

SPECIAL BULLETIN #2: RESETTLEMENT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

Issue 2: November 25, 2015

AMSSA has created the following special bulletin series, **Resettlement of Syrian Refugees to British Columbia**, to provide our members, partners and stakeholders with the latest information and facts about the Government of Canada's response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and to assist organizations in preparing for the resettlement of Syrian refugees to British Columbia.

UPDATE

On November 24, 2015, the Government of Canada released their Syrian Refugee Plan in a press conference with media representatives. Following this press conference, AMSSA participated in a conference call with Deborah Tunis and other representatives from IRCC (formerly CIC) to learn more details about how this plan will be implemented.

SYRIAN REFUGEE PLAN

- Canada will receive 10,000 Syrian refugees by December 31, 2015 – the majority of these refugees will be privately sponsored (PSRs)
- Canada will receive another 15,000 refugees by February 29, 2016 – there will be a larger portion of GARs received in 2016
- Priority is being placed on complete families, women at risk including single mothers, and LGBTQ+ men, as the government is seeking to bring the most vulnerable refugees
- Transportation to Canada will mostly be on privately chartered planes, with the military providing support if needed (prepared to transport refugees every 48 hours)
- Medical and security checks will be completed overseas before arrival in Canada – refugees will undergo standard CBSA exams on arrival in Canada
- Refugees will arrive in Canada as Permanent Residents
- Refugees will be flown to either Toronto or Montreal – PSRs will then go on to their host community
- The military is preparing to temporarily house refugees in Ontario and Quebec if necessary – the priority will be to match refugees with communities as quickly as possible
- There are some issues around securing exit permits from the Lebanese government, making the second week in December the likely beginning of large arrivals of refugees in Canada
- All transportation costs for the 25,000 refugees (both PSR and GAR) will be covered by the Canadian government – there will be NO transportation loans for all refugees from Syria brought to Canada before February 29, 2016 (there is no news about transportation loans past this time)
- Interim Federal Health for refugees is fully restored and provided to all arrivals
- There is \$678 million over 6 years earmarked for Syrian refugee resettlement – this includes contingencies, settlement funding over 4 years, and Red Cross funding (there is no further news about how these funds will be allocated, plan should be in place in the next few weeks). These funds still need to be approved by Treasury Board.
- The government still plans to resettle 25,000 GARs by the end of 2016 – those resettled by February 29, 2016 are a combination of GARs and PSRs
- There will not be an increase in funds allocated to refugees for housing
- The following webpage has been created to centralize donation, sponsor and volunteer information.
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/help.asp>

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