



Moral Sponsorship for Refugee Sponsorship Applications

From: Deacon Rudy Ovcjak, Director of ORAT (Office of Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto)

This article is intended to provide answers to some of the questions that have been asked related to moral sponsorship, namely:

1) What is a moral sponsorship? And, what are the parish's obligations under moral sponsorship? By providing a Moral Sponsorship, a parish commits to assisting the cosponsor with the logistical elements of resettlement (e.g., assisting the refugee with registering their children in school, in setting up a bank account, in arranging for a family doctor & dentist, in securing accommodations...) in the unlikely event that he or she is unable to do so.

It is important for a parish to recognize that there is no financial obligation associated with a Moral Sponsorship. The full financial liability is deposited with the Archdiocese by the cosponsor at the time that the sponsorship application is submitted to Immigration Canada.

Once the case is thoroughly screened by ORAT, ORAT will arrange for the cosponsor to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by all parties, including the pastor of the church that has agreed to provide a Moral Sponsorship. The case will not be

submitted to Immigration Canada until the MOU is signed by all parties.

2) Which parishes can provide a moral sponsorship? Only those parishes that have, or are planning to form a Constituent Group (Parish Refugee Committee) are able to provide a moral sponsorship.

3) Who can approach pastors to ask if they would consider morally sponsoring their case? ORAT recently held the "Introduction to Resettlement" information session for members of the general public (potential cosponsors) who wished to sponsor a refugee(s) for resettlement. One of the requirements for those who have attended this session is that they secure a pledge of Moral Sponsorship from a parish within the Archdiocese.

Only those cosponsors (members of the general public) who have attended a recent (within the last 6 months) "Introduction to Resettlement" Information Session are legitimately able to approach a pastor to ask if they would consider morally sponsoring their case. We suggest using a screening question to determine if the request for moral sponsorship is legitimate, such as "Have you recently attended ORAT's "Introduction to Resettlement" information session?"

Please note that it is not ORAT's policy to direct

Continued on page 2

New Immigration Canada Forms and Guides

Immigration Canada announced that new forms and guides have come into effect for the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program on May 1, 2018. These documents apply to all PSR streams including Sponsorship Agreement Holders, Groups of Five and Community Sponsors. Therefore, ORAT will not accept applications filled on the old forms.

The new forms are available on ORAT website under the Document Checklist. If your internet browser doesn't support these format, you can download the forms to your computer and fill them using Adobe Acrobat.

Table of Contents

- *Moral Sponsorship*.....page 2
- *FAQ*.....page 2
- *Upcoming Sessions*.....page 3
- *Parish Sponsorship Updates*.....page 4
- *Volunteer Opportunities*.....page 4
- *Changes: Immigration Loan Program*.....page 5

Moral Sponsorship for Refugee Sponsorship Applications

Continued from page 1

potential cosponsors to a particular parish. We have asked that each potential cosponsor arrange to meet with a pastor of a parish near their residence and ask if they would be willing to provide moral sponsorship for their refugee sponsorship application.

4) What to do with all other requests made of pastors for sponsorship, not related to moral sponsorship? When a pastor is approached by a member of the general public who has not attended the “Introduction to Resettlement” information session, or by an overseas refugee seeking sponsorship, we would encourage the pastor to direct all such inquiries to ORAT at (416) 934-3400 x804.

If you have any questions about Moral Sponsorship, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (416) 934-3400 x804 and ask to speak with someone from our Outreach team.



picture taken from internet

We rely greatly on the support of pastors and parish communities who are willing and able to undertake a Moral Sponsorship. We cannot do this work without the help of many parish communities. Your help is truly appreciated!

Please consider providing a Moral Sponsorship today.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. What if my church is not willing to sign my papers for moral sponsorship?

A. We encourage you to seek other churches in the area. You will have to explain to the church that you, as cosponsor, will be the lead in the resettlement process and as such, will be providing the funds in full.

Q. If I, as the cosponsor, am the lead in the sponsorship/resettlement, what is the purpose of a moral sponsor? Do I have to find church as a moral sponsor?

A. Yes, you have to have a church who is willing to sign on as a moral sponsor even though you are providing the full financial liability.

By providing a moral sponsorship, a parish commits to assisting the cosponsor with the logistical elements of resettlement in the unlikely event that he or she

is unable to do so. There is no financial obligation associated with a moral sponsorship on the part of the parish, as the full financial liability is deposited by the cosponsor with ORAT. The cosponsor deposits the full financial liability at the time that the sponsorship application is submitted to Immigration Canada.

Q. What is our next step after attending the Introduction to Resettlement info session?

A. The first step is for you and the refugee(s) overseas to complete the “Resettlement File Processing Steps” document and send it to ORAT. All instructions, including who to send this document to, are included in the document. Please be sure to read the document thoroughly.

Upcoming Sessions

Please note that you are required to register to book your seat for any session you wish to attend. You may register for the following sessions by clicking on the attached link:

<http://orat.eventbrite.com>

This year, the Office for Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT) signed a new agreement with the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (“IRCC”). The new agreement has introduced significant changes to the Private Sponsorship of Refugee (PSR) program. Major changes have been introduced to both financial and non-financial aspects of the settlement.

As part of ORAT’s educational program, we have incorporated these changes into most of our information sessions.



Constituent Group (CG) members and cosponsors are now required by IRCC to operate according to these revised guidelines. As such, it is vital that CGs and cosponsors attend the various information sessions offered by ORAT so that they become familiar with these changes.

You can download ORAT’s sessions as PDF through our website ([Information Sessions](#))

2018		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
MAY	2018-04-30	2018-05-01	2018-05-02	2018-05-03	2018-05-04	2018-05-05	2018-05-06	
		Pre- Arrival 1220 ORAT Office/#6:00 To 8:00 PM						
	2018-05-07	2018-05-08	2018-05-09	2018-05-10	2018-05-11	2018-05-12	2018-05-13	
			IRCC Processing Time 1220 ORAT Office/#1:30 To 3:30 PM		General Integration 1220 ORAT Office/#10:30 To 12:30 PM			
	2018-05-14	2018-05-15	2018-05-16	2018-05-17	2018-05-18	2018-05-19	2018-05-20	
				CG Seminars 1220 ORAT Office/#6:00 To 7:30 PM				
	2018-05-21	2018-05-22	2018-05-23	2018-05-24	2018-05-25	2018-05-26	2018-05-27	
		Pre- Arrival 1220 ORAT Office/#1:30 To 3:30 PM			Newcomer meeting/ Changes 1220 ORAT Office/#6:00 To 7:30 PM			
2018-05-28	2018-05-29	2018-05-30	2018-05-31	2018-06-01	2018-06-02	2018-06-03		
	Budgeting and Finance 1220 ORAT Office/#10:30 To 12:30 PM			Pre- Arrival 1220 ORAT Office/#6:00 To 8:00 PM				
4	5	NOTES:						

Parish Refugee Sponsorship Updates:

Key IRCC Changes: As reported earlier this year, Immigration Canada introduced significant changes in refugee sponsorship. It is vital that all those involved in refugee resettlement be familiar with these changes. Information about these changes has been incorporated into all our Information Sessions.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the groups who have been working alongside ORAT to incorporate these changes into existing and future sponsorships. The support and willingness of the Constituent Groups (Refugee Committees) to learn about these changes is evident in the attendance levels at the various Information Sessions through March.

We encourage those Constituent Group members who have not participated in recent Information Sessions to do so. Simply login to <http://orat.eventbrite.com> to book a seat for an upcoming session.

Project Hope 2018 Arrivals: ORAT is pleased to report an increased number of refugee arrivals for those who have been sponsored under the Project Hope initiative. Since the beginning of this year, parish and community groups have welcomed more than 50 refugees through Project Hope. We want to acknowledge all the hard

work that went into preparing for these arrivals and to extend our deepest appreciation for all those who have been busy with this work. It is due to the tremendous efforts of many parish volunteers that we continue to see the continued success of the Project Hope initiative, which was launched by Cardinal Collins in late 2015.

We currently have profiles available for refugees from conflict regions in Africa. These cases have already been submitted to Immigration Canada. We are looking to match them with Constituent Groups (parish and community refugee groups) who have had sponsorships in the past or whose sponsorships are ending. Please consider taking up one of these Project Hope cases. A representative of the Office for Refugees (ORAT) will be happy to come and meet with groups who are interested in settling a refugee family in their community.

Lastly, as we continue to save lives, we ask everyone to also remember those who have been left behind in areas of conflict and turmoil, and to keep them in your thoughts and prayers. We hope they too will be given hope to find a new peaceful place to call home.

Volunteer Opportunities at ORAT

Refugee resettlement work is not possible without the help of many dedicated volunteers who assist ORAT with various internal tasks, including administration, reception, event coordination, interpretation, translation, information sessions and case management. Volunteers at ORAT develop useful skills while contributing to our world in a meaningful way.

We currently have a number of volunteering opportunities available at ORAT. If you are interested in becoming part of our volunteer team, please contact Hazem at: orateducator@archtoronto.org.



Changes to the Immigration Loans Program Come Into Effect on February 21, 2018

Immigration loans were first introduced in 1951 to assist people displaced by the Second World War who were travelling to Canada to start a new life.

Immigration loans provide eligible immigrants, who are mainly refugees selected for resettlement to Canada, with access to funding that would otherwise not be available. Loans are used to cover a number of expenses, including travel to Canada and other costs associated with resettlement.

Changes came into effect on February 21, 2018 to the Immigration Loans Program, which will ease the loan repayment process and give resettled refugees more time to repay their immigration loan. This is intended to aid with the refugees integration to Canada by giving them more time to focus on improving their

language skills, making use of available settlement services, and securing employment.

To make loan repayment easier:

- Repayment begins 1 year after arrival in Canada (previously it was 30 days);
- New loans are interest free;
- Existing loans will have no further accumulation of interest; and,
- The repayment period has been extended by 2 years, to reduce the size of monthly installments.

These changes will also keep loans fixed at the amount that was originally borrowed.

Your input is welcome

If you would like to contribute an article to ORAT's newsletter, have any feedback on past articles, or have suggestions for future articles, please email us at: orateducator@archtoronto.org

Join us on Facebook

Become a member of the ORAT Facebook Page to get the latest news and updates on resettlement issues. Please visit our [Facebook page](#)

ORAT Website

Please visit ORAT's website to find details about our mandate, goals, and policies, as well as to obtain immigration forms and info session materials.

<https://www.archtoronto.org/refugee/>



ORAT

**Office for Refugees
Archdiocese of Toronto**

1220 Yonge Street, Suite 203
Toronto, ON M4T 1W1
t: 416.934.3400 x 804
e: oratrefugeeoffice@archtoronto.org
www.archtoronto.org/refugee

ORAT is Supported by

 ShareLife