

WELCOME TO CALGARY

Newcomer Handbook



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Welcome to Calgary project is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). This project was developed to support newcomers with compiled, valuable information and recommendations through the Welcome to Calgary Handbook and website in English – gatewayconnects.ca.

Immigrant Services Calgary would like to acknowledge the assistance and leadership of the following project management and advisory committee member serving agencies and partners, whose generous collaboration enabled this project's development:

- Centre for Newcomers (CFN)
- Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth (CBFY)
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)
- Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA)
- Trellis
- Cité des Rocheuses
- Centre d'Accueil des Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones (CANAF)
- Portail de l'Immigrant Association (PIA)
- Réseau en Immigration Francophone de l'Alberta (RIFA)

We would also like to thank our Edmonton counterpart, Catholic Social Services, and the service-delivery agencies involved in implementing the Welcome to Calgary project, whose dedication and commitment make this resource accessible to newcomers across Calgary.

Finally, we would like to thank the newcomer immigrants who decided to make Calgary their home. This project would not have been possible without your bravery. Welcome to your new home!



ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

Welcome to Calgary, Alberta! Arriving in a new country and community is an exciting time. The “Welcome to Calgary” Handbook was created to help you overcome the challenges of moving to another country while welcoming you with available resources to enjoy this new chapter in your life.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THE WELCOME TO CALGARY HANDBOOK

This resource gives you the essential information you need when you arrive in Calgary. It contains seven sections on various topics, featuring helpful information for your life in Calgary and Alberta in general, including information links and phone numbers for government offices.

There are many references to valuable sources, such as the Government of Canada website canada.ca/en.html and the Alberta Government website: alberta.ca/index.aspx.

At the end of this resource, the Newcomer's To-Do Checklist (page 88) summarizes the main tasks you must complete in the first few months of arriving in Calgary. Speak with your Gateway Planner² about using this checklist to help you succeed in your integration journey.

You can also find the handbook online at gatewayconnects.ca, and download the interactive PDF document.

Think of the “Welcome to Calgary” handbook as your map and compass. It is a tool to guide you towards where you need to go and outlines how to get there, getting you closer to unleashing your economic, social, and civic potential here in Canada.

² Gateway Planners are specialized counsellors for newcomers, available to guide you to resources and support services over the course of your journey.



Table of contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
ABOUT THE HANDBOOK	3
WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THE WELCOME TO CALGARY HANDBOOK	3

GETTING TO KNOW CALGARY 5

INTRODUCTION TO CANADA	6
ABOUT ALBERTA	8
GATEWAY	10
YOUR NEW HOME: CALGARY	12
NEWCOMER SERVING AGENCIES	15

LIVING IN YOUR NEW COMMUNITY 16

CONSUMER SERVICES	17
HOUSING	19
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	24
TRANSPORTATION	25
LAW AND LEGAL SYSTEMS	29
HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT	33
WEATHER	34
WINTER IN CALGARY	35

HEALTH AND WELLNESS 37

HEALTH INSURANCE	38
ALBERTA HEALTH CARD	39
FEDERAL HEALTH CARE FOR REFUGEES AND PROTECTED PERSONS	40
EMERGENCY SERVICES	41
FINDING A FAMILY DOCTOR	42
DENTAL SERVICES	43
ORAL HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN	43
EYE CARE	43
MENTAL HEALTH	44
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	44
ADVANCED CARE PLANNING	45
END OF LIFE CARE	46

EDUCATION AND TRAINING 47

CHILD-CARE IN ALBERTA	48
ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	49
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION	51
CONTINUING EDUCATION	53
LANGUAGE TRAINING	54

EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS 56

PREPARING FOR WORK	57
WORK SEARCH	59
WORKPLACE RIGHTS	60
STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS	63

FINANCE AND BANKING 64

MONEY AND BANKING	65
OBTAINING CREDIT	66
TAXES	67
FINANCIAL BENEFITS AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	68

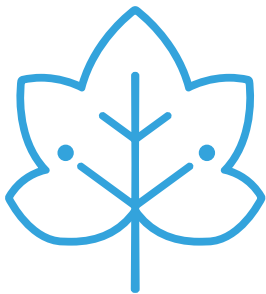
PEOPLE AND CULTURE 71

ACCESSIBILITY	72
ARTS AND CULTURE	74
FRANCOPHONES IN ALBERTA	75
LGBTQ+	77
RECREATION	78
SENIORS	80
YOUTH	81
MENTAL HEALTH	82

APPENDIX

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS	84
USEFUL WEBSITES	86
NEWCOMER'S TO-DO CHECKLIST	88
INDEX	91
O CANADA: THE NATIONAL ANTHEM	92

Getting To Know Calgary



This section introduces you to Canada, the province of Alberta and the city of Calgary, including its geography, population, economy, languages, and government. You will also find information about newcomer serving agencies and how they can help you in your journey.

Back to
Table of
contents



INTRODUCTION TO CANADA

Canada is the second-largest country on earth. It covers an area of 10 million square kilometres (3.9 million square miles) and has diverse landscapes, including mountains, forests, prairie grasslands, and Arctic tundra.

CITIES, PROVINCES AND REGIONS

Canada's capital city is Ottawa and is located in the province of Ontario. It is Canada's fourth-largest city. The three largest cities by population in Canada are Toronto (Ontario), Montreal (Quebec), and Vancouver (British Columbia).

Toronto, Ontario, is the most populated city in Canada, with 2,731,571 inhabitants in the city itself; with approximately 6.2 million people in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which includes the surrounding suburban areas.

Montreal, Quebec, has 1,704,694 inhabitants. Vancouver, British Columbia, has 631,486 and this amount increases when considering the greater Vancouver Area, or the metropolitan area, of 2,463,431 inhabitants.

In Alberta, Calgary is the largest city by population with 1,498,778 inhabitants, followed by Edmonton, Alberta's capital, with 1,366,050 inhabitants.

Canada has ten provinces and three territories. Its main regions are:

- The Atlantic Provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick)
- Central Canada (Quebec and Ontario)

- The Prairie Provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta)
- The West Coast (British Columbia)
- The North (Nunavut, The Northwest Territories, and Yukon)

FOUNDING PEOPLES AND IMMIGRATION

There are three founding peoples in Canada: Indigenous, French, and British.

Indigenous peoples lived in Canada long before European explorers, pioneers, and settlers. Currently, "Indigenous peoples" refers to three groups: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

French settlers came to Canada in the 1600s and 1700s, while English-speaking settlers came from England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland between the 1600s and 1900s.

Over the past 200 years, people from various ethnic and religious groups have immigrated to Canada. Today, approximately 20 percent of Canadians are born outside of Canada, and in Calgary, this number is over 29 percent³.

There are two official languages in Canada, English, and French. By law, the federal government provides services throughout Canada in both languages.

^{3,4} lipdata.ca/indicator/immigrants-as-a-percent-of-the-total-population





PREPARING TO BECOME A CANADIAN CITIZEN

You need to meet specific requirements to become a Canadian citizen, but you can prepare in advance when you arrive in Canada. Find more information in the free study guide for the citizenship test at canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada.html.

ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT

Canada is a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy. Canada's head of state and executive authority is vested in Queen Elizabeth II, and the prime minister is the head of government. Key responsibilities are divided between the federal and provincial or territorial levels of government. Canadians elect their federal, provincial, and municipal representatives through a public voting system.

The Queen is represented in Canada by the Governor General (federal) and 10 Lieutenant Governors (provincial).

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The federal government is responsible for leading mandates such as national defence, foreign affairs, federal taxes, employment insurance, the post office, and criminal law. The prime minister leads the federal government, and federal government representatives are called Members of Parliament (or MPs).

THE PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS

The provincial/territorial government is responsible for health, education, and transportation. In Alberta, the governing body is called the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. The Members of Provincial Parliament (or MPPs) are the provincial government representatives.

KEEP A TRAVEL JOURNAL

You will need to disclose your trips outside of Canada when you apply for a new permanent resident card, in case of expiration or loss of the previous one, and when you apply for citizenship. A travel journal is an easy way to record trips. You can keep it with your passport or other travel documents. It is not an official document; it is only intended to help you remember your trips for future immigration processes.

canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/citizenship/pdf/2372-travel-tracker-en.pdf.

CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY (CBSA)

You may not be able to bring all your belongings with you when you first arrive in Canada, so you will need to contact Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to arrange the import of your items that cannot fit in luggage or regular cargo.

You will need to fill out Form BSF186/186A (Personal Effects Accounting Document) to declare the belongings you are importing into Canada and pay any duties/fees as necessary.

The Calgary CBSA office is inside the Calgary International Airport (Unit 162, 175 Aero Way NE). To contact the CBSA, call 1-800-461-9999 or visit cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

Municipal governments (your local community or city government) are responsible for local services, such as garbage collection and recreational services. Municipal government representatives are called councillors.

- Find out more about Canada's federal government at canada.ca/en/government/system.html.
- Find out more about Alberta's provincial government at alberta.ca/index.aspx.
- Find out more about how the Calgary municipal government works at calgary.ca/home.html.



ABOUT ALBERTA

POPULATION AND GEOGRAPHY

Alberta is Canada's fourth-largest province, covering an area of 661,100 square kilometres and has a population of 4.3 million people⁴. Alberta was named after Queen Victoria's fourth daughter, Princess Louise Caroline Alberta. It is one of the Prairie Provinces, lying midway between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Located in western Canada, the Canadian Rocky Mountains border Alberta to the west, vast prairies and badlands to the east, the Northwest Territories to the north, and the United States state of Montana to the south.

Most Albertans live in urban centres, with about 1/3rd of the population living in Edmonton and the surrounding area, 1/3rd residing in Calgary and 1/3rd residing in the rest of the province. Edmonton is the capital, located in the centre of the province, while Calgary is the largest city, located in the south of the province, closer to the Rocky Mountains.

Alberta's official immigration website has essential information on moving to the province, and their checklists can help you plan all aspects of your new life in Alberta. To find out more, visit alberta.ca/immigration.aspx or alberta.ca/make-alberta-your-home.aspx.

Learn about planning a trip in Alberta by visiting the Government of Alberta's official tourism website, Travel Alberta, at travelalberta.com/ca.

Enjoy Alberta's natural environment by visiting an Alberta provincial park. Learn more at albertaparks.ca.

INDIGENOUS CULTURE

"Indigenous peoples" is a collective name for the original inhabitants of North America and their descendants. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Indigenous peoples: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. These are three distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. Métis are people with mixed First Nations and European ancestry. Inuit are the Indigenous people of Arctic Canada, including Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Yukon, northern Quebec, and Labrador.

There are 45 First Nations in three treaty areas, 140 reserves, and approximately 812,771 hectares of reserve land in Alberta. Alberta's most spoken First Nations languages are Blackfoot, Cree, Chipewyan, Dene, Sarcee, and Stoney (Nakoda Sioux). Treaty 6 covers central Alberta and Saskatchewan, Treaty 7 covers southern Alberta, and Treaty 8 covers portions of northern Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and part of the Northwest Territories⁵.



⁴ Population of Provinces/Territories as of July 1, 2020, Statistics Canada.

Photo source: thecanadaguide.com/basics/aboriginals



You may hear a Land Acknowledgement at the beginning of public events. Land Acknowledgements are shared to respectfully introduce where we live and acknowledge that Indigenous people first lived in this country. It is imperative to recognize what treaty territory you live in or are a guest of because Canadians have rights and responsibilities resulting from the treaties. A treaty is a signed agreement between the government and the Indigenous people.

June 21st is National Indigenous Peoples Day. Each year, Albertans participate in Indigenous cultural events and learn about the rich heritage of Indigenous peoples in Alberta and across Canada. According to the 2016 Canadian census, over 1.5 million people self-identified as Indigenous people⁶. In Canada, Indigenous comprise 4.9 percent of the overall Canadian population.

September 30th is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and was declared in 2021. This day honours the lost children and Survivors of the residential schools and their families and communities.

For more information on Indigenous peoples, visit canada.ca/en/indigenous-northern-affairs.html and alberta.ca/indigenous-relations.aspx.

For more information on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, visit canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/national-day-truth-reconciliation.html.

ALBERTA QUICK FACTS: DID YOU KNOW?

- Alberta has 245 rivers, over **600 lakes**, 75 provincial parks, 5 national parks and **3 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.
- **Banff National Park** is Canada's oldest national park, as it was established in 1885 and is one of the most visited national parks in all of North America.
- *Edmonton* is known as "**Canada's Festival City**" for the number of year-round festivals the city hosts.

⁶2016 Census of Canada, Aboriginal people, Statistics Canada.

LANGUAGES

English and French are Canada's two official languages, with English being the predominant language spoken. Alberta's Francophone communities speak in the French language. If you are fluent in both French and English, or bilingual in another language in addition to English or French, you will have an advantage when considered for jobs.

ECONOMY

Alberta has one of Canada's most thriving economies and is home to the country's youngest, highly skilled workforce. Alberta's diverse economic sectors include energy and cleantech, petrochemicals, agriculture, aviation and logistics, technology and data, financial services, tourism and hospitality.

Learn more about Alberta's economy at the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Innovation: alberta.ca/jobs-economy-and-innovation.aspx or investalberta.ca/why-alberta.

Learn how the Alberta Regional Dashboard can help answer your questions about living, working, investing, and doing business in Alberta's diverse regions: regionaldashboard.alberta.ca/#.

TIME ZONE

Alberta is in the Mountain time zone (MST). For example, when it is 7:00 pm in London, England, it is noon in Alberta.

Alberta follows the North American standard for daylight time. Clocks are turned forward by one hour on the second Sunday in March and turned back on the first Sunday of November.





GATEWAY

Your personal guide to your new life in Canada

60% of newcomers to Canada do not access settlement services because the current support system is complex and challenging to navigate. Gateway serves as a personal guide to help newcomers through their unique journey when moving to Alberta. It connects them to the right service at the right agency every time, allowing them to unleash their economic, social, and civic potential.

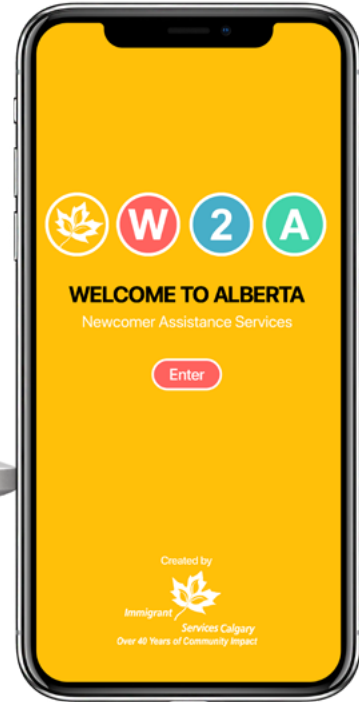
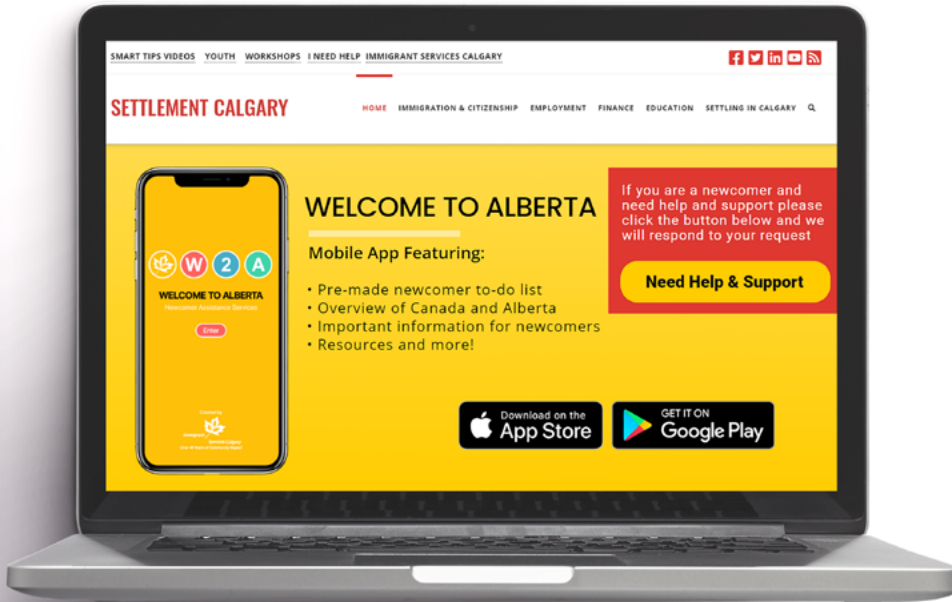
Gateway is a simple and welcoming place to start your life in Alberta, a free service that will make it easier to reach your goals and be successful. With Gateway, you will be connected to a Gateway Planner who speaks your language and can refer you to programs and services suitable for you and your family. The Gateway Planner will

provide you with a Personalized Plan highlighting all the resources you can access in your community for support.

With Gateway, you will be seen, heard, understood, and empowered to create the life you have always dreamt of in Canada.

To book an appointment with Gateway, please fill out the following web form: gatewayconnects.ca/gatewayconnects/.





WELCOME TO ALBERTA: MOBILE SMARTPHONE APPLICATION

Custom-designed for immigrants and refugees, “Welcome to Alberta” is a new mobile app built by Immigrant Services Calgary. The app’s easy-to-use menus provide one-click access to helpful services and give you relevant information about key topics like where to collect essential documents, finding a place to live, using employment services, and receiving directions to language programs.

A unique feature is providing milestones and check-in points along your journey. These milestones include things to do before arriving in Canada and things to do two weeks and two months after arrival.

The pre-loaded milestones also allow you to add to your own goals, easily track your progress, and make changes along the way. You can download it from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

To find more information, please visit settlementcalgary.com/w2a-app.

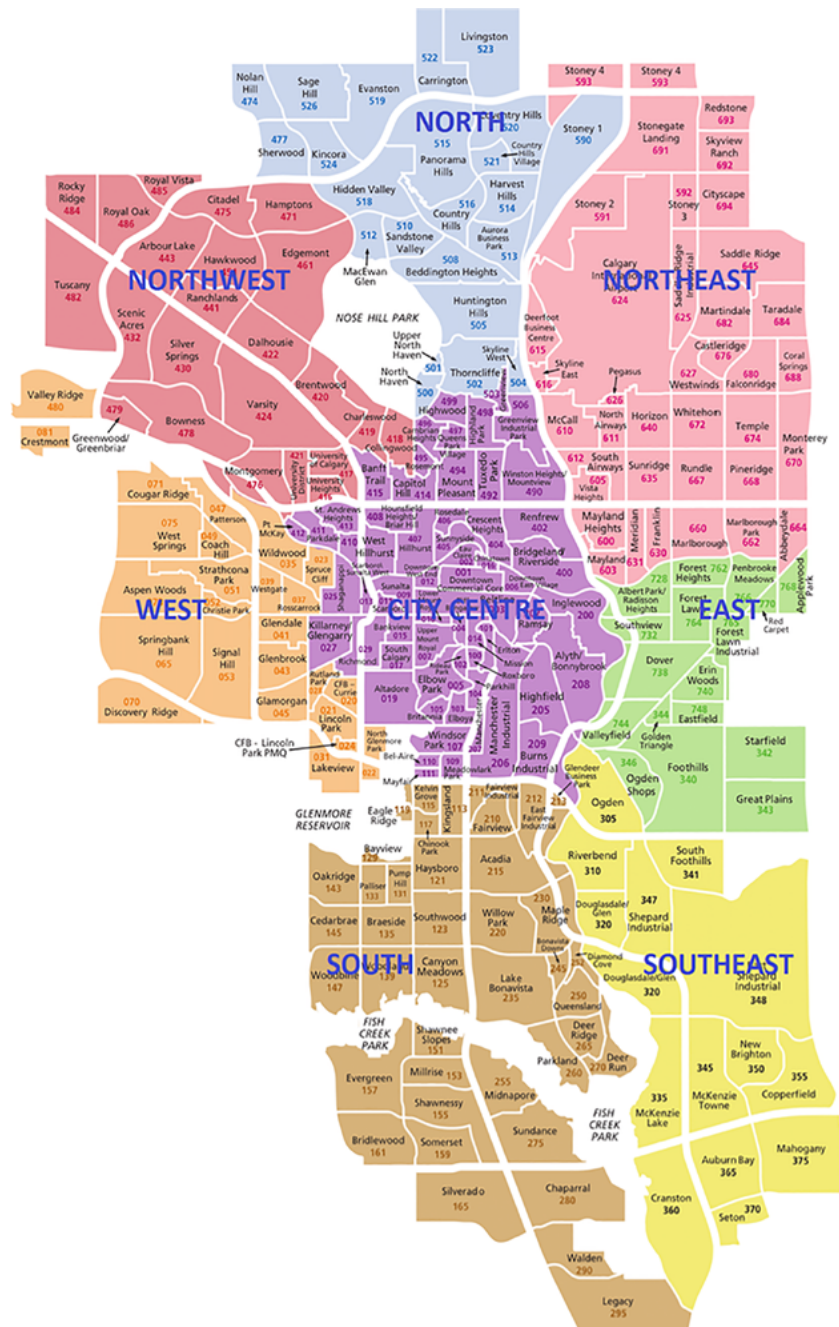




YOUR NEW HOME: CALGARY

Calgary has all the energy of a large metropolitan city with the warm and welcoming spirit of connected communities. It is located just an hour from the Rocky Mountains, and it is home to fresh air, open spaces, parks, pathways, mountains, and rivers. Calgary was ranked the most livable city in North America and the 5th most livable city in the world by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2019. Calgary is ranked as one of the top 32 cities in the world for its overall quality of living and is full of diverse communities and endless opportunities. Its density is low, quality of life is high, and housing is abundant, making Calgary a safe, clean, and healthy city that is ranked the 17th highest city in North America for personal safety.

Calgary has the second-lowest cost of living in Canadian cities, is more affordable than other large North American cities, and has one of the most reasonable housing markets in North America. In Alberta, personal income taxes, provincial taxes, and inheritance taxes, are among the lowest in the country. Its provincial health care is insurance-free, and is the only province without a sales tax. One additional perk is that Calgary's average commute time is only 26 minutes.



<https://www.nextbigmovecalgary.com/calgary-8-district-map/>

The population in Calgary can be characterized as young, well-educated, entrepreneurial, community-minded, generous, and well paid. The median age of Calgarians is a young 37.2 years⁷. According to Census 2016 results, Calgary has the most youthful population of major cities in Canada, with 70.2% between 15 to 64 years old.

Calgarians are family-focused and recreation lovers committed to a healthy work-life balance as individuals. As citizens, Calgarians are enthusiastic supporters of community organizations. With the 2nd lowest traffic congestion and lowest commute time of major cities in Canada - getting around the city is easy. Calgary has the most extensive outdoor pathway and bikeway networks in North America⁸.



Highest

HEAD OFFICE CONCENTRATION PER CAPITA IN CANADA.



Highest

CALGARY HAS THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATION OF HIGH-TECH WORKERS OF CANADIAN CITIES



3rd

CALGARY RANKED THIRD IN BUSINESS FRIENDLINESS.



1st

CALGARY IS THE FIRST AND ONLY MUNICIPALITY IN CANADA TO ALLOW SMALL BUSINESS CUSTOMERS TO START A NEW BUSINESS COMPLETELY ONLINE.



2nd Highest

SECOND HIGHEST SMALL BUSINESS CONCENTRATION OF MAJOR CITIES IN CANADA.



#1

MOST COST-COMPETITIVE CITY FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS.



1st

CALGARY IS RANKED THE MOST LIVABLE CITY IN NORTH AMERICA AND THE 5TH MOST LIVABLE CITY IN THE WORLD.



1000

CALGARY MAINTAINS ~1,000 KM OF REGIONAL PATHWAYS AND 96 KM OF TRAILS



1st

CALGARY IS HOME TO THE MOST EXTENSIVE OUTDOOR PATHWAY AND URBAN BIKE NETWORK IN NORTH AMERICA.



32

CALGARY RANKS #32 OF 231 GLOBAL CITIES IN THE WORLD FOR QUALITY OF LIVING.

Top 10

CALGARY AMONG THE TOP 10 GLOBAL CITIES FOR FAMILY FRIENDLINESS



Easiest

CALGARY HAS AMONG THE EASIEST COMMUTES OF ANY MAJOR CITY IN CANADA.

⁷ Annual Demographic Estimates, Statistics Canada, February 2020.

⁸ Calgary Economic Development.

¹⁰ <https://calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com/research-and-reports/calgary-rankings/business-calgary-rankings>



NEWCOMER POPULATION IN CALGARY

Immigration continues to be a significant driver of population growth in Calgary, with approximately one-third of Calgarians being newcomers. Immigrants are welcomed in Calgary and celebrated for their diversity of knowledge, skills, and the life histories new families bring to local communities.

To learn more about the current population, visit lipdata.ca/ or m.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com/research-and-reports/demographics-lp/population to look at trends, demographics and distribution across Calgary.

IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA

Canada's immigration policies provide opportunities to millions of people worldwide. These opportunities include but are not limited to economic immigration programs, those seeking asylum, and Canada's long-standing humanitarian tradition of receiving refugees. Immigrants are always welcome whether you come to live, study, work, or just visit.

Immigrants in Canada:

- Help strengthen Canada's labour force in numerous industries
- Contribute to the growth of the population
- Build diversity and multiculturalism
- Elevate diversity in skill, knowledge, and talent
- Contribute to the economy through payment of taxes and health system, financial investments, and entrepreneurship
- Volunteer and further community development

Immigrants in Calgary comprise:

- 1/3 of the workforce
- 42% of workers in the accommodation and food services sectors
- 47% of all engineers
- 60% of works in the nursing and residential care sector

- More than 60% of workers in transit and ground passenger transportation
- 33% of workers in professional, scientific and technical services

If you want to learn more about immigration in Canada's data, please visit canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/campaigns/immigration-matters.html.

TOURISM CALGARY

Calgary offers enjoyable places and activities to please different preferences and hobbies throughout the year. For information on things to do around Calgary, local event calendars, travel newsletters, and more, visit www.visitcalgary.com.

To download a City of Calgary Mini Map, visit visitcalgary.com/sites/default/files/2019-04/2019%20TC%20mini%20map.pdf.

ARRIVING IN CALGARY

Arriving in Calgary to start your and your family's new life can be exciting and challenging at the same time. Fortunately, you can receive support immediately to feel secure and embrace the change.

For comprehensive information on your new life in Calgary, visit settlementcalgary.com/settling-in-calgary/.

To receive a Personalized Plan to unleash your economic, social, and civic potential in Calgary, visit gatewayconnects.ca/gatewayconnects.



NEWCOMER SERVING AGENCIES

Once you arrive in Calgary, local newcomer serving agencies can assist and guide you to understand the various systems and service providers. Newcomer serving agencies are community organizations created to help newcomers. They provide information, orientation, and guidance to newcomers about diverse community and government services. Their services are confidential, free of charge, and available in many languages. The governments of both Canada and Alberta provide funding for these organizations to deliver services to newcomers.

A newcomer serving agency may help newcomers to:

- Find translation and interpretation services
- Find information about assessing educational and professional qualifications
- Find employment
- Find information about a place to live
- Connect with child, youth, family, and senior services
- Connect with legal help
- Answer financial and tax questions
- Build community connections
- Fill out forms and applications
- Find English language training
- Access computers with Internet

To locate newcomer services in your area:

- The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) provides links to community services in your area as well as useful information for all your settlement needs. To locate a list of organizations that provide a wide range of services to help you settle, visit aaisa.ca/membership-directory
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada provides a list of settlement agencies at www.cic.gc.ca or findlink.at/cic-serve.
- CLIP provides links to settlement organizations throughout Calgary: calgarylip.ca/settlement-organizations.
- City of Calgary provides a list of organizations that help newcomers get settled: calgary.ca/csps/cns/immigrants-newcomers-and-refugees/organizations-to-help-newcomers-get-settled.html.
- Call 211 Calgary to get connected with programs and services in your community.



Living in Your New Community



This section gives you information about day-to-day living in Calgary, including how to find housing, services, and recreation programs. Also where to shop for groceries, and how to get around in your community. You will also learn about your fundamental rights and legal services.

Back to
Table of
contents





CONSUMER SERVICES

There are simple errands to run to start living your everyday life, such as knowing where to buy groceries and households, how to get a phone, internet services, and how to make the most of your resources.

CONSUMER AWARENESS

Alberta's marketplace is full of valuable goods and services. There are laws protecting consumers, and businesses rule most consumer transactions. Together, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments have produced the Canadian Consumer Handbook to help you become a more informed consumer. It offers information that includes shopping, banking, housing, and home renovations.

The Alberta Ministry of Consumer Services administers consumer protection. For more information on consumer protection, visit alberta.ca/consumer-protection.aspx or canada.ca/en/services/finance/consumer-affairs.html for consumer affairs.

PHONE AND INTERNET SERVICES

Calgary has many options for cell phones, landlines, and internet services. Fewer options exist in rural and surrounding areas. Most companies offer to bundle or combine your phone (cell phone or landline), internet, and cable services in one discounted package. Family plans are also an efficient way of bundling cell phone services and saving money. Long-distance and international calling cards are also available.

If you are a newcomer and do not have a credit history, you might have to provide a deposit in warranty or

pre-pay for services during the first six months of your agreement. Be sure to read and understand all the details before you sign your contract.

Many public libraries across Alberta offer connection services with your library card, such as free on-site Internet and Wi-Fi hotspots for your computer.

Learn more about phone services: planhub.ca/alberta/ or comparecellular.ca/compare-plans-in-alberta/mobile-phones.

Learn more about Internet services: findinternet.ca/en/calgary-alberta or comparemyrates.ca/internet-providers/ab.

POSTAL OFFICE

Canada Post is the primary postal operator in Canada. It has retail stores all through the country. You can send and receive letters and packages from any of these locations. For more information visit Canada Post at canadapost.ca/cpc/en/home.page.

You can also rent a PO (post office) box and keep the same PO address even when moving or temporarily relocating. To find out how to rent a PO box through Canada Post, visit canadapost.ca/cpc/en/personal/receiving/alternative-delivery/post-office-box.page.



BUYING FOOD

Grocery stores have a large selection of food and household supplies. You can also go to smaller convenience stores (usually more expensive) called corner stores or to small stores, butchers, and bakeries. In Calgary, you also can buy fresh, local produce at farmers' markets. For information on Calgary farmers' markets, visit albertafarmersmarket.com/farmers-market/calgary-farmers-market.

Fresh Routes is a mobile grocery store that brings fresh, healthy, and affordable food to various communities in Calgary; they carry fruits, veggies, eggs, and whole grains, all sold at accessible prices. To view their schedule and to find out more, visit freshroutes.ca.

The Good Food Box Program (GFB) is a program under the Community Kitchen Program of Calgary where anyone can purchase boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables at an affordable price. GFB offers all Calgarians sustainable access to nutritious boxes of fruits and vegetables to ensure that no one goes hungry. To order a box and find out more, visit ckpcalgary.ca/goodfoodbox.

The Flashfood app allows you to buy food at a discounted rate near its expiry date. For more information, visit <https://www.flashfood.com/en/download>.

FOOD BANK

If you cannot afford to buy food, you can get free food at a local food bank. Before you can use a food bank, you might have to provide information about your income. To find a food bank near you, speak to your Gateway Planner, or visit Calgary Food Bank for more details at calgaryfoodbank.com. You can also find detailed information at informalberta.ca/public/common/viewSublist.do?cartId=1019704.

For a list of Alberta food banks, visit the Alberta Food Bank Network Association at foodbanksalberta.ca/food-banks/foodbankmembers.

TIPPING OR GRATUITY

Giving a tip of money to the person serving in restaurants, bars, hotels, and taxis is not mandatory; however, it shows appreciation for good service. A tip is usually an additional 15 percent of your bill.



HOUSING

Housing is a significant concern for all newcomers: a comfortable, safe, and affordable place to call home is an essential part of every immigrant's journey.

PROVISIONAL HOUSING

Once you arrive in Canada, you may need a temporary place to live while looking for a place to rent or buy. Staying at a hotel can be expensive, so you might consider staying at a hostel instead. Hostels provide either private rooms or beds in a large room that you share with other people. You also share a bathroom and a kitchen.

To find a hostel or hotel, visit

- The Yellow Pages at yellowpages.ca
- Explore hihostels.ca for more options
- Search the internet for tourism websites for the city/town where you will be living, and review accommodation listings posted
- Buy a tourist guidebook to Canada that contains hotel and hostel listings
- Call Travel Alberta at 1-800-252-3782 toll-free or visit travelalberta.com
- Call 211 (Information and Referral Service) to get connected with non-emergency social, health and government services. The service is free, anonymous, and available in several different languages

TYPES OF HOUSING IN ALBERTA

- **Rental room:** large homes are sometimes divided into several private bedrooms to rent to individuals who share a kitchen and a bathroom, sometimes called rooming houses
- **Room and board:** furnished room and meals are part of the rent
- **Apartment/suite:** a one, two, or three-bedroom apartment or suite in a building or house; studio, or bachelor units have a single room that serves as both living area and bedroom. All apartments have a kitchen and bathroom. Basement suites typically cost less money
- **Condominium (condo):** these are buildings with many units. The owner pays a monthly fee for maintenance in addition to the rent or mortgage
- **Townhouses/row houses:** Several houses joined, sharing a wall on both sides, many with basements and small backyards
- **Duplex:** A house divided into two separate units, each with its entrance
- **Single-family or detached houses:** Detached dwellings do not share walls with continuous houses; semi-detached houses share a wall with another place on one side



RENTING

Check online listings and the classified ads posted in your community's newspapers.

- classifieds.calgaryherald.com
- classifieds.calgarysun.com
- craigslist.org
- viewit.ca/city/calgary.aspx
- rentals.ca
- rentfaster.ca/ab/calgary
- rentboard.ca/calgary-ab

You can also:

- Walk around in neighbourhoods of your choice paying attention to "For Rent" signs on buildings and houses
- Ask friends, co-workers, and relatives
- Check bulletin boards in libraries, grocery stores, and community centres
- Ask a staff member at an immigrant-serving agency about home-finding services in your community
- Read a free copy of local home-rental publications available at malls, pharmacies, and grocery stores

When you find a listing that interests you, call the contact number and ask the following questions:

- Is the house/apartment/unit still available for rent?
- How much does the rent cost per month?
- Are utilities (water, gas, electricity) included in the rent? If not, how much do they cost for one month?
- How much is the security deposit?

Security deposit: You will likely have to pay the landlord a security (or damage) deposit before moving in. By law, the amount must not be more than one whole month's rent. The landlord keeps this amount until you move out and will return it with interest if you did not damage anything, paid rent on time, and cleaned the unit when you moved out.

The cost of renting a property varies across the province. Canadian experts recommend spending no more than 30 percent of your income on housing costs, either renting or mortgage payments.

Before renting to you, the landlord may ask you for the following:

- Identification
- Proof that you will be able to pay the rent (for example, a letter from your employer confirming you are/will be employed, bank statements, etc.)
- References from people who know you and can guarantee the landlord that you will be a good tenant (renter)

Once all parties agree, and after you pay the security/damage deposit, the landlord cannot rent that unit to anyone else.



SIGNING A LEASE AGREEMENT

Before moving into a rental property, many landlords require their tenants to sign a lease, which is a legal contract. You and your landlord should agree on the terms and conditions that you both will follow. This agreement can be written or spoken, but written agreements are always better in case of any dispute/conflict between the two of you.

Your lease should state:

- The type of tenancy lease: fixed or periodic (month-to-month)
- The rental amount: when and how will you pay it
- Length of the lease agreement (usually 12 months)
- What will include your rent, such as parking, cable, electricity, or gas
- Who pays for utilities and services
- Who pays for repairs

Many landlords also require a security deposit equal to one month of rent.

PAYING RENT DETAILS

The rental or leasing agreement specifies the date of every month you have to pay rent in one of these ways:

- Cash: Ensure you keep a receipt for the total amount
- Post-dated cheques with a future date written on them, which the landlord cannot cash until that date
- Certified cheques that your bank has guaranteed: your landlord may ask for your first and last month's rent to be certified
- Automated bank withdrawals: allow you to make payments automatically from your account to another
- Email money transfers: a way to send money directly from one bank account to another through email, using online banking

LANDLORD/TENANT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) establishes the rights and obligations for tenants, landlords, and property managers on behalf of landlords, and social housing providers in Alberta.

You can learn valuable details of the RTA at alberta.ca/residential-tenancies-act-handbook-and-reference-guide.aspx.

ALBERTA QUICK FACTS:

DID YOU KNOW?

The Residential Tenancies Act only applies to tenants renting apartments, houses, or other self-contained places. If you share a living space with your landlord, either in a rental room, room-and-board or roommate scenario, the Act does not apply to you. In these cases, it's a good idea to get an agreement in writing outlining your rights and responsibilities, along with your landlord's.

Landlords and tenants involved in a dispute can also contact the Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution Service (RTDRS) to help resolve their conflict.

To find out more, visit alberta.ca/contact-rtdrs.aspx.



INSPECTION REPORT

Legally, you and your landlord must complete an inspection report form within one week before or after the day you move in. It is critical to describe in writing all existing damage and necessary repairs to avoid causing the landlord to charge you when moving out.

RENTERS' INSURANCE

If you rent a home, apartment, or condo, tenants' insurance is recommended. A landlord will not pay for any lost or damaged belongings or possible liabilities, and the rental property owner insures the building only.

MOVING OUT

When moving out of a rental property, you must:

1. Give notice in writing to notify your landlord when you will be moving out.
 - Month-to-month agreement: 1 months' notice
 - Fixed lease: Tenancy ends at noon (12 pm) on the last day of the least
2. Disconnect utility services if they are not included in the monthly rent. If you don't, you will be charged for the services, even if you don't live there.
3. Clean all rooms and appliances. Ask your landlord what needs to be cleaned before moving out to avoid losing your security/damage deposit.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTED HOUSING

Most cities in Alberta have some government-assisted (often called subsidized) housing, which means that your rent is based on your income. Please note that the waiting time for accommodation can be long, sometimes several years. You can ask your Gateway Planner for more information about subsidized housing in your area. For more information on subsidized housing programs in Alberta, visit alberta.ca/affordable-housing-programs.aspx.

Calgary Housing Company provides safe, affordable housing for low and moderate-income Calgarians in need of non-market rental housing on behalf of the City of Calgary and the Province of Alberta. To find out more, visit calgaryhousingcompany.org.





BUYING A HOUSE

Buying a house requires careful planning, and such decisions should not be made without careful planning.

One of the steps when applying for a mortgage to buy a property for the first time is to have a good credit rating. As a newcomer in Alberta, you may not have a Canadian credit history. Therefore, you need to start building it as soon as possible. Ask your bank for support, and they will guide you with specific products and services tailored for that need.

You might need to have savings for a down payment of at least 5% of the home's total cost.

At the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's guide for newcomers, you can learn recommendations for first-time buyers: cmhc-schl.gc.ca.

To find out more about lower-cost homeownership programs for newcomers, visit <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59fa4b5cd0e628b24f1cfbba/t/5e66615614baad746290a3ad/1583767894719/CLIPNewcomerGuide2020-ONLINE.pdf> (page 29).

POST-SECONDARY STUDENT TEMPORARY HOUSING

Most universities and colleges provide housing for their students at a fee. Contact the housing department or student union of the university or college you plan to attend for more information. University and college residences are sometimes available to non-students in the summer, and they might be an optional place to stay for newcomers and travellers.

EMERGENCY HOUSING (SHELTERS)

Shelters provide basic accommodation for people who are homeless or struggling with housing. You can find phone numbers for local shelters on this website: alberta.ca/find-shelters.aspx.

To apply for emergency housing, you can call 211 to request a referral for housing support or go to the Safe Communities Opportunity Resource Centre (SORCe) at 312 Seventh Ave. S.E, Calgary, AB.

THE ALBERTA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT AND HOUSING

The Alberta Human Rights Act protects Albertans from discrimination in certain areas based on specific personal characteristics. Tenancy is one of those areas. Nobody, under the Alberta Human Rights Act, can mistreat you because of your race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, or sexual orientation. If a landlord refuses to rent a home to you for any of these reasons, you can submit a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

To find out more about your rights, visit the Alberta Human Rights Commission at albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Pages/default.aspx



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community programs and activities are great ways to meet new people, improve your English language skills, and enjoy leisurely activities. Learn more about the community activities available to you and your family below.

CALGARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

There are multiple reasons to become a member of a public Library. Your Library card provides you with free access to massive collections of books, creative spaces, programs, device borrowing, printing, movies, and music.

To find out more about what the Calgary Public Library offers to newcomers, visit calgarylibrary.ca. To get your free library card, you just need one piece of official identification (passport or driver's license) and proof of your address (such as telephone or utility).

PLACES OF WORSHIP

Albertans express their faith by gathering in churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other locations.

Canadians have the freedom to follow their religious beliefs without fear. You can learn more about these freedoms at https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/publications/bulletins_sheets_booklets/sheets/Pages/Religious_Beliefs.aspx.

Find places of worship near you by searching the internet with the terms **"Places of Worship" + "Calgary."**

VOLUNTEERING

You can make a substantial difference in other people's lives by helping with your time, skills, and dedication. Volunteering can also be a valuable part of your job search since you can gain network contacts and add to your work experience.

In 2018, 74% of Canadians volunteered informally, and 41% volunteered for charities, non-profits, and community organizations.

1.9 million Albertans do volunteer work across cultural sectors.

Most organizations will ask you to undergo a police background check before accepting you as a volunteer.

- To learn more about volunteering and to find a volunteer center in your area visit volunteerconnector.org
- To learn more about Propellus, Calgary's volunteer centre, visit www.propellus.org
- For bilingual volunteering in Calgary (English and French), visit bbbv-calgary.ca
- Ask your newcomer planner about volunteer opportunities in your area
- Call 211



ETHNOCULTURAL GROUPS

Ethno-cultural organizations provide an opportunity for individuals who have a shared cultural heritage to meet and socialize through dances, parties, picnics, barbecues, events for children, and other social activities.

To view a directory of ethnocultural groups and social clubs, visit informalberta.ca/public/common/viewSublist.do?cartId=1000273

Or settlementcalgary.com/settling-in-calgary (Under “Ethno-cultural groups”)

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTIVITIES

There are plenty of events occurring in Calgary’s neighbourhoods the whole year-round.

To explore and plan your itinerary, visit calgary.ca/csps/cns/special-events/special-events.html and visitcalgary.com/visitor-guide. Guides are available in English, French, Spanish, German, Simplified Chinese, Korean, or Japanese.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

The Federation of Calgary Communities supports community associations and shares opportunities for community volunteering. To find your local community association, visit calgarycommunities.com.

TRANSPORTATION

There are many effective ways to get around the city and its surroundings. Alberta’s integrated system of roads allows smooth and accessible transportation.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

There are accessible ways to travel around the city, such as riding a bus or the C-train. You must get a ticket or a pass to use the public transit system unless you are only travelling along 7th Avenue downtown. This area is a free fare zone, so you are not required to use a ticket or pass while using the C-train in this part of the city.

A public transit ticket is valid for 90 minutes for transferring between buses and C-trains in any direction. A day or monthly pass will allow you to use the transit system as much as you need for the day or month of validity. You can buy tickets and passes at the C-Train station ticket vending machine or selected local convenience stores. To learn more about transportation in your area, visit calgarytransit.com.

In Calgary, the C-Train transportation system begins at 4:00 am and ends at 1:00 am, and the buses operate from 5:00 am to 12:00 midnight. If you plan to be out late, please check calgarytransit.com/home.html for changes to the schedule.

My Fare is a ticketing app that allows you to purchase bus and train tickets directly from your phone. Please visit calgarytransit.com/fares---passes/my-fare.html for more information.

The Fair Entry program helps access city programs and services for all Calgarians. For example, the City of Calgary offers Calgary Transit Low Income Monthly Passes to youth, adults, and seniors, reducing the cost of the pass by at least 50%, with eligibility based on your income. To find out more and apply for the Fair Entry program, talk to your newcomer planner or visit calgary.ca/csps/cns/neighbourhood-services/programs-and-services-for-low-income-calgarians.html.

TAXIS

In most areas of Calgary, you can hire a taxi to pick you up and drive you to your destination. Taxis can be expensive, so make sure to ask your driver about an approximate cost before you begin your trip. It is also important that you can clearly see the meter, which shows the cost of the trip.



To find a local taxi company, consult the Yellow Pages yellowpages.ca/search/si/1/Taxis/Calgary+AB.

RENTING A CAR

Some people decide to rent a car to travel for a short period instead of taking public transportation. If you choose to rent a car, make sure to read the rental contract before signing it to understand your rights and responsibilities. You must also have insurance coverage. To find local car rental companies and car-sharing services, consult the Yellow Pages of your local phone book or visit yellowpages.ca.

GETTING YOUR DRIVER'S LICENCE

Driver's licences from abroad are valid for 90 days after the newcomer arrives in Alberta. After that, you will need an Alberta driver's licence, which is also official identification. Citizens or permanent residents working in Alberta with residence outside of the province, or full-time students working in Alberta for a co-op program, may continue to use the valid licence from their home province or territory. If you have questions, consult with your Gateway Planner.

You can go to one of the many registry offices to get a driver's licence. To find a registry agent near you, visit servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/find-a-registry-agent.cfm.

For information on getting your Alberta driver's licence, visit alberta.ca/get-drivers-licence.aspx

For a step-by-step guide to getting an Alberta driver's licence, visit alberta.ca/get-drivers-licence-steps.aspx.

To find the Alberta driver's handbook guide with information about driver's licences, practice knowledge tests, prepare for road tests, and become a driver, visit alberta.ca/driver-guides.aspx.

ALBERTA ID CARD

If you choose not to apply for a driver's licence and wish to have official identification, you can apply for the Alberta Identification Card, which is also an official identification.

PLEASE NOTE: Alberta identification card is only for identification purposes and does not allow to operate a motor vehicle. You will need to provide the same type of identification as you would if you were applying for a driver's licence.

The minimum age to hold an ID card is 12 years old. For more information, visit alberta.ca/id-requirements-for-identification-cards.aspx.

NEW OR UNLICENSED DRIVERS

If you have never had a driver's licence, you need to complete The Government of Alberta's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program. A new driver needs to pass a written test for Stage One, and in Stage Two, they must pass the basic road test to receive a probationary licence. There is also an advanced road test, with other requirements that drivers must pass to receive a full licence.

It will take at least three years to complete the three stages of the program to obtain a Class 5 driver's licence: 1) Learner, 2) Class 5 GDL Probationary, and 3) Full non-GDL Class 5. To begin the program and obtain a GDL learner's licence, you must bring three pieces of ID, including one piece of photo ID, your proof of Alberta residency, and proof of legal presence in Canada, to a registry agent. You will need to pass both a vision test and a written test about driving rules. Registry agencies offer written driving tests in 25 different languages, and you can take driving lessons in languages other than English from provincially licensed driving schools.

ALBERTA QUICK FACTS: DID YOU KNOW?

Temporary residents, such as students, visitors, and temporary foreign workers, can't get a driver's licence because they don't live in Alberta permanently.

The registry agent will evaluate your previous driving history when you apply for an Alberta licence. Whether you have had a driver's licence before or are applying for it for the first time, you must pass a written test and take one or more road tests.



To find a list of licensed driving schools, visit alberta.ca/licensed-driver-training-schools.aspx.

Other options for completing the driving tests include writing the test using a dictionary to translate into first languages, taking an oral assisted test in English or taking an oral exam with an approved translator. You will need to contact a registry agent for more information. To find a local registry agent, visit servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/find-a-registry-agent.cfm.

If you pass both the vision and written driving tests, you will be given a Class 7 learner's licence with additional conditions on this licence as part of the GDL program. To learn more, visit alberta.ca/class-7-learners-licence.aspx.

To find online practice driver's knowledge tests for a Class 7 licence, visit alberta.ca/drivers-knowledge-test.aspx

GDL PROBATIONARY STAGE

To get a probationary Class 5-Graduated Driver's Licence (GDL), you must have had a Class 7 learner's licence, at least one year of driving experience, be at least 16 years old, have proof that you live in Alberta, have a valid ID, and have proof of residence in Canada.

When you have passed your vision test and held your Class 7 licence for a minimum of 12 months, you may book your road test through a registry agent or online through the Alberta Road Test Scheduler. To book a road test, visit eservices.alberta.ca/book-a-drivers-road-test.html.

There are additional conditions on this licence as part of the GDL program. To view the restrictions on probationary GDL licences, visit alberta.ca/class-5-drivers-licence.aspx#toc-2.

CLASS 5 LICENCE

Before you can get a full Class 5 driver's licence, you must drive for two years as a Class 5-GDL driver and have no licence suspensions during the last year. After two years, you can take a Class 5 advanced road test at a registry agent, and if you pass, you may get your licence card.

EXCHANGING A LICENCE FROM OUTSIDE ALBERTA

The Government of Alberta has policies for exchanging driver's licences and for GDL program exemption for new immigrants and Alberta residents.

Drivers coming to Alberta from another jurisdiction may apply to have their previous driving history credited. They'll be exempted from part or all of the GDL program if accepted, depending on years of experience. This exemption gives you access to a road test without needing a Class 7 licence for one year or a Class 5 GDL for a full two years.

- **Reciprocal agreement:** If you have a Class 5 or higher driver's licence from another jurisdiction with a mutual licence exchange agreement, you can exchange it for an Alberta licence without taking a knowledge or road test. To see a list of countries with a reciprocal licence exchange agreement, visit alberta.ca/exchange-non-alberta-licences.aspx.
- **No exchange agreement:** If your licence is not from a jurisdiction with a reciprocal licence exchange agreement and you can prove you have two or more years of driving experience, you can visit a registry and hand in your driver's licence. The registry agent will check if you can apply for the GDL exemption program and will give you an application to complete. Then you'll need to pass a knowledge test and an advanced road test. If you cannot pass it, you can apply to pass a basic road test to get a Class 5 GDL licence.

BUYING A CAR

If you choose to buy a used car, make sure to research and use common sense rules. It is prudent to shop with someone knowledgeable about cars. Alberta Transportation has provided information about tools to check used car prices and advice on car inspections, mechanical fitness assessment, and final decisions. For more information, please visit alberta.ca/buying-a-used-vehicle-in-alberta.aspx.



LEASING A CAR

At a car dealership, you may also have the option to lease a car, which is essentially a long-term car rental. Make sure to read the contract conditions carefully. There are often restrictions on how long you can keep the car, how many kilometres you can drive it, and the conditions you must keep the vehicle in to return it to the dealership without fees or charges.

For more information on leasing a vehicle, amvic.org/consumer/leasing-a-vehicle.

INSURANCE

Insurance spreads the cost of claims among numerous people, so no one must pay the price of a claim alone. For one person, the costs of an accident could cause bankruptcy. When spread among many people, the costs become affordable. By law, if you buy or lease a vehicle, you must purchase automobile insurance that protects you in 3 broad categories:

- Personal injury coverage (e.g., protection against personal bodily injury, loss of life or loss of income)
- All-perils collision coverage (e.g., protection against damage to your own vehicle as a result of an insured peril)
- Third-party liability coverage (e.g., protection against your obligation to pay if you're legally liable for someone else's injuries, death, or damage to their property)

The cost of car insurance varies among companies. Contact several agencies to ask for a quote or contact an insurance broker. Find insurance companies and brokers information at yellowpages.ca or by searching the Internet.

For more information on car insurance, visit alberta.ca/automobile-insurance.aspx



CYCLING

Alberta has spectacular, popular, scenic routes for all cyclists, from novice to experienced ones. Either for recreation or transportation, cycling is a fun choice to get around in the city. There are many designated cycling lanes for commuters and recreational cycling paths. Bicycles are classified as vehicles under the Alberta Traffic Safety Act, which means cyclists have many of the same rights and legal responsibilities as other roadway users. Please note that all bicycle riders and passengers under 18 must wear a CSA, ATM or Snell-approved helmet by law. For more information visit calgary.ca/transportation/tp/cycling/cycling-education-and-safety/cycling-on-city-streets-and-pathways.html

You can also cycle to a C-Train station or bus station. Most buses and C-Trains have bike racks, and there is no additional cost for placing your bike there.

To know more about bringing your bike on the C-Train or bus, please visit calgarytransit.com/content/transit/en/home/rider-information/cycling.html.

BUS LINES TO CANMORE, BANFF AND CALGARY SURROUNDING AREA

On-It Regional Transit provides bus services on weekends and holidays from May to September, departing from Calgary downtown to Canmore and Banff. A one-way ticket costs \$10 CAD and includes public transport (Roam) in Banff for the same day. For more information about On-It, visit onitregionaltransit.ca

For more information on minibuses and shuttles running in the Calgary surrounding area, visit:

- The Banff Express: thebanffexpress.com
- Banff Airporter: banffairporter.com
- Brewster Express: banffjaspercollection.com/brewster-express



LAW AND LEGAL SYSTEMS

Canada is a bijural country, and its legal system is unique, based on a combination of common law and civil law. Common law is based on precedents, which means it can't be found in a code or body of legislation, but in past decisions. Civil law is based on civil codes that contain statements of rules.

In Canada, Quebec is the only province with a civil code instead of the combination of common and civil law.

The Constitution of Canada is the supreme law of Canada and includes the Constitution Act of 1867 and the Constitution Act of 1982. The Constitution of Canada also has Aboriginal rights and treaty rights.

The Constitution and the federal, provincial, and territorial laws, protect people's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

To learn more about Canada's system of justice, visit <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/just/img/courten.pdf>.

EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN

The Canadian Human Rights Act of 1977 states: "all Canadians have the right to equality, equal opportunity, fair treatment, and an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, and family status."

THE AGE OF MAJORITY AND THE AGE OF CONSENT

In Alberta, the age of the majority is 18 years. The age of consent to sexual activity is 16 years. For more information about the age of consent, visit justice.gc.ca or justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/other-autre/clp/faq.html.

FINDING A LAWYER

- Your Gateway Planner can help you find a lawyer
- Look in the Yellow Pages of your local phone book or visit yellowpages.ca
- The Lawyer Directory is a search tool that helps you find a lawyer based on specific criteria. People can search for a lawyer by name, firm, location, area(s) of practice, language(s) spoken, gender, and whether a lawyer offers limited scope retainers. To view this directory of lawyers and paralegals in Alberta, visit the Law Society of Alberta at lsa.memberpro.net/main/body.cfm
- The Law Society's Lawyer Referral Service helps you connect with a lawyer. After you provide information on your legal issue, a Law Society's Customer



Service team member will provide you with contact information for up to three lawyers that may help you. The first half-hour of conversation with the lawyer is unbilled. You should use it to discuss your legal issues, evaluate potential costs, and help determine if the lawyer is a good fit for you. Please mention you got their contact information from Lawyer Referral to ensure that your first half-hour is free.

For more information on this service, visit lawsociety.ab.ca/public/lawyer-referral/lawyer-referral-request.

- Legal Aid Alberta provides legal services to low-income people in family law, domestic violence, child welfare, immigration, and youth and adult criminal defence. To contact Legal Aid, call 1-866-845-3425 to apply over the phone or visit legalaid.ab.ca.
- Calgary Legal Guidance provides legal advice, information, and guidance to those without access to Legal Aid or other paid legal services. Volunteer lawyers offer legal advice to clients over the phone or in person. To find out more, call 403-234-9266 or visit clg.ab.ca.

RELATIONSHIPS AND THE LAW

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Family can be essential support in your life, and federal and provincial laws protect all family members. Anyone at risk of being abused by a family member can call the Family Violence Info Line, a 24-hour crisis hotline, at 403-310-1818 to get help anonymously in more than 170 languages. You can receive telephone crisis counselling and referrals to support and services in your community. Visit their website at alberta.ca/family-violence-find-supports.aspx.

MARRIAGE

Marriage is one of the most important social institutions in Canada. You can marry one person at a time. If you marry someone in another country, you must divorce before marrying someone in Canada. Same-sex marriage has been legal in Alberta since 2005. If you and your partner live together but are not married, both of you may be considered common-law partners. Common-law partners

must be in a conjugal relationship for more than three years or one year if they have a child together to claim common-law status. A conjugal relationship is one of some permanence when individuals are interdependent – financially, socially, emotionally, and physically – when they share household and related responsibilities and make a serious commitment to one another.

DIVORCE

If you decide to get a divorce, you need to apply to court. There are various criteria to be able to divorce in Canada. To learn more, please visit justice.gc.ca/eng/fl-df/divorce/app.html.



SPOUSAL ABUSE

Spousal abuse is a form of partner violence that includes unhealthy and destructive behaviours, such as emotional, financial, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as manipulation, coercive control, and even homicide. Women at risk of being abused by a family member can call Alberta provincial abuse helpline at 1-855-4HELPAB (1-855-443-5722) for assistance in more than 100 languages, or 211 to get information about support in your area.

Women who have experienced sexual violence by their partner can also contact Alberta's One Line for Sexual Violence to get support services (9:00 am to 9:00 pm daily). Call 1-866-403-8000 for assistance in more than 215 languages to access this service.

Connect Family and Sexual Abuse Network connects you to Calgary's network of services and support and provides access to comprehensive services for those impacted by domestic violence, sexual violence, and sexual abuse.

For sexual abuse and sexual assault questions, please call 403-237-5888 or 1-877-237-5888 (Toll-Free in Alberta).

For domestic and relationship abuse questions, please call 403-234-7233(SAFE) or 1-866-606-7233 (Toll-Free in Alberta).



ALBERTA WORKS – SUPPORT FOR ALBERTANS FLEEING ABUSE

Albertans in abusive situations can get help 24 hours a day, seven days a week through Alberta Works. Funding is available to eligible people to help them get to safety, set up a new household or start a new life.

To apply, call the 24-hour line at 1-866-644-5135.

Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter Family Violence Helpline is often the first contact for people reaching out for support. Counsellors answer the phone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing counselling, safety planning, referrals, and information in multiple languages.

To contact their 24-hour family violence help line, call 403-234-SAFE (7233) or toll-free 1-866-606-7233.

To learn more details visit calgary.ca/cps/community-programs-and-resources/victims-of-crime/victim-resources-domestic-violence.html or alberta.ca/family-violence-find-supports.aspx.

For a list of shelters in Calgary for women fleeing domestic or family violence, visit <https://acws.ca/shelters> or <https://www.alberta.ca/find-shelters.aspx>.



THE ROLE OF POLICE IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

The role of the police is to protect life and property, maintain public peace, and prevent, detect, and solve crimes. Police services are local, municipal, and national (Royal Canadian Mounted Police).

If you are in danger, **call 911** and ask for the police. They will come to your home immediately.



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse means doing something that hurts a child. Neglect is not giving or doing something that a child needs. There are four types of child abuse and neglect: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse.

Young children are at special risk, and children often believe that the abuse or neglect received is their fault.

Anyone can contact Child Intervention when they are worried about the safety of a child or youth.

If you believe a child is at risk, report it to the Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-387-5437 (KIDS)

If you are a child or teenager being abused or neglected, tell someone who can do something on your behalf: a teacher, a doctor, or someone you trust.

Children's Services offers support for children, youth, and families in seven regions across the province. This includes Calgary, Central, Edmonton, Northeast, Northwest, North Central, Southeast, and Southwest.

To get assistance during business hours, contact alberta.ca/childrens-services-office-locations.aspx.





HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT

Caring for the environment is an essential value in Alberta. You can do your part with even small actions such as avoiding littering, reusing and recycling properly, and composting.

LITTERING

Littering is throwing trash outside on the road or ground, either in the city or out in the country. Most municipalities in Alberta have laws against littering. Help keep Alberta's environment clean by putting your trash in a garbage can or taking it home with you.

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING PROGRAM

The Blue Cart recycling program is available to most households in Calgary. Instead of filling up landfill sites, this recyclable waste is used to manufacture new products. You can put several materials such as glass, metal, plastic, and paper waste into your Blue Cart for curbside pickup by local sanitation workers.

For more information visit [calgary.ca/uep/wrs/recycling-information/residential-services/blue-cart-recycling/blue-cart-recycling.html](https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/recycling-information/residential-services/blue-cart-recycling/blue-cart-recycling.html).

Food and Yard Waste program allows you to recycle organic waste such as meat, fish, fruit and vegetable scraps, plants, and coffee grounds. When organic waste is converted to compost, it is used to improve the soil in parks and farmlands. The City of Calgary provides Green Carts to single-family homes. For more information on the household waste recycling program or to find out your area's pick-up date, call 311 or visit [calgary.ca/uep/wrs/recycling-information/residential-services/green-cart/green-cart-composting.html](https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/recycling-information/residential-services/green-cart/green-cart-composting.html).

To request a Blue or Green Cart for a new home, visit [calgary.ca/uep/wrs/garbage-collection-information/residential-services/replace-fix-get-cart.html](https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/garbage-collection-information/residential-services/replace-fix-get-cart.html).

Calgary Garbage Day app is a mobile application where you can find your waste collection schedule and set notifications to remind you of your blue, black, and green cart collection days. For more information, please visit <https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/garbage-collection-information/residential-services/garbage-day-schedule.html>.

The Household hazardous waste drop-off program allows you to safely dispose of household products that contain harmful substances. These include paint and solvents, antifreeze, single-use batteries, pressurized containers, and empty oil containers. You can dispose of these items at any household hazardous waste drop-off location and select fire stations and landfill sites in Calgary.

To find a list of drop-off locations near you, visit [calgary.ca/uep/wrs/garbage-collection-information/residential-services/household-chemical-drop-off-program/household-hazardous-waste-drop-off-program.html](https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/garbage-collection-information/residential-services/household-chemical-drop-off-program/household-hazardous-waste-drop-off-program.html).

Find answers to your recycling questions and discover the right way to recycle, dispose or donate your unwanted items using the "What Goes Where" tool at [calgary.ca/uep/wrs/what-goes-where/default.html](https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/what-goes-where/default.html).



BOTTLE DEPOT SERVICE

You can receive cash for returning your recyclables to a bottle depot. There are over 200 Alberta bottle depots providing monetary refunds in exchange for the return of beverage containers. The deposit amount depends on the container's size: 10¢ deposit for a container 1L or less, and a 25¢ deposit for all containers larger than 1L.

To find a bottle depot near you, visit albertadepot.ca

ELECTRONICS RECYCLING PROGRAM

Waste electronics, also called e-waste, includes cameras, computers, monitors, telephones, and televisions. They contain toxic and valuable materials, and you should not put them in landfill sites. You pay an environmental handling fee when you buy electronic products in Alberta. The funds gathered are used to pay for recycling or to refurbish electronic products.

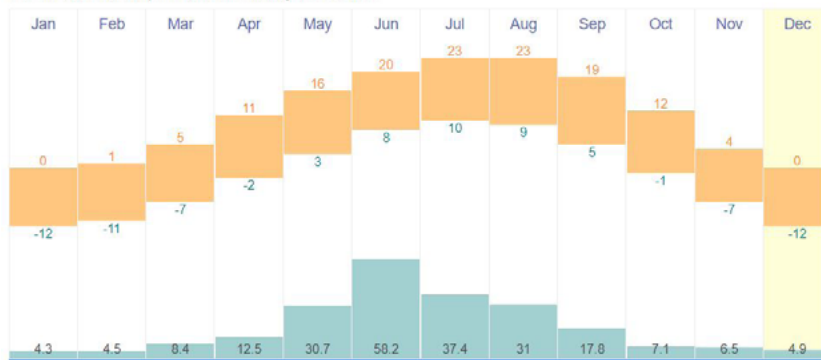
To find a city partnered recycling depot or landfill, visit calgary.ca/uep/wrs/recycling-information/residential-services/electronics-recycling/electronics-recycling-depots-in-calgary.html

WEATHER

With 333 days of sunshine, Calgary is the sunniest major city in Canada. Calgary is a mountain-high city, and the dry climate is directly related to the altitude. Temperatures are mild, especially compared to most of Canada, and it is usually sunny even when it's cold outside. Newcomers should prepare themselves for Calgary weather, as it can be unpredictable ¹¹.

Annual Weather Averages Near Calgary

Averages are for Calgary International, which is 8 kilometers from Calgary.
Based on weather reports collected during 1985–2015.



Quick Climate Info

Hottest Month	July (17 °C avg)
Coldest Month	January (-6 °C avg)
Wettest Month	June (58.2 mm avg)
Windiest Month	April (15 km/h avg)
Annual precip.	223.3 mm (per year)

Weather by CustomWeather, © 2021

WEATHER FORECASTS

Local radio, TV, and newspapers provide daily weather forecasts. To view online weather forecasts for Calgary and the surrounding areas, visit weather.gc.ca/city/pages/ab-52_metric_e.html or theweathernetwork.com/ca/weather/alberta/calgary.

¹¹ Calgary Economic Development

¹² <https://www.timeanddate.com/weather/canada/calgary/climate>



WINTER IN CALGARY

DRESSING FOR WINTER

Winters in Calgary can seem very cold, as temperatures often stay below 0 degrees Celsius for several days, and the fast winds can make the climate feel even more challenging due to the “wind chill” effect.

Follow these recommendations to be protected during winter in Calgary:

1. Learn how to dress in Calgary for winter:

- Begin with a base layer for the upper and lower body made of nylon or polyester to keep the warmth inside the body.
- A second layer is recommended for insulation, including fleece or wool clothes, as they trap warm air. Avoid cotton or jeans as they do not serve as heat insulators.
- The third layer will protect you from snow. A winter jacket and snow pants will complete the protection.
- Accessories: toque, balaclava, scarf, neck protector, gloves, mittens, and warm socks.
- Winter boots with insulation.

To download a “Winter Clothing Checklist”, visit settlementcalgary.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Checklist-Winter-Clothes.pdf

To find out more about resources for affordable winter clothing for all ages, visit alignab.ca/family-resource/clothes-household-free-discounted.

2. Learn about Frostbite and Hypothermia

Frostbite is a type of injury caused by freezing. When someone is exposed to freezing temperatures, blood circulation moves to the internal organs and brain and away from the skin and extremities, such as fingers, hands, toes, and feet.

Frostbite can permanently damage the body, and severe cases can lead to amputation of the affected body part.

Some signs of frostbite are:

- White or pale grey skin area
- Waxy skin
- Numbness

What to do if you or someone else show signs of frostbite:

- Heat the exposed area in warm water until it starts turning pink, which is a sign of the return of blood circulation.
- Use a warm, wet washcloth on the frostbitten nose or earlobes. Do not massage it.
- If you don't have access to warm water, warm the affected area using body heat, for example, in your underarms.
- Do not use a heating pad or heat lamp for warming. Affected areas are numb and can quickly burn.
- Get the person medical attention as soon as possible.

Hypothermia is when the body's temperature is less than 35°C

Some signs and symptoms of hypothermia include:

- Shivering
- Slow breathing
- Drowsiness
- Cold palms and feet
- Loss of consciousness
- Slurred speech
- Memory loss
- Confusion



If you notice any of the above signs, get medical attention immediately, and if you can't, follow these recommendations:

- Try to warm the person up and get the person into a warm room.
- Remove any wet clothing that the person is wearing.
- If available, warm the center of the person's body—chest, neck, head, and groin—using an electric blanket. You can also use skin-to-skin contact, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets.
- Get the person medical attention as soon as possible.
- If the person appears unresponsive, perform CPR until the person responds or medical aid becomes available.

3. Check the weather forecast

Before heading out of your house, check the weather forecast on the TV, radio or online. Watch out for extreme weather warnings that will come through TV, radio, and text messages.

SNOW REMOVAL

As tenants or property owners, you must follow snow shoveling policies and bylaws. These policies are different in each city. Typically, homeowners or tenants must remove snow from sidewalks 1 or 2 days after it snows and failing to remove the snow can result in a fine. To find out more about Calgary's rules regarding snow removal, visit: calgary.ca/CSPS/ABS/Pages/Bylaws-by-topic/Snow-ice.aspx.

DRIVING IN WINTER

Driving in the winter is quite dangerous as there tends to be a lot of snow, ice, and black ice that makes it difficult to steer and brake.

Winter Driving Recommendations:

1. Prepare your vehicle for winter weather:

Regularly check your:

- Battery
- Ignition system
- Exhaust system
- Heating and cooling system
- Lights
- Tires
- Windshield wipers
- Fuel tank

2. Install winter tires

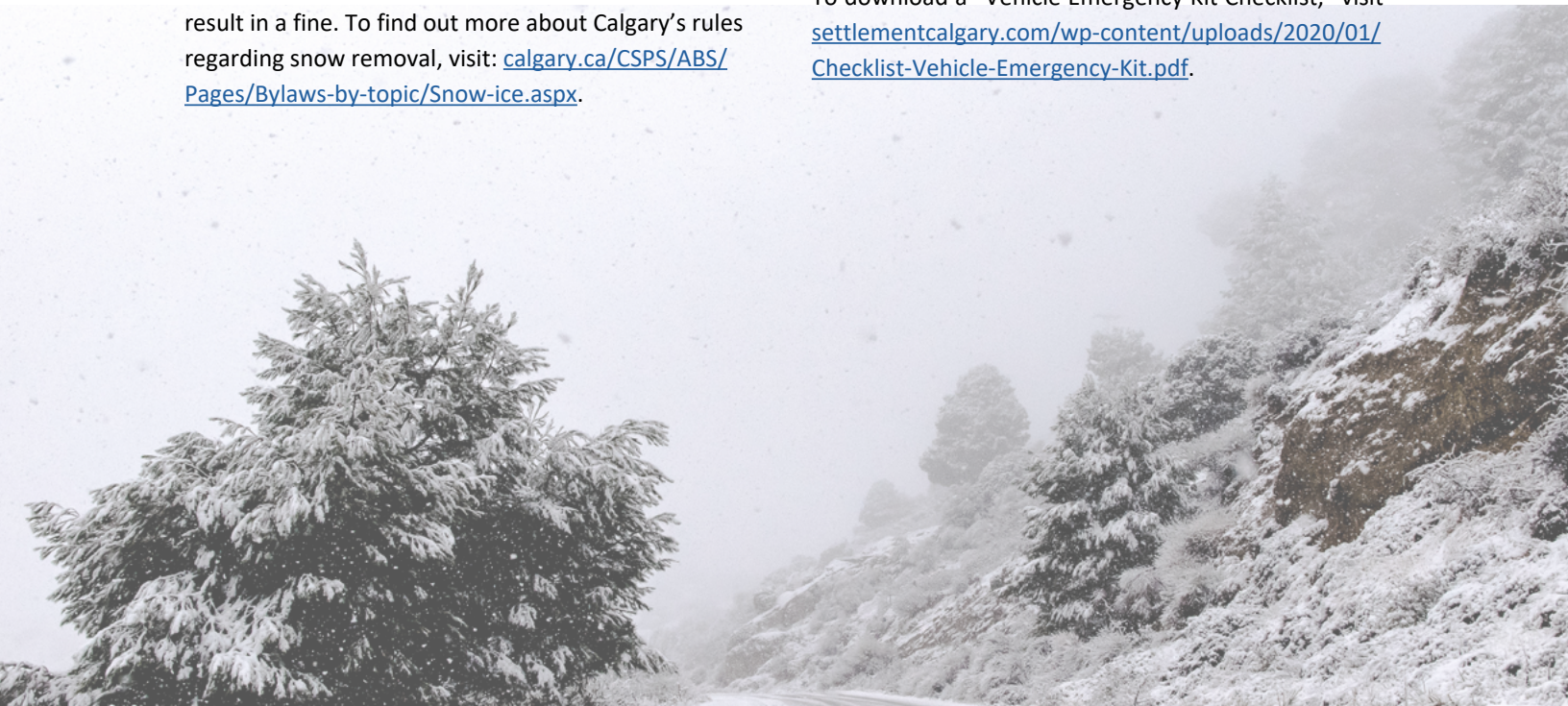
3. Reduce speed

4. Keep ample distance from other cars

5. Remove snow from your roof, hood, and license plate

To find out more about helpful winter driving tips, visit alberta.ca/safer-winter-highways.aspx.

To download a "Vehicle Emergency Kit Checklist," visit settlementcalgary.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Checklist-Vehicle-Emergency-Kit.pdf.



Health And Wellness



The three levels of government: federal, provincial, and territorial governments, play a crucial role in administering Canada's healthcare system. The delivery of healthcare services is the responsibility of the provincial and territorial governments. Canada's national health insurance program (Medicare) gives all residents prepaid access to hospitals and physicians.

Back to
Table of
contents





HEALTH INSURANCE

The Government of Alberta provides universal health care to the province's residents through the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP). Every newcomer should register for the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan within the first three months of arriving. Primary health care insurance, like hospital and medical treatment, is free to residents of Alberta, and part of your taxes payment contributes to funding it.

This plan pays for essential medical services such as visits to a family doctor and emergency medical care. To be a part of this health insurance plan, you must have Alberta Health Care. The Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan supplies a personal health card for each family member covered under the plan. Learn more about the different services that AHCIP pays for on the Alberta Ministry of Health website at: alberta.ca/ahcip-what-is-covered.aspx.

AHCIP will not pay for all healthcare needs. For example, drug prescriptions or dental services. Your employer might provide health-benefit plans that covers some of these additional costs. You can also buy private insurance to cover healthcare expenses not covered by AHCIP.

Medical services not covered under the AHCIP include:

- non-medically required surgery such as cosmetic procedures
- health services offered by a provider that is not a physician, such as a chiropractor, acupuncturist, massage therapist, homeopath, nutritionist, psychologist
- diagnostic imaging referred by chiropractors and physiotherapists

- routine vision care such as adult eye exams, eyeglasses and contact lenses
- standard dental care services, such as cleaning, fillings and extraction of wisdom teeth
- dentures
- prescription drugs when are not provided in a hospital
- some immunizations for travel purposes
- some podiatry services
- assisted reproductive technologies, such as fertility treatments
- health services requested by third-party providers, such as medicals for employment or sports

If you are not sure that the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan covers your medical assistance, contact the AHCIP office: alberta.ca/ahcip-contact.aspx.

NOTE FOR TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

Not all residents legally entitled to be and remain in Canada are guaranteed Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan Coverage.



ALBERTA HEALTH CARD

You should apply for your Alberta Health Card as soon as you have the necessary documents. When applying, please present a photocopy of your passport and all other Citizenship and Immigration Canada documents issued to you and your dependents in Alberta, along with a completed AHCIP Coverage Registration Form.

With your accepted documents, you may be eligible for coverage. To register for a health card, you will need to:

- Complete a AHCIP Coverage Registration Form
- Provide proof of documents (Alberta residency, identity, legal entitlement to be in Canada)

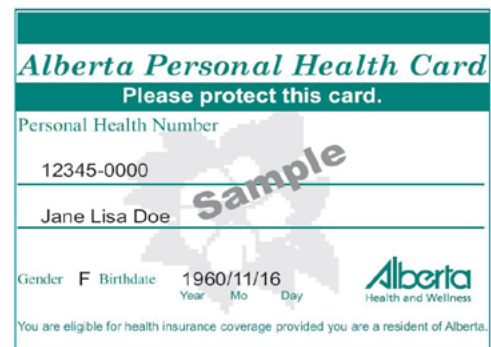
To apply, you can:

- Visit an Alberta registry office. To find a registry agent near you, visit servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/find-a-registry-agent.cfm or:
- Mail your completed application form and photocopies of your supporting documents to the AHCIP office:

Alberta Health

Attention: Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan
PO Box 1360, Station Main
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N3

- Please include photocopies of supporting documents, including the front and back of the paper, and do not send originals in the mail when mailing your application.



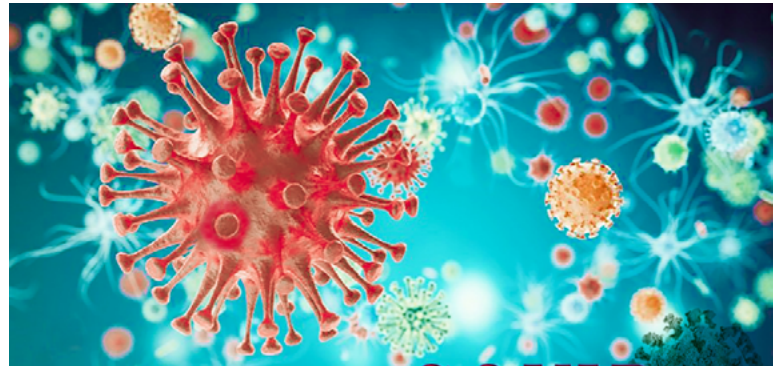
For more information visit

www.alberta.ca/ahcip-apply.aspx,
call 780-427-1432, Toll-Free: 310-0000,
TDD/TTY: 780-427-9999 or
1-800-232-7215, or fax 780-422-0102.

COVID-19

As COVID-19 has had many implications for Albertans, you should stay updated on public health actions, health requirements and travel restrictions to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Please visit alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx for more information.



FEDERAL HEALTH CARE FOR REFUGEES AND PROTECTED PERSONS

The Canada Interim Federal Health Program provides temporary health insurance to refugees, protected persons, refugee claimants, and dependents in Canada not yet covered by a provincial or territorial health insurance plan. During the waiting period in Alberta, health care is available through the Interim Federal Health Program to refugee claimants who are not from a designated country of origin, refugee claimants from a selected country of origin that filed their claims before December 15, 2012, and protected persons. For more information, visit canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/help-within-canada/health-care.html or call 1-888-242-2100.

MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE

Before arriving in Canada as a resident, you may have had a medical examination where you learned that you will need another examination upon arrival. This is called medical surveillance and it is to ensure that you are in good health. If this is your case, you must contact the public health authority in your area within 30 days after you arrive in Alberta. If you do not report in, you may have problems with your immigration process. To find out more, visit albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/service.aspx?id=4811.



EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency medical services (EMS) provide pre-hospital care to sick or injured people, and ambulance staff are paramedics who can provide immediate treatment. For urgent, potentially life-threatening medical emergencies, dial 911 on your telephone at any time. Emergency call centres provide interpreters in more than 170 languages, and you will be connected to an operator who will immediately send an ambulance to your location. You can also choose to go to the emergency room of your nearest hospital; these are usually open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

To find a hospital or health care facility in your area, visit albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/default.aspx?source=mha.

AHCIP pays for treatment in emergency departments, so you will not be refused ambulance service if you cannot afford to pay. If you don't have Alberta health care coverage, you will have to pay for any assistance you receive.

For information about ambulance services billing, visit the following website: alberta.ca/ambulance-and-emergency-health-services.aspx.

You can check emergency department wait times in Alberta's hospitals at albertahealthservices.ca/waittimes/waittimes.aspx

WALK-IN CLINICS

You can ask for a physician at a walk-in clinic without making an appointment. If you have a health problem that needs to be addressed but is not life-threatening, you can visit a walk-in clinic instead of a hospital emergency department. These clinics are an option for minor health concerns, including sprains, slight pain, ear infections, flu symptoms, etc. Walk-in clinics are not usually open 24/7 like hospitals and may also have a wait time.

To find a walk-in clinic near you, call Health Link at 811, consult your Yellow Pages directory or visit medimap.ca/Location/Calgary.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Public health offices and community health centres are different from traditional doctor's offices and walk-in clinics. You should not visit them if you or your family are sick or need a prescription. These centres' staff are public health nurses and other healthcare workers offering free health services by appointment only.

Free services include:

- Immunizations (vaccination injections)
- Post-natal services
- Early childhood development check-ups
- Advice on topics such as family planning and nutrition
- Health programs for pregnant women and babies

Call your local public health office or community health centre to learn what they offer and to book an appointment to receive various health services.

To find your nearest public health office or community centre, call Health Link at 811 or visit albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/service.aspx?id=1000870 or albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/service.aspx?id=4811.

VACCINATIONS

Everyone who moves to Alberta from another country should get immunization for protection against certain diseases.

Alberta has a free vaccination (or immunization) program to protect adults and children from various diseases. If you or your children are vaccinated, bring your records when you come to Alberta. If you or your children are not vaccinated, talk to your family doctor or medical staff at a community health center to determine which vaccinations your child needs, or call Health Link at 811. Schools, hospitals, and your family doctor will ask for your permission before your child is immunized. Also, your child's school may ask you for your child's vaccination record.

To learn more about Alberta's vaccination program visit immunizealberta.ca





FINDING A FAMILY DOCTOR

Your family doctor specializes in providing care for you and your family. If you are sick or need medical advice, they will be your ally and will refer you to a medical specialist when necessary. However, it can be challenging to find a family doctor in some areas of Alberta. If you need help to access a family doctor service, visit the following links with valuable information:

- For more information on health services in Alberta and how to access these services, visit Alberta Health at alberta.ca/health.aspx
- Visit Alberta Health Services for more information albertahealthservices.ca
- To find a doctor in your area, visit albertafindadoctor.ca
- Use “doctor search” on the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta website: cpsa.ca
- Talk to your Gateway Planner
- Ask your family and friends for recommendations

HEALTH LINK 811

Health Link is a service that provides free health information and advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can speak with a Registered Nurse over the phone by calling 811 or Toll-Free at 1-866-408-5465. The service is free, confidential, and available in over 240 languages. You may request an interpreter from a Health Link staff member and they will arrange for interpretation services.

To find out more about Health Link, visit myhealth.alberta.ca.



DENTAL SERVICES

AHCIP does not generally cover dental services, although it does pay for certain dental services provided in a hospital. However, there are services available for people in need of Dental Services who do not have additional Health Insurance.

AHS Public Health Dental Clinics

Qualified dentists provide reduced-fee dental treatment services to eligible low-income individuals or families without access to dental insurance. Emergency clients must show evidence of low income.

To find out more, visit albertahealthservices.ca/services/Page13202.aspx.

To find a dentist in Calgary, visit dentalhealthalberta.ca/visiting-your-dentist/find-a-dentist

To find out how you can access various free or low-cost dental care programs for all ages, visit albertahealthservices.ca/assets/programs/ps-1042857-dental-treat.pdf.



ORAL HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN

Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan does not cover routine dental services; however, if your child has Alberta Health coverage, you may be able to access a community health centre for limited services.

AHS Oral Health - Preventative Dental Services provides preventative services, including oral health education, screenings, and fluoride applications for high-risk children to improve the oral health of people of all ages in Calgary and its surrounding areas. The Preschool Fluoride Varnish Program (0-3) provides dental screenings, referrals, and fluoride varnish applications for eligible children 12 - 35 months of age.

For more information, visit albertahealthservices.ca/assets/programs/ps-1042857-coh-pub-fvclinics.pdf.



EYE CARE

Eye See, Eye Learn is an eye health and vision program for kindergarten-age children in Alberta. An optometrist will check your child's vision and eyes health during an examination covered by Alberta Health. If your child requires eyeglasses, they will receive a free pair through the program covered by a one-year manufacturer's warranty. You need to book an appointment with a Doctor of Optometry and inform them you would like to participate in Eye See, Eye Learn.

To find out more, visit optometrists.ab.ca/@/AAO/ESEL.



MENTAL HEALTH

Alberta covers mental health-care services provided by psychiatrists. AHCIP does not cover psychologists, social workers, and other counsellors' services unless you access them through a government-funded agency such as a hospital, a mental health organization, or a community health centre. Mental health problems vary in range and are as important as physical health and spiritual health to our overall well-being. Alberta's mental health services include:

- promoting good mental health
- identifying and intervening early in mental illness
- helping people living with mental health disorders

If your family doctor refers you, AHCIP will pay for the services of a psychiatrist. Contact your local health authority or ask your family doctor to find a psychiatrist in your area.

To find a private practice psychologist in your area, ask your family doctor, call the Psychologists Association of Alberta at 780-424-0294, or visit their website psychologistsassociation.ab.ca.

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Community mental health services include assessment, case management, rehabilitation, and supportive counselling and crisis intervention. Community-based mental health services are operated by regional health authorities or through contracted organizations. These services assist people with mental health difficulties to develop coping and living skills as well as obtain other community services needed to meet their living needs and personal goals.

For more information visit: albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page14063.aspx. If you or someone you know is suffering from mental health issues, there are several options to get help:

- Call the Mental Health Help Line toll-free at 1-877-303-2462 to speak with a mental health professional 24/7; this service is free and confidential, translation services are available
- Call Health Link at 811 to speak with a Registered Nurse; this service is free and confidential
- Call AHS Addiction Helpline toll-free at 1-866-332-2322, translation services are available
- Ask your newcomer planner for a referral to mental health services
- Call the 24 Hour Distress Line at 403.266.HELP (4357); this service is free and is offered in over 200 languages.
- Call 211; this service is free, confidential, multilingual, and available 24/7

AHS Access Mental Health provides information, resources, and connection to services for individuals of all ages with addiction and mental health concerns and is a non-urgent service.

To contact Access Mental Health, call 403-943-1500 or visit albertahealthservices.ca/services/page11443.aspx.



ADVANCED CARE PLANNING

Advanced care planning is the process of preparing your wishes and assigning a person to speak for you if you cannot do so for yourself in a health emergency.

5 Main Steps to Advance Care Planning

Step 1: Think about your values and goals

You can use the following questions to help you decide what your values and preferences are:

- Who are the essential people in your life?
- Are there religious or spiritual beliefs that might impact your decisions for medical treatments?
- Have you thought about receiving organ and tissue donations as well as becoming a donor?

Step 2: Get information about your health

Learn about your health. If you have health conditions, ask your doctor about your prognosis, medical treatments options, and the health care decisions you may need to make.

Step 3: Choose someone to speak on your behalf

It is important to select someone to speak on your behalf when you cannot do it. This person should be someone you trust, can communicate clearly, and is competent to make complex decisions under moments of stress. This person will legally be your agent.

Step 4: Communicate your wishes to your closest people

Even if you are in good health now, talk to your family, friends, and your healthcare team to let them know your wishes if you cannot speak for yourself. As your wishes may change over time, make sure to update those individuals on your decisions.

Step 5: Write a personal directive

A personal directive is a legal document in Alberta, and it will only come into effect when you are not able to make decisions about your healthcare. For more information about Advance Care Planning, visit myhealth.alberta.ca/HealthTopics/Advance-Care-Planning.



END OF LIFE CARE

End-of-life care refers to the options you or someone you care for have when approaching the end of life.

It is for anyone with a life-limiting illness or a severe chronic disease.

Options may include:

Palliative care: This treatment supports people living in a life-threatening condition and provides pain management and support, ensuring that the patient and their loved ones feel at ease.

Do not resuscitate orders (DNR): This is a legal document to let medical professionals know that you do not want to be resuscitated in the event that you stop breathing.

Refusal or withdrawal of treatment: You have the right to refuse medical treatment, and if you are already receiving it, you have the right to have it withdrawn.

Refusal of food or drink: You have the right to refuse any food or drink offered by others.

Palliative sedation: These are medications to ensure that you are not feeling pain from your illness.

Medical assistance in dying: You may receive medical assistance in dying if you meet the criteria listed in: albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/maid/if-maid-how-access-medical-assistance-in-dying-in-alberta.pdf.

For more information on end-of-life care, please visit canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/options-decision-making-end-life.html.
alberta.ca/end-of-life-options.aspx#jumplinks-1.



Education And Training



This section provides education and training opportunities from child-care to postgraduate studies, continuing education, and language training.

Back to
Table of
contents



CHILD-CARE IN ALBERTA

While working or attending school, you may find that you need child care for your young children. There are several child-care centres, also called daycare, options in Calgary. Make sure to evaluate them according to your child's needs.

LICENSED AND UNLICENSED CHILD CARE

There are two kinds of child-care in Calgary: licensed (sometimes called formal) and unlicensed (sometimes called informal). Here is a list of several licensed child-care options:

- Daycare programs: For children under six years old. They provide care and learning through play activities
- Out-of-school care programs: For children between 6-12 years old, before and after-school hours, lunch hours
- Pre-school programs: pre-school-aged children (3-4 years), four or fewer hours per day
- Group family child-care programs: provide child-care to between 7-10 children in the home
- Approved family day homes: provide care for six or fewer children, including caregiver's children, in the home

The Child Care Licensing Act and its regulations guide all licensed child-care facilities in Calgary. Provincial government staff from Alberta Children's Services regularly inspect licensed child-care centres to ensure their compliance with health, safety, and caregiver training standards.

Not all facilities are licensed. A person can provide private home child-care without a licence, if they do not take care of more than four children under the age of 12, including no more than two children under two years old. These numbers include the caregiver's children. Learn more about your options for child-care at alberta.ca/accessing-child-care.aspx.

To find out more about registering for child-care and how to find quality child-care, visit alberta.ca/child-care.aspx.

To find a child-care program you can:

- Ask friends and neighbours for references
- For Francophone daycares contact one of the Francophone-serving organizations (see the section: Francophones in Calgary)
- Contact your local Children's Services office for a list of child-care programs. To find a local office in Calgary, visit alberta.ca/childrens-services-offices.aspx
- Search for information about licensed child-care programs and contracted family day home agencies using the Government of Alberta Child Care Lookup tool. You can access the online tool at humanservices.alberta.ca/oldfusion/ChildCareLookup.cfm
- Read "Choosing Child Care: A Guide to Licensed and Approved Child Care in Alberta" to help begin your search. To access the guide, visit open.alberta.ca/publications/6137104.



CHILD-CARE SUBSIDIES

The Alberta Child Care Subsidy Program provides provincial support to eligible families to help with the cost of care by reducing child-care fees for children from the ages of 12 weeks to 12 years. If you cannot afford to pay for child care, you may be eligible for a subsidy. The amount you receive will depend on your family income, your reason for needing child care, and your family's size.

To learn more, visit alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx.

CCIS CROSS CULTURAL CHILD CARE

CCIS Cross-Cultural Child-Care Centre is a licensed and accredited child-care program for immigrant and refugee children.

For more information, call 403-262-5692 or visit ccisab.ca.



ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Your child can attend public school in Alberta for free. Public schools divide into elementary (kindergarten to grade 6), junior high school (grades 7 to 9), and senior high school (grades 10 to 12). You can choose a private school for your child where you must pay tuition. The Alberta Ministry of Education inspects private schools that offer credits toward the Alberta High School Diploma.

SCHOOLS

Kindergarten is the beginning of learning for your kid. Many Alberta kindergartens are not compulsory in Alberta but are offered free of charge in schools throughout the province. Local schools may offer full-day kindergarten or programs for children younger than kindergarten.

A child must be at least five years old as of December 31 to start kindergarten in the fall of that kindergarten year, which means that a 4-year-old child may begin kindergarten if the child turns five years old on or before December 31 of that kindergarten year.

When many parents request it, schools may offer before-and-after school programs from about 7:00 to 9:00 am and from 3:30 to 6:00 pm. These programs may be for full-day kindergarten students at a reasonable fee.

Under Alberta law, children between six and 16 must attend school. Secondary schools prepare students for post-secondary education (e.g., college, university, and apprenticeships) or offer diverse programs to prepare students for work immediately after graduation.

SCHOOL BOARDS

Parents or legal guardians must register children at their local schools. Generally, children will attend schools based on where they live. Each community in Calgary is served by one or more publicly funded school boards or school authorities. There are English- and French-language school boards throughout Calgary as well as charter and private school districts. Most communities have a publicly funded Catholic or public school board. Get to know the school boards or authorities that govern the schools in your area. They offer many ways for you to get involved in your child's school and your community.

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL

The initial step to enrolling your children in school for the first time is contacting your local school board. They will assess your children to determine their placement level and whether they need additional support, such as English or French language classes. You will need legal proof of your child's name, date of birth and immigration

status in Canada, as well as evidence of your address and any immunization or school records you have. Interpretation and translation support are available to parents, and you need to book an appointment for service. To find your local school board to enroll your child, visit asba.ab.ca/school-boards-and-zones/school-boards.

Calgary Board of Education cbe.ab.ca

Calgary Catholic School District cssd.ab.ca

FrancoSud School Board francosud.ca

FEES

While most students do not have to pay tuition, you may have to pay fees for transportation, textbook rentals, art supplies, etc. If you cannot afford to pay these fees, school boards may waive them, meaning they may not ask parents/guardians to pay.

To find out about the CBE Fee Waiver, visit cbe.ab.ca/registration/fees-and-waivers/Pages/Waivers.aspx.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

English: Some students will begin learning English for the first time when they attend elementary or secondary school. Language support is available for students whose first language is not English.

French: Alberta Education encourages opportunities for all Alberta students to learn French by providing French language programs, such as French immersion and French as a second language courses, including:

- **French First Language** – Education is offered in French from Kindergarten through Grade 12. French first language schools begin in Kindergarten or Grade 1; however, eligible students may enter at any grade level.
- **French as a Second Language (French Immersion)** – French is the language of instruction for a significant part of each school day, and several or all subjects are in the French language. Many schools offer early French immersion beginning in Kindergarten or Grade 1; some schools also provide late French immersion beginning in Grade 6 or Grade 7.
- **French as a Second Language, Courses** – Taking French as a Second Language course (often referred to as FSL) is optional in Alberta

Learn more about French language programs, visit alberta.ca/french-language-education-in-alberta.aspx.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Alberta offers programs and support for children with behavioural, communication, intellectual or physical needs to benefit from their school experiences fully. To learn how Alberta K to 12 education works to meet the diverse learning needs of each student, visit cbe.ab.ca/programs/supports-for-students/exceptional-and-special-needs/Pages/default.aspx.

Community schools serve students with physical or medical disabilities and average cognitive abilities. Programs are adapted to provide assistive/adaptive equipment, facilitate access to the school environment and arrange for therapeutic services if required.

For more information on CBE Exceptional and special needs, call 403-817-4000 or visit cbe.ab.ca/programs/Pages/default.aspx.

For more information on CSSD Diverse Learning Supports, call 403-500-2000 or visit cssd.ab.ca.



POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Students in Alberta can pursue their post-secondary education or apprenticeships at colleges or universities. They also offer a variety of post-graduate certificates for internationally educated people who already have post-secondary credentials.

COLLEGES

Alberta colleges offer career-focused programs that prepare students to find jobs in various occupational fields, including health, technology, business, and hospitality. Students have the option to attend public or private colleges. Colleges offer certificate and diploma programs, and some may offer applied degrees. Usually, a college certificate program requires short-term learning, such as one year or less, and a college diploma program may require two years of full-time study. Applied degrees provide enhanced career education at bachelor's level, leading to career opportunities above entry-level jobs.

UNIVERSITIES

Universities in Alberta offer undergraduate and graduate programs. They offer Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral (Ph.D.) in numerous faculties with undergraduate specializations and graduate programs. Universities and colleges require applicants to have high school diplomas or equivalents. However, students who have not graduated from secondary school might be able to apply as mature students provided that they are 19 years old or older and are Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. Each university and college will provide information about their specific programs and entrance requirements. If you studied outside Canada, you will need to have your academic documents evaluated. Each post-secondary institution has its own evaluation standards and procedures.

Your prior learning completed overseas is assessed when you apply for higher education. You will need to confirm it meets your program's admission requirements. Contact a school's admissions office to learn more about credential recognition and evaluation.

- To get an assessment that compares your credentials to educational standards in Canada, visit alberta.ca/international-qualifications-assessment.aspx
- For an interactive map listing post-secondary institutions in Calgary and Alberta, visit learningclicks.alberta.ca/resources/institution-map
- To explore Alberta post-secondary programs that meet your career goals, visit alis.alberta.ca/explore-education-and-training/time-to-choose-your-post-secondary-education



FINANCIAL AID

Scholarships, grants, and student loans are considered types of financial assistance or financial aid. Scholarships consist of financial aid awards based on various criteria that the student will apply to further education. Grants are established directly for students who meet specific qualifications or qualifying circumstances. Student loans are subsidized loans from the Canadian government and provincial aid organizations.

Alberta Student Aid offers all those financial aids to help cover students' costs while in school. There are eligibility requirements for full-time and part-time students.

Find out if you are eligible for ASA at studentaid.alberta.ca and learn about the Canada Student Loans Program at canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education.html.

WINDMILL MICROLENDING

Windmill offers low-interest loans of up to \$15,000 to help skilled immigrants and refugees achieve professional success in Canada. Windmill supports clients to obtain the Canadian licensing or training required to work in their field or secure a position that matches their level of education, skills, and experience. These loans can pay for exams, training, assessments, books, materials, living allowance, relocation costs, professional association fees, and other expenses to advance their career.

For more information, visit windmillmicrolending.org.

CAREER LOANS

Career Loans provides microloans of up to \$15,000 to help skilled immigrants fulfill their career goals in Canada. Your loan repayment can be up to four years with low-interest rates (prime plus two percent), and they offer free one-on-one career counselling for newcomers.

To find out how much you can benefit from a Career Loans, visit <https://www.careerloans.ca>.

APPRENTICESHIPS

An apprentice learns a skilled trade on the job under the direction of more experienced workers, and they complete classroom instruction as part of their training. As apprentices, they are employees and earn a salary while learning a trade. Apprentices can learn from more than 150 skilled trades through apprenticeship training.

To learn how you can become an apprentice, visit alberta.ca/become-apprentice-alberta.aspx.

REGISTERED EDUCATION SAVINGS PLANS (RESPS)

The RESP is a special savings account that parents can open to save money for their child's education after they finish high school.

Learn more at canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/education-savings/resp.html.

CANADA LEARNING BOND

The Canada Learning Bond (CLB) is money that the Government of Canada adds to a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) for children from low-income families. This money helps pay the costs of a child's full or part-time studies after high school. Parents are not required to contribute to this bond to receive the CLB. The Government of Canada contributes up to \$2,000 per RESP for an eligible child per year, and they will base eligibility on the number of children and income. For more information, visit canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/learning-bond.html.



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Colleges, universities, and school boards offer a variety of continuing education programs, often held in the evenings and on weekends.

People often take continuing education courses after they have obtained degrees or diplomas to develop their personal interests and learn a new skill for fun— for example, in gardening or photography – or to help them achieve work-related goals. This can be a great learning experience and will help you get to know people in your community.

- To find your local school board, look in the Yellow Pages of your telephone book or visit asba.ab.ca/school-boards-and-zones/school-boards
- Find a comprehensive list of Calgary colleges and universities at learningclicks.alberta.ca/resources/institution-map
- Visit the Alberta Community Adult Learning Program website to find out about these programs at alberta.ca/community-adult-learning-program-overview.aspx
- For tips and advice on going back to school as an adult, visit alberta.ca/going-back-school-adult.aspx

OBTAINING A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AS AN ADULT

A mature student is someone 19 years or older as of September 1 of the current school year. There are upgrading providers across the province who can help you reach your goals as an adult learner. You can upgrade in a classroom setting or through distance and online learning. Mature students are eligible to receive the Alberta High School Diploma or the Certificate of High School Achievement.

For more information, visit alberta.ca/academic-upgrading-if-you-are-20-or-older.aspx



LANGUAGE TRAINING

Learning English or French is an integral part of your life in Canada. If you need to improve your language skills, you must take English classes that match your level of language skills. Taking an English assessment is an excellent way to determine your level of proficiency in English.

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

The Calgary Language Assessment and Referral Centre (CLARC) will assess your English language skills and refer you to English language courses after your assessment. They will assess your level of English language skills in four areas: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. A trained and certified person will evaluate you based on a national standard (Canadian Language Benchmarks). This service is free to most newcomers. After this assessment, they will refer you to the appropriate language schools: LINC programs (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) or ESL (English as a Second Language) program.

- Call 211 for more details on ESL or LINC courses provided throughout Calgary
- Immigrant Services Calgary provides free assessment and referral services to Permanent Residents and Convention Refugees residing in Calgary and surrounding areas. Call the Calgary Language Assessment and Referral Centre (CLARC) at 403-262-2656 or book an English assessment online by visiting settlementcalgary.com/clarc-registration

LANGUAGE CLASSES

The federal and provincial governments provide school boards, colleges, and community agencies to offer free English and French classes. Colleges, universities, and private language schools also offer language courses for a fee. There are many kinds of English and French classes available in Alberta, including:

- Academic Bridging/Upgrading
- Computer Programs for ESL Learners
- Customized and Independent ESL Programs
- Drop-In Programs
- English in the Workplace
- Entrepreneurial Programs
- ESL Pre-Employment/Training Programs
- ESL Programs for Trades and Professions
- ESL with Literacy Support
- General ESL Programs
- LINC Programs
- Programs for International Students
- Specific Language Skills





LOCATE LANGUAGE CLASSES

- For a directory of in-person and online English language programs and services for immigrants and international students in Calgary, visit immigrantservicescalgary.ca/sites/default/files/September%202020%20-%20March%202021%20ESL%20Directory.pdf
- To find English language drop-in services, visit immigrant-education.ca
- For a list of free resources available to help new Canadians learn English and communicate better, visit alberta.ca/improve-your-english.aspx

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN FRENCH

The French language assessment program is called "Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada (CLIC)."

The CLIC program offers French language classes based on CLB standards (Canadian language benchmarks).

These courses offer you the opportunity to learn and express confidently in French and develop speaking and writing skills.

To access CLIC programs in Calgary call La Cité des Rocheuses at 403-249-1749 or visit citedesrocheuses.com/clic-linc-welcome.

For detailed information about Francophone services, please visit alberta.ca/french-services-directory.aspx.

DID YOU KNOW?

Canadian spelling is unique, and it is a mix of British and American spelling. You will soon notice that some words include a "u," such as "neighbourhood" or a "c," where you would usually see an "s." An example of this is the word "defence," which is spelled as "defense" in America. To ensure you are using appropriate Canadian spelling, use a Canadian dictionary.

If you want to know more, please visit noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/en/blogue-blog/canadian-spelling-eng.

Employment And Business



This section provides information to help you understand and access the Alberta labour market. You can learn about getting ready to work in Alberta, gaining recognition for your international training and work experience, looking for a job effectively, and starting your own business.

Back to
Table of
contents



PREPARING FOR WORK

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN)

You need to have a Social Insurance Number (often called a SIN) when you arrive in Canada. You will use your SIN to fill out your tax forms and apply for certain government services. You should keep your SIN private and protected. To find out how to apply for your SIN, visit Service Canada at [servicecanada.gc.ca/](https://servicecanada.gc.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/apply.html) or canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/apply.html.

OCCUPATIONS IN CALGARY AND ALBERTA

There are numerous occupations, professions, and trades across Alberta. Some of them are regulated, while others are unregulated or self-regulated.

UNREGULATED OR SELF-REGULATED OCCUPATIONS

Professions and trades that do not require you to have a special licence or certificate to work in Alberta are called “unregulated occupations” and include financial managers, economists, computer programmers, bookkeepers, systems analysts, general carpenters, cooks, and more. Other standard terms that mean the same as regulated are “certified” and “registered.” Some occupations do not require certification to work in Alberta, although there is certification availability, and these are called self-regulated occupations. An example is a human resource consultant.

REGULATED OCCUPATIONS

Many professions and trades in Alberta, including landscape horticulturist, powerline technician, steel detailer, and residential construction site manager, require you to be registered with or licensed by a regulatory body. These are called “regulated occupations.” If you are looking forward to working in a regulated occupation, you will need to research Alberta’s occupation regulatory body to learn the requirements to get licensed or registered. Your provincial regulatory office (PRO) will inform you if you need to address gaps in your training or take examinations before being licensed or registered.

To find out about regulated trades and occupations in Alberta, visit tradesecrets.alberta.ca/trades-occupations.

To find out about regulated professions in Alberta, visit alis.alberta.ca/occinfo/certifications-in-alberta.

To learn about working in more than 50 designated trades in Alberta, including Red Seal trades, visit the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training website tradesecrets.alberta.ca/trades-occupations/trades-occupations-list.



FOREIGN EDUCATION CREDENTIALS ASSESSMENT

An Educational Credential Assessment evaluates foreign educational diplomas, compares them to the academic standards in Canada, and certifies the comparison.

Having your education credentials assessed will allow you to learn how your education compares to Canadian educational standards for work search, professional licensure, and post-secondary education purposes.

Visit the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials at cicic.ca.

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) compares international educational qualifications to provincial education standards. You can apply for an assessment certificate that recognizes foreign education and may help you get a job in your field, get into school, or become professionally licensed. You can get this type of assessment if you have a formal academic or technical degree, diploma or certificate earned outside Canada.

For more information on IQAS, visit the Government of Alberta Ministry of Labour at alberta.ca/iqas-employment-education-licensure.aspx.

World Education Services (WES) provides credential evaluations to internationally trained professionals and students. WES also offers free tools and resources and publishes articles on various topics about working and studying in Canada.

For more information visit, www.wes.org.

BRIDGING PROGRAMS

Bridging programs provide training, work experience, and job search assistance to internationally trained workers. These programs can also help you get licences that you may need to work in your regulated profession. Alberta's bridging programs help prepare you to work in your occupation by providing training, skills upgrading, sector-specific job search assistance and employment support. Some bridge training programs prepare you to obtain licensure to practice in a regulated profession. Others provide you with access to opportunities in your occupational field through work placements, mentorships, and networking with employers.

For information about bridging programs, speak to your Gateway Planner or visit the Employment and Training Services Directory at alberta.ca/employment-training-services-directory.aspx.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Career Loans provides microloans of up to \$15,000 to help skilled immigrants fulfill their career goals in Canada. Your loan repayment can be up to four years with low-interest rates (prime plus two percent), and they offer free one-on-one career counselling for newcomers.

To find out how much you can benefit from a Career Loans, visit careerloans.ca

- Windmill Microlending has an Immigrant Microloan Program, where a loan of up to \$15,000 can be considered for newcomers who need help to pay for the costs associated with obtaining the Canadian licensing or training that will allow you to work in your profession or trade in Canada.

For more information, visit windmillmicrolending.org





WORK SEARCH

Applying for a job of your interest takes time, perseverance, organizational skills, and might present some challenges. Resumés may be different in Canada than in your home country, and networking with working professionals, a crucial part of your job search, can be daunting if you don't have local contacts. Fortunately, there are numerous agencies and support available to help you throughout your job search.

JOB SEARCH SUPPORTS

There is a wide selection of programs and websites to help you learn about the labour market and find employment in Alberta. You can begin your research here:

- Alberta labour market and job market forecasts jobbank.gc.ca/content/pieces-eng.do?cid=14639&lang=eng or alberta.ca/labour-market-information.aspx
- Explore “Working in Canada,” a tool created by the Government of Canada at canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada.html
- Access the Service Canada database for jobs available across Alberta and Canada online at jobbank.gc.ca/home
- For tips on finding work in Alberta and to learn how credentials transfer from other countries, visit alberta.ca/work-in-alberta.aspx
- For Alberta’s job search resources, including regional employment services, job banks, occupation and salary information, and other job search resources, visit alis.alberta.ca/occinfo/alberta-job-postings/job-alerts
- Explore the Calgary Employment Services Directory at open.alberta.ca/publications/calgary-employment-services-directory
- Learn about upcoming career fairs and events in Calgary and the surrounding area every Friday in the Employment Bulletin at docs.google.com/document/d/1L2MaqEg7Ls83kGB6CuJbededd0DUUnLqZ0LY1DJMFvU/edit
- The ALIS website can help you explore your career options and training programs and help with your job search. Visit ALIS at alis.alberta.ca
- Alberta Supports and Alberta Works Centres employment services are available online, via telephone and at over 50 different centres located across the province. They offer job fairs, job postings, job search libraries, job training information, employment counselling, computers, and photocopiers for job searches, along with resumé, job-interview and job-search workshops. They also provide information on a broad range of Alberta social-based programs and services for children, youth, adults, and seniors, including employment and training, support for emergencies, childcare, income, disability, seniors, etc. For more information, visit albertasupports.ca, humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/services.aspx, or call 1-877-644-9992 toll-free



- Bow Valley College Directions for Newcomers in Trades and Professional Careers provides career services to help newcomers get connected to the workforce and restart their career in Canada. To find out how they can assist you with finding employment, visit Bowvalleycollege.ca or call 1-877-297-2553 toll-free
- Alberta Career Information Hotline is a career counselling and referral service where staff can answer your questions about career planning, resumes, educational options and funding, occupational descriptions, labour market information, work search skills, and the workplace. You can call 1-800-661-3753 toll-free in Canada or 1-800-232-7215 TTY toll-free
- Conseil de Développement Économique en Alberta (CDÉA) connects francophone entrepreneurs in Alberta, visit lecdea.ca

APPLYING FOR A JOB

You apply for a job by sending a resumé (also known as “curriculum vitae” or CV) and a cover letter. A resume lists your qualifications and work experience, and a cover letter is a short description of what makes you a strong candidate for the position. Some employers will be uncertain of the value of your previous experience in another country, so make sure that your resume and cover letter show how your previous work experience will benefit an Alberta employer. You can find information on creating resumes and cover letters, as well as preparing for job interviews, at alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/resumes-and-references, alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/cover-letters, alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/interviews-and-offers.



WORKPLACE RIGHTS

WORKPLACE EQUALITY

The Alberta Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in employment based on the grounds of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, and sexual orientation.

To learn more about your equality rights and responsibilities, visit the Alberta Human Rights Commission at albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Pages/default.aspx.

ALBERTA EMPLOYMENT STANDARD CODE

Alberta workers have the right to a fair and safe workplace. The Alberta Employment Standards Code (AESO) sets out the minimum workplace standards that employers and employees must follow.

For full details, visit alberta.ca/alberta-employment-standards-rules.aspx.



WAGES

Many employees in Alberta are entitled to earning the minimum wage. The current general minimum wage applies to all employees, except for students under 18. Since 2019, the provincial minimum wage has been \$15.00 per hour. To be updated on the current minimum wage, visit alberta.ca/minimum-wage.aspx.

WORK HOURS

Usually, employees work eight hours per day and 40 hours per week, with some exceptions. An employee may work a maximum of 12-hours a day unless an exception occurs. Except for a written overtime agreement, an employer must pay at least 1.5 times the employee's regular rate for all overtime hours worked. Overtime consists of all hours worked, over 8 hours a day or 44 hours a week, whichever is greater. General holidays, vacation leave, and paid sick time are all deemed "hours of work" for calculating overtime.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

There are eight public holidays (statutory) each year in Alberta. Employees who qualify are entitled to take these days off from work and be paid public holiday pay for the day. Alberta's public holidays are New Year's Day, Alberta Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day. Alberta's optional holidays are Easter Sunday, Heritage Day, and Boxing Day.

VACATION TIME

Most employees are entitled to vacation time and vacation pay after being employed for one year. Typically, full-time employees are entitled to a minimum of 2 weeks of vacation time for every 12 months or year they work. Instead of paid vacation time, employees have the right to be paid at least 4% of their total wages. Employees must receive at least two weeks of vacation per year for the first four years of employment and a minimum of three weeks after the 5th consecutive year. For every week of vacation, employees have the right to 4% of the wages earned in that year. This means that employers may put vacation pay on every cheque or choose to payout at the time of the vacation leave.

GETTING PAID

Employees must receive their payroll on a regular, recurring payday and be given a statement showing their hours worked at regular or overtime rates, wages, and deductions for that pay period. Employers must pay employees within ten consecutive days from the end of the pay period unless employment terminates.

MATERNITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE

Working parents are entitled to unpaid temporary leave from their jobs when expecting or having a baby. The length of maternity leave is 15 weeks, and the maximum length of parental leave varies, depending on standard or extended leave but can be between 40-69 weeks. Employment Insurance (EI) provides financial benefits to eligible parents. Call the Ministry of Labour and Immigration's Employment Standards Office at 1-877-427-3731 toll-free or visit canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental.html

You can also visit any Service Canada centre to speak with a federal government labour affairs officer. Check the Yellow Pages of your phone book or visit canada.ca for the locations nearest you.





HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Alberta Occupational and Safety Act legislation establishes minimum standards for safe and healthy practices in Alberta workplaces and sets measures to protect the safety and health of Alberta workers.

- Read through the OHS Code Explanation Guide, which explains OHS Code rules in plain, easy-to-understand language. To view the guide, visit ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li001
- You can also speak with an OHS worker using “Ask an OHS expert” at alberta.ca/ask-expert.aspx at 1-855-957-7233 to ask any questions you may have
- To learn more about the Alberta Ministry of Labour and Immigration’s strategies to protect workers, visit alberta.ca/ohs-prevention.aspx
- Alberta Occupational Health and Safety help prevent worker injuries and illnesses by providing measures and information for taking action. To find out how to report a safety concern at work or file a complaint, call the OHS Contact Centre at 1-866-415-8690 toll-free

THE ALBERTA WORKERS COMPENSATION BOARD (WCB)

The Alberta Workers Compensation Board (WCB) administers Alberta's no-fault workplace insurance for employers and their employees. Employer contributions fund the board. WCB provides disability benefits, monitors the quality of health care that workers receive, and helps workers injured on the job. Working with its partners, the WCB promotes safe and healthy workplaces, facilitates recovery and return to work, provides compassionate and supportive compensation services for workers and employers, and ensures responsible financial stewardship. wcb.ab.ca.

If you have been injured at work or want to learn more about workplace safety and insurance, call the Calgary WCB office at 403-517-6000, call 1-866-922-9221 toll-free in Calgary, or call 1-800-661-9608 across Canada.



WORKPLACE CULTURE

Workplace culture can differ from one place to another. Generally, Alberta employers emphasize "soft skills" like communication. Your local newcomer serving agency, Gateway, and other employment experts can guide you in learning about Alberta’s workplace culture. To learn more about Alberta workplace culture, visit alis.alberta.ca/media/697790/workinginalberta.pdf.



STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Alberta is a magnificent place to create your own business, as Albertans have an entrepreneurial spirit supported by a young, educated, and diverse workforce. Starting a business is easy in Alberta, with the lowest corporate tax in Canada and no provincial sales tax¹³.

- For information and resources for newcomers on how to start a business in Alberta, visit alberta.ca/immigrate-start-business-in-alberta.aspx and alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/work-options/start-a-part-time-business-from-home/
 - The Government of Canada has established many Canadian business service centres where you can get information and support to help you start your own business. For more information, call 1-888-576-4444 or visit ca/en/services/business.html
 - Community Futures Network of Alberta (CFNA) offers small business development and rural economic development through their 27 Community Futures offices throughout rural Alberta. Services offered include helping you write a business plan, helping create a marketing plan or business expansion strategy, and providing one-on-one coaching and business mentoring. For more information, visit albertacf.com
 - Business Link offers services for immigrant entrepreneurs. These services include one-on-one coaching supports, informative resources, guidebooks and checklists, training and workshops, and network referral building. To visit Business Link, visit businesslink.ca/what-we-do/immigrant-entrepreneur-program
 - Calgary Catholic Immigration Society's Centre for Entrepreneurship provides information and connections for launching prospective entrepreneurs' businesses in Calgary, informational seminars, access to resources and amenities for researching and developing business plans. Many opportunities exist to connect with investors, potential partners, advisors, and other newcomer entrepreneurs. For more information, visit connectingcalgary.ca/services/centre-for-entrepreneurship
 - The Immigrant Educational Society carries out entrepreneurship development training, which provides entrepreneurship development skills and financial literacy education to people who want to start a new business in Canada. For more details, visit immigrant-education.ca/programs/employment/entrepreneurship-development
 - Momentum provides financial coaching for money management, debt prevention and reduction, and saving for the future. It also specializes in employment skills training and small business start-up programs. To find out how Momentum can benefit you, visit momentum.org
 - Conseil de Développement Économique en Alberta (CDÉA) offers continuous and in-depth support to francophones in Alberta in the evolution of entrepreneurial projects, visit lecdea.ca
- ¹³ Government of Alberta, alberta.ca/immigrate-start-business-in-alberta.aspx.



Finance And Banking



Managing your money and personal finances allows you to evaluate your resources at different life stages. Learn information in this section about opening a Canadian bank account, obtaining credit, and paying taxes, along with information about financial benefits and social assistance.

Back to
Table of
contents



MONEY AND BANKING

Alberta residents typically keep their money in banks, credit unions, or trust companies, and these financial institutions are both safe and convenient. Most financial institutions are members of the Canadian Deposit Insurance Corporation, meaning the government insures the money in your account up to a maximum of \$100,000.

MONEY

For information about Canada's currency and exchanging foreign money, visit the "Welcome to Canada" booklet section on currency and exchange canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/publication-welcome-canada-what-you-should-know.html. You should never send cash through the mail, as it is not secure. Instead, use a cheque, money order (purchased from the bank) or postal order (you can buy it at a post office). Banks will provide you with options for sending money abroad.

BANK SERVICES

You can open a bank account even if you do not have a job or any money to put into it when you first open it. Most banks offer the following services:

- Chequing and saving accounts
- Debit cards
- 24-hour Internet and telephone banking
- Loans and credit cards
- Investment products and planning
- Financial advice

Even though Canadian banks are considered very secure, you should protect your financial interests. For tips and advice on protecting yourself and your finances from fraudulent activities such as credit card fraud, visit canada.ca/en/services/finance/consumer-affairs.html

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Before opening an account, research several financial institutions in advance, and learn their banking products and services, fees, and interest rates. Ask your bank about no-fee bank accounts, which are becoming increasingly popular. Also, ask about services specifically for newcomers. Some banks have special offers and conditions.

If your employer uses a direct (payroll) deposit, you will need a banking account. Savings and investment accounts help save money because they have higher interest rates than chequing accounts. However, you may only be allowed to make certain types of transactions or a limited number of them.

Most people who open savings accounts also have chequing accounts for day-to-day banking. To open an account at a bank, credit union or trust company, you will need to show two pieces of identification, such as a passport. Usually, one piece of ID must have your photo on it. When you open a bank account, you will receive a bank card (also called a debit card) that you can use at stores, restaurants, and other businesses. It also lets you complete transactions at bank machines, commonly known as Automated Tellers Machines or "ATMs."

OBTAINING CREDIT

Credit cards, vehicle loans, and bank loans are the most used types of credit. Make sure to learn all the details about the amount and frequency of payments when you get the loan or credit.

You pay an interest fee when you get a bank loan or use a credit card. Interest is the money you pay when you borrow funds. The interest rate refers to the percentage (%) of the total amount borrowed that you pay back in interest over a certain period. Some loans and credits have very high-interest rates. Whenever you borrow money from a bank using a bank loan or credit card, make sure to ask and understand your interest rate.

Visit the “Welcome to Canada” booklet to learn more about different types of credit and loans, along with how to choose and apply for a credit card: canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/welcome.pdf.

CREDIT HISTORY

Every time you take out a loan or use a credit card, a reporting agency collects data about your payments and how long it takes you to pay back the total amount. This information becomes part of your credit history.

It is vital to build a credit history in Alberta if you want to apply in the future for a credit card, loan, or mortgage. Your financial institution will review your credit history to determine how well you have managed your finances in the past. Based on your credit history, your financial institution will decide whether to approve the credit you want or not.

Many people start building their credit history with credit cards and ensure to pay their balance on time and in full to save on interest. Talk to a representative at your financial institution about credit card programs for newcomers, as they make exclusive offers or deals for new immigrants.

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada has some valuable tips and information about credit at canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency.html.





In Canada, all three levels of government: federal, provincial, and municipal, collect taxes. Taxes support government-funded programs such as education, health care, transportation, infrastructure, and children's services.

TYPES OF TAX

The most common taxes collected are income tax, sales tax, property tax, and business tax. Ensure you know the receipts and other documentation you need to save throughout the year for tax-related purposes. To learn a description of the diverse types of taxes, visit the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance at alberta.ca/taxes-levies-overview.aspx.

INCOME TAX

Generally, Canadians file their income tax returns before the national deadline of April 30. You must report all your income from all sources, even if you earn it internationally or overseas. Your employer must provide you with a T4 (Statement of Remuneration Paid) form. As a newcomer, you can get help completing your income tax return for free through the Community Volunteer Income Tax program.

- Ask your Gateway Planner about free income tax clinics in your area
- Visit the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) at canada.ca/en/services/taxes/income-tax.html
- Visit the CRA's webpage on income tax for newcomers that will introduce you to the Canadian tax system, and help you to complete your first income tax and benefit return as a resident of Canada canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/international-non-residents/individuals-leaving-entering-canada-non-residents/newcomers-canada-immigrants.html
- To learn why filing your taxes can be beneficial to you as a newcomer, visit canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/newcomers-taxes.html

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST) CREDIT

Alberta has no provincial sales tax. However, the federal government collects a 5% Sales Tax, otherwise known as the goods and services tax (GST). GST is added to the price of most consumer goods. The Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) annually returns all or part of this tax through a tax credit to people with low incomes.

You can apply to get this credit by completing the GST Credit Application section on your tax return form or an RC151 GST/HST Credit Application for Individuals Who Become Residents of Canada.

CRA will evaluate your eligibility. If they determine you meet the criteria, you will receive a payment. Your Gateway Planner can also help you apply to the program after arriving in Canada; ask them how they can help in this process. Find out more information at canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/goods-services-tax-harmonized-sales-tax-gst-hst-credit.html.

CANADA CHILD BENEFIT

If you have children under 18, you may receive the Canada Child Benefit (CCB). If eligible, you will receive a monthly tax-free payment from the Canadian government to help with the cost of raising your child. It is your income and the number of dependent children you have, which will determine the amount you receive. To learn if you are eligible and apply, visit the Canada Revenue Agency canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/canada-child-benefit-overview.html.

FINANCIAL BENEFITS AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

In Alberta, provincial and federal programs help those experiencing financial need.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI)

You may be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits if you lose your job due to circumstances beyond your control, such as a shortage of work or mass layoffs. To qualify, you must have accumulated a certain number of insurable work hours in Canada in the previous 52 weeks. To learn more about applying for EI benefits, speak with your Gateway Planner or visit Service Canada at canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html.

CANADA PENSION PLAN (CPP)

When working in Alberta, your employer automatically deducts money from your paycheques to contribute to CPP on your behalf. To qualify to receive CPP, you must meet the eligibility criteria:

- have made at least one contribution to CPP
- be at least 60 years old

To find out more about CPP, visit Service Canada at canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp.html

OLD AGE SECURITY PENSION (OAS)

The OAS pension is a monthly benefit paid to people 65 years and older. To qualify to receive OAS, you must have lived in Canada for at least ten years after turning 18. To learn more, visit Service Canada at canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp/old-age-security.html.

ALBERTA SENIORS BENEFIT

Low-income seniors can get financial assistance to help with monthly living expenses. If you are a new Alberta resident, you are eligible to begin receiving benefits on the month of your 65th birthday or after three months of permanent residency in Alberta, whichever is later. Applicants who are not yet receiving benefits through the Old Age Security Program must submit a new application each year. Eligibility is based on income reported in your tax return from the previous year. The amount you receive depends on your income, combined with your spouse/partner's income, and if you currently receive OAS. Applications can be submitted anytime during the year, and benefits are distributed monthly. To find out more, visit alberta.ca/alberta-seniors-benefit.aspx.



INCOME SUPPORT

Alberta Income Support can help provide financial support for individuals and families to pay for basic expenses like food, clothing, and shelter. Income Support recipients also receive health benefits, employment services, and help to receive child support. The process typically takes two weeks. You can apply online or fill out a paper application and bring it to your nearest Alberta Supports or Alberta Works Centre.

For more information, visit alberta.ca/alberta-income-support.aspx.

To connect with the main Alberta Supports Contact Centre, call 1-877-644-9992 toll-free.

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If you face an emergency, you can apply for one-time financial assistance to help you buy food, medication, clothing, temporary shelter, or other needs. You can apply online through alberta.ca/my-alberta-supports-how-to-apply-online.aspx or by calling the 24-hour Emergency Income Support Contact Centre at 1-866-644-5135 or calling TTY toll-free at 1-800-232-7215.

To apply for emergency financial assistance online, visit myalbertasupports.alberta.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do

ALBERTA CHILD AND FAMILY BENEFIT

The Alberta Child and Family Benefit (ACFB) provides direct financial assistance to lower and middle-income families with children under 18 to help provide a better quality of life for their children. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) administers the ACFB program on Alberta's behalf and will mail or make direct deposit payments every three months. The amount your family receives under the ACFB will depend on your family's income level, and how many children under 18 you have. You are automatically considered for the ACFB when you file your annual tax return and qualify for the federal government's Canada Child Benefit. No further action is required.

To learn more about the Alberta Child and Family Benefit, visit alberta.ca/alberta-child-and-family-benefit.aspx.

ASSISTED INCOME SUPPLEMENT FOR THE HANDICAPPED (AISH)

Assisted Income Supplement for the Handicapped (AISH) provides financial and health benefits for eligible Albertans with a permanent medical condition that prevents them from earning a living. There are procedures to evaluate if a person qualifies; the medical condition must be likely to remain permanent, and there is no medical treatment, therapy, rehabilitation, or training available that will help improve your ability to earn a living. AISH looks at the income and assets you and your spouse or partner have. Depending on your situation, you may receive a monthly living allowance, a monthly child benefit, health benefits, and personal benefits. To apply, you will need to gather your application form and all other required documents, and submit your application via mail, fax, online, or submit them in person at your nearest AISH or Alberta Supports Centre.

For more information on AISH, visit alberta.ca/aish.aspx.



ALBERTA ADULT HEALTH BENEFIT

The Alberta Adult Health Benefit program covers health benefits for Albertans in low-income households who are pregnant or have high ongoing prescription drug needs. If you or other household members have coverage through another health benefits plan, you must use that plan first. The Alberta Adult Health Benefit plan may cover your remaining costs. You may be eligible if you are a refugee or refugee claimant who is not receiving health benefits from any other source, such as AHCIP, AISH, Income Support, or the Federal Interim Health Program. You will need to fill out an application form and fax the form to 780-415-8386 or mail the form to the Health Benefits Contact Centre in Edmonton. If you are approved, you will receive a health benefits card. The card will list all eligible family members' names and identification numbers. You must show this card to your doctor, optician, pharmacist, or ambulance attendant each time you or a family member receives a service paid for by the Alberta Adult Health Benefit plan.

To find out more about the AAHB, visit alberta.ca/alberta-adult-health-benefit.aspx.

ALBERTA CHILD HEALTH BENEFIT

The Alberta Child Health Benefit covers children's health expenses for low-income families. This health plan is for children up to 18 years of age. You can apply to this program to get eyeglasses, prescription drugs, and dental care for your children that the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan does not cover. Families qualify based on income, and if another health plan covers your children, you must use that plan first. You will need to fill out an application form and fax the form to 780-415-8386 or mail the form to the Health Benefits Contact Centre in Edmonton. If your application is approved, you will receive a health benefits card in the mail. The card will list each child's name and identification number. You need to show this card to your child's doctor, dental provider, pharmacist, optician, or ambulance attendant each time your child receives a service that can be paid for by the Alberta Child Health Benefit plan.

To find out more about the ACHB, visit alberta.ca/alberta-child-health-benefit.aspx.

CRA BENEFITS FINDER

Use the CRA Benefits Finder and answer questions to get a customized list of benefits for which you may be eligible to receive from federal, provincial or territorial governments: srv138.services.gc.ca/daf/q?id=7ed6707c-a7e0-4fe6-b7a1-44498853f3bc&GoCTemplateCulture=en-CA.



People And Culture



[Back to Table of contents](#)



ACCESSIBILITY

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Almost 10 percent of Calgarians report having a physical, sensory, cognitive, communication access, or other type of disability¹⁴. As Calgary's population ages, this percentage will increase. Improving accessibility in Calgary is an ongoing priority that benefits everyone in our communities. Alberta's businesses, organizations, and communities are becoming more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities.

DISABILITY

Disability is a term that covers problems in body function or structure, called impairments, activity limitation, such difficulty for an individual to execute an action, and problems experienced by individuals when involved in life situations.

The Alberta Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on physical and mental disabilities and recognizes that everyone is equal. The Act's standards describe what all businesses and organizations must do to ensure people with disabilities can participate fully in Alberta's society. In Alberta, by law, employers, landlords, tenants, and service providers must make reasonable efforts to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Suitable accommodation can enable equal participation in any of the following protected areas:

- employment practices
- employment applications and advertisements
- residential or commercial tenancy
- goods, services, accommodation, or facilities

customarily available to the public (for example, restaurants, stores, hotels or provincial government services)

- statements, publications, notices, signs, symbols, emblems, or other representations that are published, issued or displayed before the public
- membership in trade unions, employers' organizations, or occupational associations

Learn more about the Alberta Human Rights Act at albertahumanrights.ab.ca/about/Pages/legislation.aspx.

Learn about the Alberta Human Rights Commission at albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Pages/default.aspx.

To find out what is guiding Calgary's approach to accessibility and how people with disabilities are being celebrated, visit calgary.ca/csps/cns/research-and-strategy/advisory-committee-on-accessibility/accessibility-and-disability-in-calgary.html.

For a comprehensive list of City services and programs for people with disabilities, visit calgary.ca/csps/cns/research-and-strategy/advisory-committee-on-accessibility/accessibility-and-disability.html.

For information on the Federal Disability Reference Guide, please visit canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/arc/reference-guide.html.

¹⁴ 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability, Statistics Canada.



PROVINCIAL DISABILITY SERVICES

The Ministry of Community and Social Services provides disability service information and referrals. They provide information, case management, referral services, and support to families of children with disabilities and adults with developmental disabilities to access and connect with support services.

- Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) provides a wide range of family-centred support and services, including information, case management, and referral support, tailored to each family's unique needs. For more information, visit alberta.ca/fscd.aspx.
- Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) provides information, case management, service planning, and referral services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families to receive PDD-funded support services and help accessing services to live as independently as possible in their community. For more details, visit alberta.ca/persons-with-developmental-disabilities-pdd.aspx.
- For a list of approved regional disability service providers, visit alberta.ca/pdd-disability-services-office-locations.aspx.



ARTS AND CULTURE

Alberta has a wide variety of opportunities to enjoy cultural activities such as dance performances, concerts, theatre productions, art galleries, and historical sites. During the summer, you can find rodeos and fairs throughout Alberta, as well as special celebrations such as the famous Calgary Stampede and Edmonton's Heritage Festival. These events are advertised in newspapers, radio, television, and social media.

- Visit the Calgary Arts Development Cultural Directory to view a complete listing of culturally diverse organizations in Calgary at calgaryartsdevelopment.com/directory.
- Calgary has two Arts Centres that offer programs and activities for all ages and skill levels. Types of activities include pottery, printmaking, drawing, painting, dance, and more. For more information on new art programs, visit calgary.ca/csps/recreation/arts-centres.html.
- Tourism Calgary has mapped out a wide variety of arts and culture activities across the city on their "Things To Do" map. To see what activities you can participate in around Calgary, visit visitcalgary.com/things-to-do#/2371/arts-and-culture.
- For a list of Calgary art galleries, visit visitcalgary.com/things-to-do#/2106/art-galleries--studios.

FESTIVALS

There are several festivals and community events throughout the year in Calgary. From gastronomic, cultural, and sports to music, film, and dance, you have plenty of choices to enjoy festivals in Calgary.

For a list of Calgary festivals, visit visitcalgary.com/things-to-do#/1701/festivals.

ETHNIC FOOD

In Calgary, there are various ethnic food markets and international grocery stores that sell imported products from all over the world. All major supermarkets carry many foods used in international cuisines, and some supermarkets have 1-2 aisles devoted to global food ingredients. To find ethnic food stores and international grocery stores in Calgary, search "**Ethnic food store**" or "**International grocery store**" + "**Calgary**" on the web to find a business near you.

RESTAURANTS

Calgary is home to many newcomers who have made others feel at home by opening ethnic restaurants and specialty food stores. To find locations you may be interested in eating while supporting local businesses, visit visitcalgary.com/things-to-do#/1666/eat--drink.

MUSEUMS

Calgary has various museums you can visit to learn more about Canadian culture, historical events in Alberta, cultural sites in Calgary, and much more.

To see a list of museums in Calgary, visit visitcalgary.com/things-to-do#/2241/museums--galleries.

THEATER

For a list of professional and semi-professional theatre companies in the Calgary area and to see their calendar or performances and events, visit theatrealberta.com/about/member-organizations





FRANCOPHONES IN ALBERTA

Alberta has approximately 2,000 communities and natural sites with French-influenced names. French is the mother tongue of 1 in 5 Canadians and about 86,705 Albertans (2% of the population). Alberta has the third-largest minority Francophone population after Ontario and New Brunswick¹⁵, excluding Quebec. Furthermore, Alberta has four officially bilingual municipalities, and 13 other communities have formed the Alberta Bilingual Municipalities Association (ABMA).

For more information on Francophone heritage and cultures in Alberta, visit alberta.ca/francophone-heritage.aspx

ALBERTA FRANCOPHONE SERVICES

The French Language Services Act guarantees an individual's right to receive services in French, and Alberta has designated areas for these services. The federal government has worked together with Alberta's Francophonie to support its vitality and provide quality programs and services that meet its practical needs. In 2017, the Alberta government adopted a French Policy that guides its ministries in maintaining and developing new services in French.

For the Alberta French services directory, visit alberta.ca/french-services-directory.aspx.

To access Francophone newcomers guide with information about living in Alberta, education, health, immigration, and much more, visit alberta.ca/fr-CA/bonjour-alberta.aspx.

PORTAIL

Your personal guide to your new life in Canada, in the French language

Like Gateway for English-speaking newcomers, Portail is the solution for French-speaking newcomers in Calgary looking for a clear direction to reach their needs, goals, and dreams.

Portail is a free service that provides Francophonie with a Personalized Plan that will refer them to the right services at the appropriate agencies to unleash their economic, social, and civic potential.

If this resonates with you, please visit the following form to book an appointment with Portail: portailconnexions.ca/contact.

For more information, visit portailconnexions.ca.

To view the Government of Canada's list of Francophone service providers for newcomers in Calgary, visit cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/services/index.asp#table1caption.

¹⁵ Francophone Heritage, Government of Alberta.



RIFA

Le Réseau en Immigration Francophone de l'Alberta (RIFA) is a network of members who provide direct and indirect services to Francophone immigrants to succeed in their settlement and integration in Alberta, for the vitality of the Francophone community and the economic development of Canada.

Their reception and settlement centers in Alberta are non-profit organizations that provide newcomers with information and orientation services, support in finding housing, social services, and more.

The principal aims of the network are to strengthen the reception and settlement services for newcomers to Alberta, support the social and cultural inclusion of Francophone immigrants, and collaborate with Francophone and Anglophone organizations in Alberta. For more information, call 780-784-7527 or visit rifalberta.com.

CANAF

Centre D'Accueil Pour Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones de Calgary (CANAF) is Calgary's designated Francophone Newcomers Centre, where Francophone newcomers are assisted with settling and integrating into Canadian society. They provide orientation to community resources and services such as banks, shops, health, educational, legal facilities, interpretation, and non-official translation of documents related to employment, health, education, and legal matters. Also, they refer newcomers to paraprofessional counselling when experiencing adaptation or integration problems to Canadian society.

Centre D'Accueil Pour Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones de Calgary is funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to provide services to Francophone refugees and immigrants. For more information, call 403-532-6334 or visit canaf-calgary.ca.

CITÉ DES ROCHEUSES

La Cité des Rocheuses promotes cultural enrichment, intercultural, and multidisciplinary dialogue in French in Calgary. They coordinate and present numerous cultural, artistic, and educational events for the community and youth of the Calgary region.

They also provide a gathering place and services for

the general public and present artistic, cultural, and community-based programs in French according to the needs of the Francophone population of Calgary, with a particular focus on youth.

The Francophone Newcomers Centre at La Cité des Rocheuses meets the needs of newcomers in Calgary, offering free, personalized settlement and orientation services as well as practical information provided by trained settlement workers. La Cité des Rocheuses also offers pre-arrival services, day camps, French language classes, information sessions & workshops, and much more. For more information, call 403-249-1749 or visit citedesrocheuses.com/homepage.

PIA

Portail de l'Immigrant Association (PIA) is a multicultural association that offers a range of services and programs that respond to the needs of Calgary's Francophone community and promotes and shares Francophone cultural treasures with the general public in Alberta.

The programs they offer for Francophone women include various services to raise awareness of violence against women and help them develop socio-economic services to increase personal, social, and leadership skills and increase a sense of belonging to the Francophone community. PIA also offers a program for young people aged six and over. The objective of this program is to:

- Increase opportunities for meetings and enrichment for young Francophones in Calgary.
- Strengthen the social skills of young people.
- Increase young people's sense of belonging to the community.

For more information, call 403-668-0299 or visit pia-calgary.ca.

CALGARY FRANCOPHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS

For information on Francophone services providers for newcomers in Calgary, please visit <https://www.alberta.ca/french-services-directory.aspx>.



LGBTQ+

- LGBTQ+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender, Queer, and +, which leaves room for people to self-identify in a way that makes sense to them. LGBTQ+ immigrants can find social networks to help establish themselves when coming to Canada. Calgary offers numerous organizations to empower, inspire, and connect LGBTQ+ newcomers. The Centre for Newcomers LGBTQ+ Immigrant Settlement Support Program provides needs assessment and referral, language training, interpretation support, career counselling, active referral to employment, and other related services to new LGBTQ+ Calgarians. Whether you have permanent residency, are filing for asylum as a refugee, or are here under any other status, you can use their LGBTQ+ newcomer services. They assist those in Alberta from any country in the world. To find out more, visit centrefornewcomers.ca/lgbtq



- The Calgary LGBTQ+ Refugee Centre is a partnership with the End of the Rainbow Foundation. The Calgary LGBTQ+ Refugee Centre provides one-to-one support for LGBTQ+ refugees in Calgary, providing services directly or through referrals to other community and service organizations that can provide the requested service. Through this service, refugees can access support for the refugee process, including letters and support at Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) hearings. Refugees can also access information and referrals to LGBTQ+ and other organizations, one-to-one support and orientation to Canada, support groups, mentoring, and volunteer opportunities. To find out more, visit endoftherainbow.ca/calgary-lgbtq-refugee-centre
- Calgary Rainbow Railroad Station offers convention refugees circles of support in Calgary, creates sponsorship groups, finds housing or shelter, food and clothing, language training, and career development. This is a partnership with the End of the Rainbow Foundation, plus the Affirming Network of Faith Communities in Calgary. To find out more, visit endoftherainbow.ca/calgaryrainbowrailroadstation



RECREATION

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

Recreational programs in your community and the city can help you meet people, improve your language skills, and enjoy leisure activities. To learn more about the community activities available to you and your family, visit liveandplay.calgary.ca/HOME/page/home.

The City of Calgary Recreation Fee Assistance Program offers low-income Calgarians subsidized access to registered programs and admissions to aquatics and fitness centres, leisure centres, art centres, golf courses, and Local Fee Assistance Program partners.

To find out more, visit calgary.ca/csps/recreation/fee-assistance.html.

COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTERS

There are various community programs and public recreation centers in Calgary where community groups can meet. Many centres have gyms, skating arenas, swimming pools, and sports fields. Most programs and facilities are free or low-cost. Discover activities and programs at your local community recreation centre by talking to your Gateway Planner. You can also call 211 or visit calgary.ca/csps/recreation/recreation-facilities.html. Find out more about the recreation facilities listed below that offer subsidies by contacting them directly or visiting their websites:

- Repsol Sport Centre: 403-233-8393, repsolsportcentre.com
- Trico Centre for Family Wellness: 403-225-5569, tricocentre.ca
- Vivo for Healthier Generations: 403-532-1013, vivo.ca

- Westside Recreation: 403-531-5875, westsiderec.com
- YMCA: 403-269-6701, ymcocalgary.org

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Many Calgarians participate in winter activities when the weather gets cold, and there are plenty of fun things to do in Calgary and the surrounding area. Here is a list of ideas for you and your family to enjoy in the wintertime:

- Skiing/snowboarding: You can ski and snowboard in Calgary. WinSport offers lift tickets, and Winter Hill Passes for skiing and snowboarding all winter long. You can also take a day trip to the Canadian Rockies and experience any one of the many world-class ski resort facilities. Ski lifts open as early as mid-November and run to May. The University of Calgary Outdoor Centre offers ski and snowboard rentals for beginner and experienced skiers and snowboarders.

For a list of ski resorts in Alberta, visit onthesnow.ca/alberta/ski-resorts.html

To rent skis/snowboards from the University of Calgary Outdoor Centre, visit outdoor-centre.ucalgary.ca/gear-rentals

Winsport operates Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, one of the famous facilities from the 1988 Winter Olympics. To rent winter equipment from Winsport, visit winsport.ca/tickets-passes-and-rentals/rental-information/winter-rentals

- Cross-country skiing: In Calgary, cross-country skiing is welcome in any park, along with a selection of track set groomed city parks & trails you can access for free. Canmore Nordic Centre Provincial Park is only 1 hour west of Calgary, where the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary were held, and has cross-country



ski rentals available on site. The University of Calgary Outdoor Centre also offer cross-country ski rentals for beginner and experienced skiers.

To rent cross-country skis from the University of Calgary Outdoor Centre, visit outdoor-centre.ucalgary.ca/gear-rentals

- **Tobogganing:** Tobogganing (also called sledding or snow-tubing) is a classic outdoor winter activity and a perfect way to celebrate the cold weather in Calgary, with its collection of maintained hills that anyone can enjoy. Visit your local retailer or ask a friend to borrow a sled or toboggan for family-friendly fun.
- **Tubing:** Tubing is a family-friendly winter activity everyone can enjoy, and it doesn't require special skills. You will ride soft inflatable tubes down through dedicated tube runs. The WinSport Tube Park is the largest in Western Canada and is a great way to experience the thrill of tubing.

To find out more about WinSport Tube Park, visit winsport.ca/explore-winsport/current-activities/winsport-tube-park/

- **Snowshoeing:** Snowshoeing is a great way to get active in the winter, easy to learn, and affordable to try for people of all ages. Snowshoeing is welcome in any Calgary park and you can also explore trails in the Rocky Mountains. The University of Calgary Outdoor Centre offers snowshoe rentals for beginner and experienced snowshoe enthusiasts. The Bow Habitat Station hosts learn-to snowshoe clinics that include all the basics.

To rent snowshoes from the University of Calgary Outdoor Centre, visit outdoor-centre.ucalgary.ca/gear-rentals

To sign up for a snowshoeing clinic at the Bow Habitat Station, visit bowhabitat.alberta.ca/programs/snowshoe-clinics.aspx

- **Ice skating:** Calgarians enjoy indoor and outdoor skating, especially in the winter. The City of Calgary provides seven outdoor public ice-skating rinks free to use as Calgarians throughout the city. Bowness Park Lagoon and Olympic Plaza offer skate rentals on-site, including helmets, skating aids, and skate sharpening. The University of Calgary Outdoor Centre also offers skate rentals for beginner and experienced skaters. Outdoor skating rinks in Calgary are typically open from mid to late December-February.

For a list of outdoor skating rinks in Calgary, visit calgary.ca/csps/parks/locations/outdoor-skating-rinks.html

To rent skates from the University of Calgary Outdoor Centre, visit outdoor-centre.ucalgary.ca/gear-rentals

- **Outdoor pools:** There are various hot springs, naturally fed pools in the mountains, Calgary, and surrounding area. You can enjoy a soak in the rejuvenating waters of Canadian natural wonders.

For a list of hot springs and outdoor pools in Alberta, visit hotsprings.ca





SENIORS

Senior immigrants can feel isolated and commonly lack social networks to help establish themselves in their new communities when coming to Canada. Improving accessibility and availability of senior services for immigrants in Calgary is an ongoing initiative that benefits everyone in our communities. Seniors are respected members of the community and can give back in many ways.

For information on Alberta senior support in the community, including age-friendly communities, seniors housing, elder abuse prevention, pensions, and funding for organizations, visit alberta.ca/supports-for-seniors.aspx.

HOUSING

There is local government-assisted housing for seniors in Alberta. The Government of Alberta works with municipalities, various housing providers, non-profit and private sector organizations, and housing management bodies to build and operate affordable housing for Albertans with low income. Eligibility for housing programs depends on income and applicants' priority depends on their needs.

To find out more about the Seniors Self-contained Housing Program and Seniors Lodge Program, visit alberta.ca/affordable-housing-programs.aspx.

Alberta Seniors Communities and Housing Association maintains an online seniors housing directory that includes independent and supportive living options.

To view their directory, visit Ascha.com.

The Kerby Centre provides senior housing referrals and assistance to seniors (55+) who are thinking about changing or need to change their present accommodation.

For more details, visit kerbycentre.com.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

For information on Alberta seniors' financial assistance programs and services, including Alberta Seniors Benefit, special needs assistance, health, dental and optical assistance, and property tax deferral, visit alberta.ca/financial-assistance-for-seniors.aspx.

HEALTH BENEFITS

The Government of Alberta provides seniors with premium-free coverage for prescriptions drugs and other health-related services not covered under the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP). When AHCIP records indicate you will turn 65, you will receive a package by mail with information about programs and services for seniors. Benefits include prescription drugs, diabetic supplies, ambulance services, clinical psychological services, home nursing care, and chiropractic services. For more information, visit alberta.ca/seniors-health-benefits.aspx.



FEE REDUCTION PROGRAMS

Most libraries, recreation centres, museums, transit systems, and other public facilities have fee reduction programs that charge lower fees for seniors. Ask about fee reduction programs at any public facility.

The City of Calgary Fair Entry program provides fee reduction for home maintenance services, such as basic yard care, snow removal, house cleaning, painting, and minor repairs for low-income seniors. It also offers low-income yearly transit pass for eligible seniors (65+). For more information, visit calgary.ca/csps/cns/neighbourhood-services/programs-and-services-for-low-income-calgarians.html?redirect=/fairentry.

GATEWAY

Gateway has specialized Planners that can support senior newcomers by connecting them to resources available within the community. These planners understand your needs and will help you find a sense of belonging within your city.

To book an appointment with a Gateway Planner, please visit <https://gatewayconnects.ca/gatewayconnects>.



YOUTH

YOUTH PROGRAMMING

To learn about free programs to meet the unique needs of immigrant and refugee children and youth, visit CLIP's Newcomer Guide at static1.squarespace.com/static/59fa4b5cd0e628b24f1cfbba/t/5e66615614baad746290a3ad/1583767894719/CLIPNewcomerGuide2020-ONLINE.pdf (pg.10).

CALGARY BRIDGE FOUNDATION FOR YOUTH

The Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth (CBFY) provides services for immigrant and refugee youth and their families by providing culturally appropriate information, knowledge, and advice as they build their life in Calgary. CBFY offers various services, including:

- In-School Settlement Program: Orientation and settlement support to students arriving in Calgary before the start of the new school year

- Settlement support to newcomer students attending The Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic School District
- Afterschool Program: works with immigrant youth throughout their school years (grades 1 – 12) and focuses on keeping youth engaged by providing academic support, English development, recreation, and building healthy life skills
- Mentorship Program: introduces immigrant youth (grades 7 – 12) to Calgary through afterschool programs, peer mentoring, field trips, and one-on-one support. Mentors provide a support system by offering school tours, translation, and friendship
- Basic literacy English classes for newcomers
- Community-based workshops on topics of interest to newcomers to Calgary

To find out more, call 403-230-7745 or visit cbfy.ca



TRELLIS

Trellis Society provides programs to improve access to resources for children, youth, and families, such as:

- Shelter, Housing and Outreach: Offer emergency shelter and long-term housing, job search, school search, and support toward self-sufficiency
- After-School Programs: Welcoming after-school clubs for youth to make friends, participate in activities, learn about health and wellbeing, improve physical literacy, and more
- Education and Employment support: Programs activities and initiatives to increase opportunities for youth to succeed
- Settlement Services: Through Building Your Connections (BYC), newcomer youth receive support by equipping them with needs assessments, referrals, community connections, employment-related services, cultural and recreational activities, family events, and community collaboration to reduce barriers.

To find out more, call 403-629-0413 or visit growwithtrellis.ca.



MENTAL HEALTH

BULLYING

Bullying is an ongoing and intentional misuse of power to intimidate, abuse, hurt, or scare school-aged children. Bullied people struggle to defend themselves.

Bullying includes:

- Verbal abuse (calling someone names)
- Social gossip (telling lies about someone or spreading rumours about them)
- Physical violence (pushing, hitting, kicking)
- Cyberbullying (using websites, social media, cellphones to hurt someone else)

For help and advice about bullying:

- Your child can talk to trained counsellors at the Alberta Bullying Prevention Helpline 24/7. To speak to someone, call 1-888-546-2323 toll-free; staff speak more than 170 languages
- Visit bullyfreealberta.ca for more information

UNITED VOICES

United Voices: Immigrant Youth Wellness Summit is the first summit in Southern Alberta. Youth from all backgrounds between the ages of 12 and 20 are welcome to register to participate in a fun day, including stories from inspirational immigrant speakers, interactive break-out sessions, and more while also learning how to battle the stigma surrounding mental health. If you want to learn more about mental health and how to take action against its stigma, you can become an advocate for mental health and spark change in your community by participating in United Voices.

To find out more, visit settlementcalgary.com/united-voices.



HELP LINES

KIDS HELP LINE

Youth can contact the Kids Help Phone through their 24-hour crisis line to speak to a mental health professional by calling 1-800-688-6868.

CONNECTEEN

You can receive 24-hour support by calling the ConneCTeen crisis line at 403-264-8336 (TEEN).

ConneCTeen Online Chat is available from 3:00 pm – 10:00 pm on weekdays and 12:00 pm – 10:00 pm on weekends at CalgaryConneCTeen.com.

DISTRESS CENTRE

To receive free short-term counselling services, you can call the Distress Centre 24-Hour Support Crisis Line at 403-266-4357 (HELP); this service is free and offered in over 200 languages.

EMPLOYMENT

CITY OF CALGARY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CENTRE

The Youth Employment Centre provides free career and employment services to youth ages 15 to 24, including connecting with a career advisor to research careers and educational options and hosting workshops, industry training, and hiring events.

For more information, visit calgary.ca/csps/cns/children-and-youth/youth-employment-centre.html or call 403-268-2490.

EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH EMPLOYMENT (EYE)

The Immigrant Educational Society (TIES) has a program for immigrant youth between 15 and 30 years of age looking for a job and updating their employment skills. The program offers minimum wage benefit support for 24 weeks while you learn skills to make you stand out to potential employers. To find out more, visit immigrant-education.ca/programs/employment/empowering-youth-employment-eye.





USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

9-1-1 – EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency, dial 911 on your phone. 911 should be your first call to ask for assistance, not a family member or friend. The operator will ask you for your full address, including your postal code. Interpreters are available in 170 languages, and operators are trained skilled listeners. They can quickly connect with an interpreter if needed.

2-1-1 – COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

211 is the phone number to get information and referrals to community and social services in your area. It is an essential service that helps Albertans find the right resource or service for whatever issue they need help with at the time. 211 is available 24/7 by phone, text, and chat, 365 days a year. The service is free, confidential, and available in more than 170 languages over the phone.

To find out more about 211, visit ab.211.ca.

3-1-1 – CITY SERVICES

Dial 311 for City of Calgary service information and non-emergency and non-law enforcement-related services (e.g., bylaw-related issues, potholes, street cleaning, tax account inquiries.)

Learn more about this service at calgary.ca/cfod/csc/311.html.

8-1-1 – HEALTH LINK

Dial 811 to access a telephone service that provides free 24/7 nurse advice and general health information for Albertans.

To find out more about Health Link, visit albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/link/index.html.

GATEWAY

Phone: 403-265-1120
contact@gatewayconnects.ca

IMMIGRATE TO ALBERTA INFORMATION SERVICE

Phone: 780-427-6419
Toll-Free: 1-877-427-6419

ALBERTA PROVINCIAL NOMINEE INFORMATION

Phone: 780-427-6419
extern.labour.alberta.ca/FeedbackForm/Immigration/Opportunity

TOURISM INFORMATION

Travel Alberta
Phone: 780-427-4321
Email: info@travelalberta.com

VITAL STATISTICS - BIRTH, MARRIAGE, DEATH CERTIFICATES

Phone: 780-427-7013

TTY Toll-free: 1-800-232-7215

Fax: 780-422-4225

Email: vs@gov.ab.ca

ALBERTA EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Phone: 780-427-3731

Toll-Free: 1-877-427-3731

TTY Toll-Free: 1-800-232-7215

STUDENT AID INQUIRIES

Phone: 1-855-606-2096

TTY Toll-Free: 1-855-306-2240

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Alberta Supports Contact Centre

Phone: 1-877-644-9992

Fax: 780-422-5692

Email: css.childsubsidy@gov.ab.ca

AHCIP OFFICE

Phone: 780-427-1432

Toll-Free TTY: 1-800-232-7215

Email: health.ahcipmail@gov.ab.ca

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKER HELPLINE

Phone: 1-877-944-9955

SERVICE CANADA INFOLINE

Call 1-800-622-6232 for information about immigration, taxation, citizenship, employment insurance, your social insurance number, or any other federal program or service.

FOREIGN CREDENTIALS REFERRAL OFFICE

Toll-Free: 1-888-854-1805



Back to
Table of
contents

USEFUL WEBSITES

GATEWAY

Gateway serves as a personal guide to help each newcomer through their unique journey, connecting them to the right service at the right agency every time—helping unleash their economic, social, and civic potential. Gateway Planners will work with you to build a Personalized Plan to achieve your dreams and goals gatewayconnects.ca

AAISA

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) is a non-profit umbrella organization representing agencies that provide resettlement, settlement, and integration services to newcomers in Alberta. aaisa.ca

YELLOW PAGES CALGARY

Find residential, business, and government telephone numbers using the digital phone book yellowpages.ca/search/si/1/Yellow-Pages/Alberta+AB

MOVING TO ALBERTA: IMMIGRATION

Find services to help you immigrate to Alberta, including IQAS, AINP, language training and settlement supports at alberta.ca/immigration.aspx

OPPORTUNITY ALBERTA

Learn about living and working in Alberta with resources and information to help you successfully move, immigrate, or start a business. alberta.ca/opportunity-alberta.aspx

ALBERTA LEARNING INFORMATION SERVICES (ALIS)

ALIS is Alberta's online source for career, education, and job information, including certification and registration requirements, occupational information, job search sources, educational planning, and educational publications. alis.alberta.ca

ALBERTA GOVERNMENT

Contact the Alberta Government using the phone numbers listed in the link below for all general inquiries. You can view a list of emergency and toll-free numbers, popular numbers and links. alberta.ca/emergency-numbers.aspx

COME TO CANADA

If you are temporary in Canada and want to extend your stay, through this resource, you will learn to determine your eligibility, how to fill the application out, and how to submit it. canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/extend-stay.html.

Back to
Table of
contents

LIVING IN CANADA TOOL

The Government of Canada offers complete and detailed information on how someone can immigrate to Canada. Learn helpful information at canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada.

WORKING IN CANADA

Information about how to apply for work in Canada, how to extend a work permit, and how to hire a foreign worker. canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada.html.

STUDY GUIDE FOR CITIZENSHIP TEST

The study guide for the Citizenship test is Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship. It contains the rights and responsibilities of Citizenship, and newcomers can study it to prepare for the citizenship test. canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada.html.

SERVICE CANADA

Service Canada provides you with access to many Government of Canada programs and services. You can find information specifically for newcomers at servicecanada.gc.ca.



Back to
Table of
contents

Newcomer's To-Do Checklist

Review this checklist and identify your top 5 priorities. The darkened square indicates when to complete the task (first two weeks, first two months, first six months). Everyone's newcomer journey will be different, so these timeframes are only suggestions.

CATEGORY	FIRST 2 WEEKS	FIRST 2 MONTHS	FIRST 6 MONTHS
Getting to Know Calgary			
Book an appointment with a Gateway Planner			
Consumer Services			
Arrange for a phone number for people to contact me			
Know where to access the Internet, if needed			
Set up utilities, if necessary (water, gas, electricity, Internet)			
Explore grocery stores and markets in my community			
Housing			
Find housing that fits my budget			
Plan for all housing-related costs, including insurance, utilities, and property taxes			
Understand my rights and obligations as a tenant			
Community Involvement			
Find out about programs and facilities at my local community centre			
Find the library in my neighbourhood and get a library card			
Learn about ethnocultural events close to my area			
Apply for City of Calgary Recreation Fee Assistance			
Transportation			
Learn about the public transit options in my community			
Apply for my Alberta driver's licence or ID card			
Apply for City of Calgary Low Income Monthly Transit Pass			
Helping the Environment			
Get a Blue Box and Green Box			
Find my local drop-off locations for used electronics			
Health and Wellness			
Apply for my AHCIP card			
Find my family doctor			
Purchase health insurance for my first three months in Canada			
Locate the nearest hospital and walk-in clinic			
Talk to someone about my stress			

CATEGORY	FIRST 2 WEEKS	FIRST 2 MONTHS	FIRST 6 MONTHS
Child Care			
Arrange for child-care			
Register for child-care subsidy			
Elementary, Junior and High School			
Find which school(s) my children will be attending			
Know my child's school registration deadline			
Arrange transportation for my children to and from school			
Obtain all the documents needed to register my children in school			
Apply for Fee Waiver			
Post-Secondary Education			
Know the college or university application deadlines for my children			
Know the general admission requirements			
Apply for any available funding support			
Continuing Education			
Learn about college, university, or school board courses relevant to my interest or occupation			
Language Training			
Complete a language assessment			
Identify the language program that best suits my needs			
Speak to a Gateway Planner to learn about language training specific to my occupation			
Preparing for Work			
Apply for my Social Insurance Number (SIN)			
Find out if my occupation is regulated in Alberta			
Have my educational credentials evaluated			
Locate bridging programs in my region that are relevant to my career goals			
Looking for Work			
Speak with a Gateway Planner about my job-search needs and next steps			
Access employment services			
Gain a basic understanding of Alberta workplace culture			
Prepare a resumé and cover letter			
Begin to network and develop a list of social and professional contacts			
Locate volunteer/unpaid internship programs available in my area of expertise			
Workplace Rights			
Understand my rights and obligations under the Alberta Human Rights Act			

CATEGORY	FIRST 2 WEEKS	FIRST 2 MONTHS	FIRST 6 MONTHS
Starting Your Own Business			
Contact a business centre to get information about starting my own business			
Money and Banking			
Research banking options and open a bank account			
Speak to my bank representative about banking services for newcomers			
Apply for a credit card			
Taxes and Benefits			
Apply for Canada Child Benefit (if eligible)			
Apply for GST benefit (if eligible)			
Apply for additional health benefits			
Receive confirmation of CCB, GST, ACHB, AAHB, etc.			

Back to
Table of
contents

Index

A

About Alberta 8, 10

AHCIP 39, 85, 88

AHCIP card 88

Apprenticeships 52

B

banking 65, 90

benefits 52, 61, 67, 68, 80, 90

bridging programs 89

C

child care 48, 49

consumer awareness 17

continuing education 53

credit 65, 66, 67, 90

cycling 28

D

dentist 43

disability 72, 73

driver's licence 26, 88

driving 27

E

education 28, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 58, 63, 83

elementary school 49

emergency useful phone numbers 84

employment 56, 60, 68, 83

F

family doctor 88

food 18, 74

G

geography 8

government 7, 19

H

health care 41

housing 22, 88

Human Rights Act 90

I

introduction to Alberta 8

introduction to Calgary 12

introduction to Canada 6

L

language assessment 89

language training 86

LGBTQ 77

M

mental health 44, 83

P

phone and Internet services 17

public transportation 25

R

recreation 74, 78

recycling 33, 34

rights 23, 88, 90

S

seniors 68, 80

settlement agencies 15

Social Insurance Number 89

T

taxes 67, 88

transportation 28, 89

V

volunteering 24

W

weather 34

work 59, 60

looking for work 59

preparing for work 57

workplace culture 89

workplace rights 60

Y

youth 83

O CANADA: THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

O Canada!

Our home and native land!

True patriot love in all of us command.

With glowing hearts we see thee rise,

The True North strong and free!

From far and wide,

O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

God keep our land glorious and free!

O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

In French:

Ô Canada!

Terre de nos aïeux,

Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux!

Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,

Il sait porter la croix!

Ton histoire est une épopée

Des plus brillants exploits.

Et ta valeur, de foi trempée,

Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.

Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.

Back to
Table of
contents



Disclaimers

Photo Credits

[Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

canva.com

created by

Immigrant Services Calgary

visit

gatewayconnects.ca

