

Income support programs for immigrants and refugees: Eligibility and application

| | Permanent resident | Temporary resident (work/study permit) or spouse of a temporary resident | Refugee claimant | Protected person (Convention Refugee, determined to be a CR from within Canada) | Visitor visa/ Non-status/ Undocumented |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| Social Insurance Number | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as they arrive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as they arrive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as they receive the Employment Authorization SIN starts with 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps the same SIN that starts with 9 that they got when a Refugee Claimant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, but some exceptions may apply for visitor visas. |
| Child Tax Benefit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as they arrive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply after 18 months with no gaps in permits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, unless the spouse is eligible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As soon as they are accepted as Convention Refugees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, unless the spouse is eligible |
| GST/HST credit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as they arrive Re-apply each year by filing an income tax return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as they arrive Re-apply each year by filing an income tax return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply as soon as you have a SIN Re-apply each year by filing an income tax return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-apply each year by filing an income tax return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible if individual has SIN or ITN and meets personal & residency requirements |
| Income Support (E.g., Alberta Works, Manitoba Employment and Income Assistance, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For sponsored permanent residents special rules apply. See your provincial program's policy directives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibly, under very special circumstances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently yes, check your provincial program's policy directives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently yes, check your provincial program's policy directives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It depends. See your provincial program's policy directives. |
| Immigration Loans program (federal) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. To help cover costs associated with transportation to Canada, establishment, and the RPRF. To disadvantaged newcomers to pay for expenses such as housing, telephone deposits, and work tools. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No |
| Resettlement Assistance Program (federal) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. It provides refugees with income support, immediate essential services and access to broader based services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under exceptional circumstances for those in eligible sponsorship or emergency situations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No |
| Climate Action Incentive (ON, MB, SK, AB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply by filing taxes for previous fiscal year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply by filing taxes for previous fiscal year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply by filing taxes for previous fiscal year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply by filing taxes for previous fiscal year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible if individual has SIN |

Important: If you do not have legal status in Canada, or if you are a temporary resident, you should seek legal advice before applying to any benefits. If you get benefits you aren't eligible for, you may have to pay them back. You can find free legal services for people living on low incomes on the Government of Canada's [Legal Aid Program](#) website. If you do not have status or have temporary status, visit Canada Revenue Agency website on [international and non-resident taxes](#) for more information. This resource is based on federal and Ontario provincial benefits.

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