources by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress

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The Role of a Welcome Group

Ukrainian arrivals are new to the Welcome Group Program, but in many ways, they are similar to other refugee newcomers. They are seeking to make social connections with friendly individuals who are eager to welcome them to their new Canadian lives. While some Ukrainians may be hoping to return to their homeland in the future, the Welcome Group's role is to provide social support during their time in Canada.

For a description of the volunteer role in supporting refugee newcomers, please refer to our Volunteer Training Guide [here](#).

Дякую вам усім! (Dyakyuy vam usim!)

Special thanks to ACCES Employment, COSTI, CUIAS, NYCH, UCC Ontario, and UCC Toronto for sharing their expertise about the needs of Ukrainian CUAET arrivals with us.