

# SEEKING REFUGE

## AMSSA's BC Refugee Resource Network Bulletin

Edition 18, July 2023

### CUAET visa holders now eligible for BC Income or Disability Assistance

As of July 1st, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction implemented a policy change to make [CUAET visa holders eligible](#) (see "Eligibility" under this link) for regular B.C. income and disability assistance. This access replaces the provincial hardship assistance previously available to CUAET holders.

Effective July 1st, CUAET holders who meet the eligibility criteria for income or disability assistance (for example, income level) may apply for and receive assistance using the same process as other BC residents. Unlike the special hardship assistance program, income and disability assistance is not limited to 12 months, which will provide longer term support for displaced Ukrainians under the CUAET program due to the ongoing war in Ukraine. Eligibility begins with the July 2023 benefit month and letters have been sent to impacted clients, outlining the policy changes and necessary steps for the transition process.

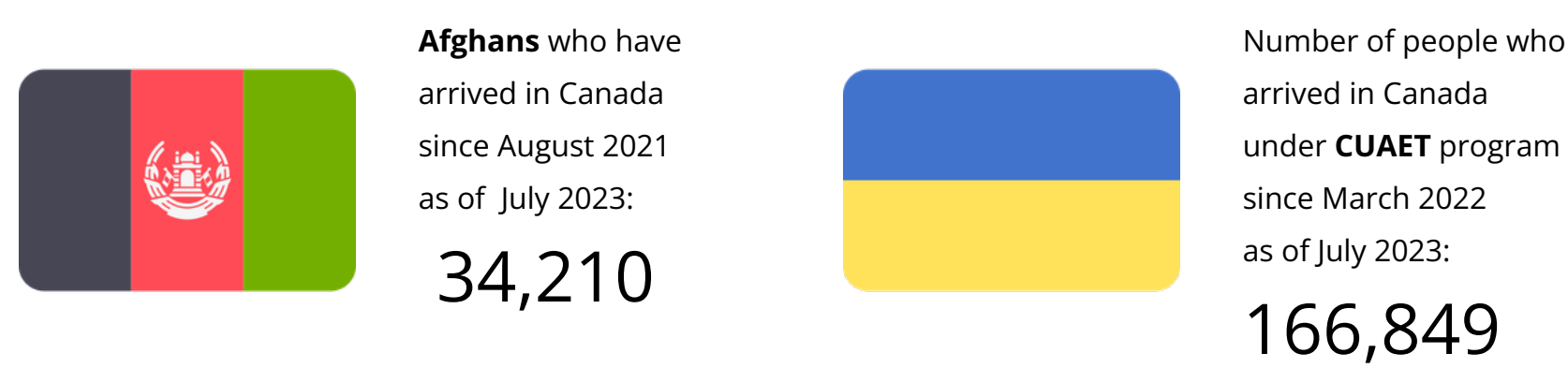
More information on applying for B.C. income and disability assistance can be found on the [BC Employment and Assistance \(BCEA\) Policy & Procedure Manual website](#).

### IRCC partners with Rainbow Railroad for refugee referrals

On June 8, [Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced](#) that Rainbow Railroad, an international organization based in Canada and the United States, has been newly designated as a trusted partner for refugee referrals. Since 2011, the [Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership](#) (working with BC-based organization Rainbow Refugee) has facilitated private sponsorship of LGBTQI+ refugees fleeing persecution on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation. The program announced by Prime Minister Trudeau allows Rainbow Railroad to refer refugees directly to the Government of Canada's Government-Assisted Refugee resettlement program. While most refugees receive their designation and referral through the UNHCR, this process can take months or years; therefore, Canada maintains relationships with international organizations to identify and refer refugees from vulnerable groups. As a trusted partner, Rainbow Railroad can help speed this process for LGBTQI+ refugees.

Information about this partnership may be helpful to Canadian residents concerned for LGBTQI+ friends or family members fleeing persecution. Of relevance to people in BC, this new partnership may result in a larger percentage of LGBTQI+ refugees resettled through the GAR program. As part of furthering BC's commitment to advancing the rights and freedoms of people with all sexual orientations and gender identities, a number of resources for building welcoming spaces and serving the unique needs of LGBTQI+ refugees are available. The [Province of BC has a resource page](#) providing information and resources relating to equity.

To learn more about challenges and barriers faced by LGBTQI+ newcomers, access [AMSSA's resource](#) on meeting the needs of LGBTQI+ immigrants and refugees. [BC Refugee Hub](#) offers LGBTQ resources covering services available to refugees in BC, while [Rainbow Refugee's Resources page](#) includes links to refugee and refugee claimant supports in BC and beyond. The [Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration \(ORAM\)](#), an international NGO serving LGBTQI+ refugees and asylum seekers, has published guides for humanitarian sector organizations, companies with LGBTQI+ employees, and any agency serving sexual and gender minority refugees. Ensuring safe and welcoming spaces for all resettled refugees is a shared responsibility, and making use of available resources and trainings can help professionals in all sectors meet the unique needs of LGBTQI+ refugees.



Source: [Government of Canada - #WelcomeAfghans: Key Figures](#)  
[Government of Canada - Ukraine Immigration Measures: Key Figures](#)

[Afghan Resettlement Resources](#)

[Ukrainian Migration Resources](#)

Please take the time to fill out the feedback survey so AMSSA can make Seeking Refuge more relevant to your needs

[Survey](#)



AMSSA's BC Refugee Resource Network is an initiative to strengthen community capacity to support resettled refugees and displaced Ukrainians through education, information dissemination, research and training. The Seeking Refuge bulletin has been created to keep service providers up-to-date on news, resources, and to provide information on frequently asked about topics related to recent migrations of displaced Ukrainians and resettled refugees. If you know someone who would like to receive this bulletin, please share this [link](#).

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs



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