



Month 13 Planning – Resource Kit

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Last updated: Nov. 2016

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Month 13 Planning – FAQs

What should the sponsoring group consider when the sponsorship period is coming to an end?

Sponsors should consider the following as they approach the end of the sponsorship period:

- Evaluating the sponsorship period, including your experience as sponsors, i.e. successes, challenges and lessons learned;
- The settlement needs of the newcomer(s) before the sponsorship period comes to an end, i.e. any assistance required during the transition and post-sponsorship period; and,
- The sponsors' relationship with newcomer(s) in the post-sponsorship period.

When do we begin preparing the newcomer(s) for the post-sponsorship period?

Sponsors are advised to **begin preparing newcomer(s) for the end of the sponsorship period**, and the transition to the post-sponsorship period, **as early as Month 9**. In Month 9, sponsors are advised to communicate to the newcomer(s) that the sponsorship period will be ending in 3 months, and that the sponsoring group is not obligated to provide financial and settlement support beyond Month 12.

At the beginning of Month 9, sponsors are advised to conduct a **needs assessment** to determine what needs to be done before the sponsorship period concludes at the end of Month 12 to prepare the newcomer(s) for the transition to the post-sponsorship period. The assessment should be conducted in conjunction with the newcomer(s) to ensure that there are no unmet needs or service gaps at the end of Month 12.

What essential information should be communicated to the newcomer(s) before the sponsorship period ends?

Sponsors are advised to communicate to the newcomer(s) as soon as possible after arrival that the sponsorship period is 12 months (2 years for Joint Assistance Sponsorship [JAS] cases), and that the sponsoring group is not obligated to provide financial and settlement support beyond Month 12. Sponsors are strongly advised to communicate this clearly to newcomer(s) and ensure that the newcomer(s) are aware of the exact date when the sponsorship ends.

Starting in Month 9, sponsors should **begin preparing newcomer(s) for the end of the sponsorship period**. Before the end of Month 12, sponsors are advised to use the **Month 13 Planning Checklist** to ensure that the newcomer(s) have the information they require, as well as necessary skills, knowledge and services for the post-sponsorship period. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Access to affordable housing;
- How to pay rent and other household bills;
- How to budget and transfer money electronically;
- Access job search services and resources; and,
- How to contact emergency services.

Information that sponsoring groups should provide to newcomer(s) about transitioning to the post-sponsorship period includes, but is not limited to:

- Social assistance (including eligibility and how to apply);
- Eligibility for subsidized housing (including when and how to apply);
- Services offered by local settlement agencies;
- Taxes (including how and when to apply, assistance available when completing tax returns and entitlement for tax benefits);
- Educational programs and subsidies offered by local schools and colleges for further education (including further ESL); and,
- Changes in healthcare coverage (i.e. end of IFHP coverage, and alternative options for loss of coverage).

Is there a checklist that sponsoring groups can use to ensure that all essential information is communicated and all tasks are completed before the sponsorship period ends?

Sponsors are strongly advised to use the **Month 13 Planning Checklist** to assist them with ensuring that all essential information is communicated to the newcomer(s), as well as ensuring the newcomer(s) have the necessary skills, knowledge and services, for the post-sponsorship period.

When and how should self-sufficiency be assessed?

Self-sufficiency should be continually assessed throughout the sponsorship period by sponsors. Some benchmarks of self-sufficiency include, but are not restricted to: employment/self-employment with sufficient income to cover living costs; and, the ability to conduct day-to-day tasks (e.g. paying rent, bills, budgeting, knowledge of local area and transportation etc.).

What services are available, and what steps should be taken, when it appears that the newcomer(s) are not self-sufficient?

It is important for sponsors not to feel disheartened or discouraged if the newcomer(s) they have sponsored are not self-sufficient by the end of Month 12. Sponsors must recognize that **integration is a long-term process** which can take many years and is influenced by a number of factors. Sponsors are the start of the integration process, and it is unrealistic to expect the newcomer(s) to be fully integrated into Canadian society by the end of Month 12.

If newcomer(s) are not self-sufficient by the end of Month 12, the newcomer(s) are entitled to apply for the following services and assistance that will help them achieve self-sufficiency:

- Social assistance and welfare support;
- Subsidized housing;
- Further ESL classes;
- Employment training support; and,
- Community activities and social support groups.

Sponsors are advised to see what services are available to newcomer(s) within their province and municipality, as some services may be restricted or additional services may be available based on location.

When, and how, should newcomer(s) that are not self-sufficient apply for social assistance?

Sponsors are advised to **research what social assistance or income assistance programs are available within their province**, what the average processing times are, and the specifics of how to apply. **Sponsors should ensure that the newcomer(s) receive their first social assistance payment at the end of Month 12** so that they are able to cover their rent for Month 13, as well as pay for groceries and bills.

- In **Alberta**, the **Income Support Program** is administered by the Ministry of Human Services. Newcomer(s) can apply for social assistance online (<https://myalbertasupports.humanservices.alberta.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do#>). Once the application is submitted, the newcomer(s) will be given a time to meet with a case worker. **Website:** <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/financial-support/689.html>

- In **British Columbia**, the application for the **BC Employment and Assistance Program** can be submitted online, and is followed by an in-person or phone interview with a case worker. Sponsors in **British Columbia** are advised to contact their local Work BC Centre for more information. **Website:** <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/apply-for-assistance>
- Newcomer(s) in **Manitoba** can apply for the **Employment and Income Assistance Program**. Before newcomer(s) are able to submit an application for the program, they may need to attend a pre-intake orientation. Newcomer(s) in **Manitoba** are advised to contact their local office for more information on how to apply for the **Employment and Income Assistance Program**. **Website:** <http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/misc/loc/winnipeg.html>
- In **New Brunswick**, newcomer(s) are able to apply for the **Social Development Program**. Newcomer(s) are advised to contact their local Social Development Regional Office for more information on how to apply. **Website:** http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.10295.Social_Assistance_Program.html#serviceDescription
- In **Newfoundland**, newcomer(s) are able to apply for income support from the Department of Advanced Education and Skills. **Website:** <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/income-support/application.html>
- In **Nova Scotia** the Department of Community Services is responsible for delivering the **Employment Support and Income Assistance Program**. Newcomer(s) in **Nova Scotia** can apply for the program via telephone. **Website:** http://novascotia.ca/coms/employment/income_assistance/HowtoApply.html
- Newcomer(s) in **Ontario** are able to apply for **Ontario Works** at the start of Month 12, to ensure that they receive coverage at the end of Month 12. Newcomer(s) can apply for Ontario Works online, in-person, or by phone. Newcomer(s) in **Ontario** are advised to contact their local Ontario Works office to see what the best and quickest way to apply is for their municipality. **Website:** <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/social/ow/>
- Newcomer(s) in **Prince Edward Island** are able to apply for the **Social Assistance Program** via telephone. **Website:** <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/family-and-human-services/social-assistance-program>
- For newcomer(s) in **Saskatchewan**, the **Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP)** offers varying kinds of financial help. Newcomer(s) in **Saskatchewan** are advised to contact their local Social Welfare office for more information and how to apply. **Website:** <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/find-a-social-services-office>.

Are newcomer(s) entitled to subsidized/low-income housing once the sponsorship period has ended?

Sponsors are advised to research whether their provincial government offers any subsidized or low-income housing and assist the newcomer(s) with applying for the program, or provide them with the information on how to apply. Sponsors must consider processing and waiting times, as waitlists may be longer in some areas compared to others.

What kind of relationship should sponsoring groups have with the newcomer(s) in the post-sponsorship period?

Sponsors are welcome to continue providing financial and/or settlement support after Month 12 for PSR and BVOR newcomer(s) at their discretion. However, **sponsors are not obligated to do so**. If sponsors do decide to provide financial support after Month 12, sponsors must research how this support may affect any social assistance or income assistance the newcomer(s) may be receiving from the provincial government, as it may result in them not being eligible for social assistance, or having their payments reduced.

Sponsors may also wish to keep in contact with the newcomer(s) they sponsored to see if they could be of any assistance in the post-sponsorship period. However, **sponsors should respect the newcomer(s)' right to self-determination** in the post-sponsorship period, as they did during the sponsorship period.

Month 13 Planning – Sponsors' Evaluation

1) What were your sponsoring group's goals for the sponsorship period before the newcomers arrived?

2) Were these goals achieved? If so, how?

3) What were some of the successes of the sponsorship? How did you achieve them?

4) What were some of the challenges of the sponsorship? How did you overcome them?

5) Did you have expectations of the sponsorship? Were these expectations "realistic"? Were these expectations met?

6) Were the newcomers' needs met?

7) What feedback have you had from the newcomers about the sponsorship?

8) How self-sufficient are the newcomers?

9) What specific actions did you take to promote self-sufficiency, and facilitate and empower the newcomers?

10) How effective was communication between sponsors and newcomers throughout the sponsorship period?

11) Looking back, is there anything that you would do differently?

12) What did you learn, both individually and collectively, from engaging in refugee sponsorship?

13) Would you engage in refugee sponsorship again?

Month 13 Planning – Checklist

Health

- Is the newcomer registered with a family doctor?
- Have you provided the newcomers with relevant information on vaccinations?
- Do the newcomers need counselling or any other mental health support? If so, have you made the appropriate referrals or provided them with the relevant information on how to access these services?
- Do the newcomers have any remaining medical needs that need to be addressed? If so, have you made a referral or provided them with the relevant information on how to access the necessary services?
- Do the newcomers know how to contact emergency services in cases of emergency?
- Do the newcomers know how to navigate the medical system?
- Do the newcomers require any dental care?
- Do the newcomers understand that their benefits through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) will end after month 12?
- Do the newcomers know what they are entitled to through their provincial health insurance?

English Language Classes

- Do the newcomers wish to continue with ESL classes?
 - Would the newcomers like to engage in any further or advanced ESL classes?
- Do the newcomers know how to access ESL classes if they need them at a later date?

Education

- Are the newcomers interested in continuing with ESL classes? Do they know how to register for further classes?
- Are any children that are now old enough enrolled in school?
- If newcomers have moved or will move, have you assisted them to enroll their children in school?
- Do the newcomers wish to pursue further studies? If so, have you provided them with the relevant information on courses and institutions?
- Are the newcomers aware of the various vocational programs and academic courses they are able to access?
- Are there any specific educational needs that need to be addressed before the end of the sponsorship period?
- Do the newcomers need your support to find volunteer opportunities in their field?

Employment

- Are the newcomers employed?
 - If not, what can be done before the end of the sponsorship period to assist the newcomers with finding employment or self-employment?
- Are the newcomers aware of any relevant bridging courses and vocational training opportunities?
- Are newcomers aware of Canadian professional licensing requirements for their profession or vocation?
- Are newcomers aware of their rights as an employee, or their responsibilities as an employer?
- If newcomers are working or will work in the future, do they know how to arrange for child care?

Housing

- Do the newcomers need/want to relocate to another house or apartment, or another town or city?
- If the newcomers need to relocate to another house or apartment), have you assisted them with finding suitable accommodation?
- Are the newcomers aware of their rights as tenants?
- Do the newcomers know when and how to pay their rent, and any other household bills (e.g. utilities, hydro, phone, internet, cable etc.)?
- Are the newcomers aware of subsidized housing options?
- Do the newcomers understand and agree with the terms of their new lease?

Social Services

- Have you assisted the newcomer to apply for provincial social assistance (if necessary)?
- Does the newcomer understand the details of provincial social assistance, such as:
 - What is necessary to apply
 - How much money will be provided
 - Terms and conditions
 - Reporting requirements

Finances

- Do the newcomers need any further assistance with budgeting or banking? For example, are they comfortable taking care of their finances on their own? Do they know how to transfer money electronically?

Transportation

- Do the newcomers know how to travel within the city? Are they comfortable taking public transportation? Do you need to provide further explanations or accompany them?
- If the newcomers move, do they need support in learning new transportation routes?

Interpretation

- Do the newcomers know how to access interpretation support if needed?

Community Support & Orientation

- Do the newcomers require more support to find community activities or events?
- Do the newcomers want your help connecting them with specific programs or groups in your community related to their interests?
- If the newcomers have or will move, do they need your support to orient them to the new community? For example, the nearest grocery stores?

Documents and Application Forms

- Are newcomers receiving all of the benefits they are entitled to, such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCB)?
- Do newcomers have all of the documents that they require? Do they require your assistance with the application process for any remaining documents (e.g. travel documents)?
- If the newcomers have moved, do they need your help to change their address with government agencies, on their cards and documents, etc.?