

Settling Your Family in Canada

Schools, child care, health, benefits, safety and belonging

For newcomer parents, caregivers, children and youth

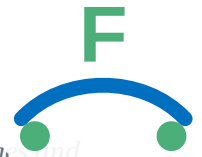


PRACTICAL. CLEAR. SOURCE-BASED.

Revised August 2026

www.theworldbridge.ca





How to use this guide

Use the actions in the order that fits your status, province and circumstances. Write in the planning pages and return to the source page before a high-consequence decision.

01

Start with legal and safety steps

Confirm documents, conditions, deadlines and immediate needs before optional purchases.

02

Use official sources

The linked authorities are the primary reference. Rules and eligibility can change.

03

Keep evidence

Save confirmations, receipts, records and written advice in a secure system.

04

Ask early

Use free newcomer supports and seek individualized advice for high-consequence decisions.



IMPORTANT

This guide provides general information and practical orientation. It is not a substitute for individualized immigration, legal, tenancy, employment, financial, tax or medical advice. Eligibility, procedures and provincial or territorial rules can change. Verify current requirements with the linked authority before acting.

Bring the family record file

1

Identity and relationships

- Passports, birth and marriage certificates
- Custody, adoption, separation or consent records
- Immigration documents for each family member
- Certified translations where needed

2

School

- Report cards, transcripts and learning plans
- Language or special-education assessments
- Proof of prior enrolment
- Contact information for the previous school

3

Health

- Immunization records
- Medication and allergy information
- Medical, dental and vision summaries
- Insurance and emergency contacts

Register children for school

1

Find the correct school authority

- Public education is administered provincially and locally
- Use the home address to identify the school board and catchment
- Ask about public, Catholic, French-language and other lawful options
- Confirm transportation and registration procedures

2

Prepare documents

- Proof of age, identity and address
- Immigration and custody records where requested
- Immunization and school history
- Special learning or accessibility information

3

Ask for settlement support

- Many school boards offer newcomer reception or settlement workers
- Request language assessment where appropriate
- Explain learning strengths and concerns
- Ask how families receive notices and translations

Choose child care carefully

1

Understand the options

- Licensed centre or home child care
- Before- and after-school programs
- Unlicensed care within provincial rules
- Care by relatives or trusted community members

2

Check quality and safety

- Licence or oversight status
- Staff qualifications, ratios and supervision
- Emergency, illness and medication policies
- References, visits and communication practices

3

Budget and assistance

- Fees, deposits, closures and late charges
- Provincial subsidy or affordability programs
- Transportation and meals
- Written agreement and receipts

Set up family health care

1

Coverage

- Apply for health coverage for every eligible family member
- Confirm temporary or private insurance where needed
- Understand prescription, dental and vision gaps
- Keep each person's records separate

2

Routine care

- Primary care, pharmacy and dental options
- Immunization and developmental follow-up
- Prenatal or postpartum care where needed
- School and public-health services

3

Emergencies and crisis

- 911 for immediate danger
- 988 for suicide crisis support
- Provincial health advice and 211 where available
- Local family-violence and child-safety resources

Taxes and family benefits

1

Canada Child Benefit

- Eligibility depends on residence, caregiving, immigration status and other criteria
- Apply when eligible rather than assuming it is automatic
- Provide newcomer income and supporting documents accurately
- CRA may assess related provincial or territorial benefits

2

Keep eligibility current

- File required annual tax returns
- Report address, marital status and custody changes
- Respond to CRA document reviews
- Keep proof that children live with and are cared for by you

3

Find other supports

- Government Benefits Finder
- Provincial child-care and drug programs
- School nutrition, recreation and community supports
- Do not pay promoters for benefits you are not eligible to receive

Help children adjust

1

Expect mixed emotions

- Excitement and grief can exist together
- Children may miss language, family, food and familiar routines
- Behaviour or school performance can change
- Adjustment timelines differ within one family

2

Create stability

- Predictable sleep, meals and school routines
- Time to maintain home language and relationships
- Age-appropriate explanation of family finances and immigration
- Regular one-to-one check-ins

3

Ask for help early

- Teacher, school settlement worker or counsellor
- Family doctor or community mental health service
- Culturally relevant youth programs
- Crisis support where safety is at risk

Safety, consent and family rights

1

Everyday safety

- Emergency numbers and home address
- Safe routes to school and transit
- Online privacy and trusted adults
- Weather, water and road safety

2

Consent and boundaries

- Teach body autonomy in age-appropriate language
- Adults in authority must still act lawfully
- Children should know how to seek help
- Do not use children as interpreters for sensitive matters

3

Family conflict

- Stress does not excuse violence or abuse
- Use culturally responsive family supports early
- Know local crisis and legal services
- Call 911 where there is immediate danger

Build belonging

1

Start locally

- Public library and community centre
- School clubs, sports and arts
- Faith and cultural communities
- Newcomer and neighbourhood organizations

2

Make participation sustainable

- Choose activities that fit the family budget and schedule
- Ask about subsidies or equipment support
- Balance structured activity with rest
- Include parents and caregivers in their own community connections

3

Protect identity

- Value home languages and cultural knowledge
- Talk openly about racism and exclusion
- Help children build confidence without forcing assimilation
- Seek allies in school and community systems

Family settlement mistakes

1

Administrative

- Missing school or immunization records
- Assuming benefits are automatic
- Using one family member's status expiry for everyone
- Ignoring school or CRA requests

2

Financial

- Choosing housing without transportation and child-care costs
- Paying for unverified child care
- Relying on unconfirmed benefits
- Sending sensitive documents to unofficial helpers

3

Emotional

- Expecting children to adjust immediately
- Treating language loss as success
- Making children responsible for adult interpretation
- Waiting for a crisis before seeking support

First 60-day family checklist

1

First two weeks

- Secure records and emergency contacts
- Apply for eligible health coverage
- Start school registration
- Locate food, transit and community essentials

2

Weeks 3-4

- Confirm child care and school transportation
- Apply for benefits if eligible
- Choose health and dental providers
- Establish routines

3

Month 2

- Meet school or settlement supports
- Join one affordable community activity
- Review each family member's adjustment
- Update budget and document calendar

Our family settlement plan

1

Children and school

- School/board: _____
- Registration date: _____
- Transportation: _____
- Support contact: _____

2

Care and benefits

- Health coverage: _____
- Primary care/pharmacy: _____
- Child care: _____
- Benefits application: _____

3

Belonging and safety

- Community activity: _____
- Trusted local contact: _____
- Emergency plan stored at: _____
- Family check-in date: _____

Reliable sources and next steps

Open the linked authority and confirm the current rule before acting.

01**IRCC - Newcomer services**www.canada.ca**02****IRCC - Find free newcomer services**ircc.canada.ca**03****CRA - Canada Child Benefit eligibility**www.canada.ca**04****CRA - How to apply for CCB**www.canada.ca**05****Government of Canada - Benefits Finder**www.canada.ca**06****Health Canada - Health insurance cards**www.canada.ca**07****Public Health Agency - Family violence services**www.canada.ca

GENERAL INFORMATION NOTICE

This guide provides general information and practical orientation. It is not a substitute for individualized immigration, legal, tenancy, employment, financial, tax or medical advice. Eligibility, procedures and provincial or territorial rules can change. Verify current requirements with the linked authority before acting.

Dauda Raji, RCIC R710077 | raji@theworldbridge.ca | www.theworldbridge.ca