

CONNECTIONS

QUIS Newsletter



QUINTE REGION RESPONDS TO UKRAINE CRISIS

Since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, there has been an overwhelming show of support to Ukraine from community members in the Quinte region. From moral support to donations of space, money and material goods, the community seems eager to provide support where they can. QUIS has received many inquiries about how and where support can be directed for Ukrainian nationals inside and outside Canada.

As the situation unfolds, both the government and QUIS responses may need to change. QUIS is monitoring events and news releases on a regular basis and will provide timely updates when needed. We do expect that there will be some families arriving in our region but at this point, it is too fluid and uncertain to give specific numbers or timeframes for arrivals. We can, however, commit to being welcoming, supportive, and helpful in guiding newcomers and community members in the settlement process and throughout integrating and adapting to new lifestyles.

The numbers posted on the IRCC website tracker (as of late April) show that almost 20,000 Ukrainians have now arrived in Canada with permissions to stay temporarily up to a period of three years. You can check out the IRCC Key Figures website yourself at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/ukraine-measures/key-figures.html>.

For those fleeing the violence and displacement happening in Ukraine, both the provincial and federal governments have announced a number of support services that will help with meeting basic needs and integration efforts. At the federal level, IRCC has announced full settlement services will be available to Ukrainians who arrive here and the province of Ontario has also extended eligibility for OHIP and drug benefits along with access to language learning and public education support. While this crisis response looks very different from previous refugee responses, QUIS is glad to see that the temporary nature of the emergency visas has not impacted the ability of Ukrainian nationals in accessing essential services.

If you are looking for more information, you can contact Quinte Immigration Services at 613-968-7723 or info@quinteimmigration.ca. The Government of Canada has also created a hotline for family members looking to bring relatives from Ukraine to Canada. You can reach it by calling 613-321-4243 or visiting the IRCC website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/ukraine-measures.html>.

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IRCC UPDATES

News Releases & Information from Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada

SPECIAL MEASURES FOR UKRAINE EMERGENCY TRAVEL

In response to the February invasion of the Ukraine by Russia and the resulting refugee crisis, the Canadian government has announced special travel measures for Ukrainians with family members in Canada and for those wanting to escape the violence in Europe. At the moment these measures are meant to be temporary but visas and permits can last for up to 3 years in length. **See cover story for more details.*

IMPLIED STATUS NOW CALLED MAINTAINED STATUS

In February 2022, IRCC updated its official term for documenting status while waiting on a final decision. If an application to extend or change a temporary permit was submitted to IRCC ahead of the initial expiry, the applicant remains under a valid immigration status until a final decision has been given by IRCC. This was previously called implied status but the official term is now called maintained status and carries all of the same rules.

REFUGEE CLAIM ONLINE PORTAL

In January 2022, IRCC launched a new online portal for asylum seekers to submit refugee claims for protection inside Canada. This portal replaces the paper application process and is being referred to by CBSA officers and immigration officers at land borders and airports.

*Note: The timeframe for submitting your claim has not changed and changes are difficult to be made if errors in information occur. QUIS strongly encourages the use of a refugee lawyer through the Law Society of Ontario to ensure you understand the application requirements.

COLLEGE OF IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS FORMALLY RECOGNIZED

In January 2022, IRCC announced that the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC) officially became the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC). The newly formed College is the regulatory body for all Immigration Consultants in Canada including designating representatives in applications, providing legal representation in immigration cases, and all training and professional courses leading to a person calling themselves a consultant. The CICC is also responsible for oversight, complaint mechanisms, and disciplinary actions regarding fraudulent activity.

IRCC recently announced it is updating processing timeframes on its website. This will show more accurate waiting times for applications that are being processed.



- QUOTE OF THE DAY -

*It does not
matter how
slowly you go as
long as you do
not stop.*

- CONFUCIUS -

COVID-19 : NEWS & UPDATES

INFORMATION ABOUT TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, REOPENING UPDATES & ONGOING HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES

TESTING UPON ARRIVAL NO LONGER REQUIRED TO ENTER COUNTRY

Starting April 1, 2022 there will no longer be a requirement for fully vaccinated travelers to test for COVID-19 upon arrival at a port of entry. There will continue to be random rapid testing so that the government can monitor for new strains of the virus. If selected for a random test, there will not be a quarantine requirement.

There are currently 8 vaccines that are approved by Health Canada to help fight the COVID-19 virus. Any fully vaccinated traveler arriving in Canada needs to have proof that they have received the appropriate doses of any of the approved vaccines. Using the ARRIVECAN mobile app is required to upload documentation and provide the Government of Canada with information upon arrival to the country.

ONTARIO RE-OPENS TO MOST SERVICES

Most of the provinces in Canada have lifted the majority of restrictions for public gatherings and businesses. There may still be offices, government services, or businesses that continue to choose to keep some safety measures in place and we encourage you to respect their decision and follow any guidelines still in place at those locations. Many health officials are still encouraging people to wear masks in large or crowded spaces to maintain everyone's health even though the provincial mandate has ended.

****Note**** Office appointments at QUIS are being scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for settlement services only. If you need to see a settlement worker in person, you will need to book your appointment in advance and wear a mask the entire time you are in the office. There will also be a quick COVID-19 screening upon your arrival.

LOOKING FOR VACCINE INFORMATION OR GETTING A BOOSTER DOSE?

Currently, all individuals aged 5 and over are eligible for their first or second COVID-19 vaccination. Children between the ages of 5 and 11, in most cases, will receive a pediatric dose of the Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine. For more information on vaccine safety in children, visit <https://www.hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines-youth>.

Accessing vaccines is NOT dependent on your immigration status - it is available to everyone in Ontario. Contact Hastings & Prince Edward Public Health at 613-966-5500 if you do not have a provincial health card and want to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Visit their website for more information on vaccinations and current appointment bookings.



APRIL SHOWERS, MAY FLOWERS & SPRING CELEBRATIONS

Purim & Passover

- Purim is a Jewish festival that commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from Haman, an official of the Achaemenid empire, who was planning to kill all the Jewish people in Persia. His plan was disrupted by Mordecai, of the tribe of Benjamin, and his cousin, Esther, who was the queen of Persia.
- The day has become one of feasting and rejoicing for Jewish people. People exchange food and drink, donate to charities for the poor, eat a celebratory meal and recite from the Scroll of Esther, a Jewish text. *This year, Purim took place from the evening of March 16 to the evening of March 17.*
- Passover begins April 15 and continues to April 23 as a Jewish festival of freedom that celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt and their transition from slavery to freedom. Special meals called Seders and the retelling of the exodus journey mark this holiday.

Hindu festival of Holi & Sikh Vaisakhi celebration

- Holi is an ancient Hindu festival also known as the Festival of Spring, the Festival of Colours and the Festival of Love. It celebrates the victory of good over evil and also the victory of Vishnu, a Hindu god, over Hiranyakashipu.
- Holi celebrates the coming of spring. People meet friends and family, play and laugh and work to repair broken relationships. Groups of people carry drums and other instruments and move from place to place singing and dancing. *This year, Holi was celebrated on March 18.*
- Vaisakhi is a Sikh celebration also known as Khalsa Day and is marked by prayers, sharing of faith and often a parade to commemorate the significant contribution of Sikhs around the world. This year, Vaisakhi is celebrated on April 14.
- Sikhs have pledged themselves to a spirit of service, equality, and compassion. Sikhs wear the articles of their faith to represent the commitments they have made.



Photo credit: Olga Filippova



Ramadan & Eid-Al Fitr

- The month long fasting of Ramadan begins April 2 until about May 2. Muslims fast from dawn to sunset to train themselves in their faith and practice commitment to traits like patience, self-control, humility and generosity.
- Once the month has passed, a big celebration called Eid-Al Fitr is held with large meals and family gatherings.

Easter

- This Christian holiday moves around depending on the lunar calendar and commemorates the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ over 3 days.
- Traditionally this is a serious and solemn holiday marked by religious services but also celebrates the redeeming power of God to all humankind.
- This year Easter is taking place from April 15 to April 17. Orthodox Easter is celebrated April 24.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...



- Sikhism is a religion and philosophy founded in the Punjab state of India in the 1400's.
- In 2019 there were over 500,000 Sikh persons living in Canada making it the second-largest Sikh population in the world (in proportion to overall country population).
- The government of Canada enacted Sikh Heritage Month in 2019 to recognize the significant contributions that Sikh Canadians have made to Canada's society, economy, politics and culture.
- The core principles of Sikhism include generosity, equality, openness, and compassion.
- Sikhism also stresses the equality of all men and women and emphasizes service to humanity.





UPCOMING EVENTS & INFO SESSIONS

MAY 2022

- **Election Information Session - May 05 at 12pm via Zoom**

A guest speaker from Elections Ontario will be sharing information about voting options in the upcoming Ontario provincial election.

- **Community Development Council - May 13 at 12pm via Zoom**

A guest speaker from the Community Development Council of Quinte will be discussing low-cost food and baby supply programs as well as community gardens and cooking workshops.

- **Clothing Giveaway - May TBD**

A free giveaway of professional clothing, donations courtesy of Maurice's in Belleville.

JUNE 2022

- **CELPIP Testing Information Session - June 08 at 12pm via Zoom**

A guest speaker from a new CELPIP testing centre in Kingston will be sharing information about the CELPIP testing process as well as the services offered at their centre.



Email Meghan to register for info sessions & workshops at ceotis@quinteimmigration.ca



ARTS & CULTURE EVENTS

Looking to learn more about acting or improving your theatre arts skills?

SOLE Theatre is offering acting classes for adults and children from April 19 to June 21. Courses offered in Belleville and participants will learn a variety of key skills. Visit

<https://downtownbelleville.ca/events/sole-theatre-acting-classes/> for more information!

The Smokin' 116 restaurant is offering a Karaoke night

Thursday is Karaoke night, starting in April, for those who enjoy signing along to their favourite song!

There will be prizes for singers, food and drink specials and most importantly, fun times! Disposable microphone covers will be provided and the microphone will be sanitized after each performer to keep everyone safe and healthy. 116 Pinnacle Street in Belleville

The Mother of all Craft Shows - 13th annual arts & craft show

May 7 from 9:30 to 4:00 at The Grand (formerly Greek Hall) - 70 Harder Drive, Belleville. Enjoy handcrafted gifts for purchase created by more than 50 vendors. \$5 entry fee and you can visit

<https://discoverbelleville.ca/event/the-mother-of-all-craft-shows/> for more information.

Circles of Joy - Art, Music & Dance Community Festival

Family friendly event at Macaulay Heritage Park in Picton that celebrates storytelling, music and community arts collectives. May 14 from 1pm to 5pm with \$10 suggested donation. Visit

<https://www.deptofillumination.org/circles-of-joy> for more information.

RECREATION PROGRAMS - CHILDREN & ADULTS

Looking to get active?

SPORTS & WELLNESS ACTIVITIES
RETURN!

City of Belleville has a wide range of programs for children, adults & groups. Check out their website for details - <https://www.belleville.ca/en/learn-and-play/recreation-programs.aspx>

Quinte West Soccer Club has details on registration for ages up to 18 on their website at <https://www.quintewestsoccerclub.com/>

Beaches, splash pads, and swimming pools are available in Belleville, Trenton and Prince Edward County. Check out the websites for your municipality for more details!

Prince Edward Soccer Association is looking for Referees for the 2022 season. Training and payment included! <https://www.pecsa.ca/>

Belleville Bulldogs Rugby is hosting a free 'Try Rugby' day on April 30 at Mary Ann Sills park. They are also looking for referees. Visit their website for the details - <http://www.bulldogsrugby.com/>

INCOME TAX CLINIC



QUIS offers a Community Volunteer Income Tax Clinic each spring. The program is free of charge and is designed for people who have a simple tax situation and who have a modest income. This year, the clinic is being offered on the phone or by Zoom.

To make an appointment, please contact Quinte Immigration Services at 613-968-7723 ext.222. John Mark Robertson, the co-ordinator for the program, will go over a consent form prior to the tax appointment, as well as sending out a checklist of documents to prepare for the appointment.

On the day of the appointment, you will receive a call or Zoom call from Ken Palmer, the tax volunteer for QUIS. He will ask for information from the different tax documents you have. Once the appointment is completed, Ken will send out the return, which will be forwarded to you by John Mark. If you have any questions or want to make a tax appointment, please contact John Mark by email or phone.

RESOURCES FROM REVENUE CANADA

Canada Revenue Agency has posted a number of helpful tips for newcomers on their website. The website lists a variety of information to help in filing taxes for the first time, benefits of filing to receive financial credits, where to find help with taxes and even a short video that is available in 12 different languages. <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/news/newsroom/tax-tips/tax-tips-2022/new-canada-new-doing-taxes.html>

Click on the following link to watch the video in Arabic, Cantonese, English, Farsi, French, Hindi, Russian, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, and Urdu. <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/news/cra-multimedia-library/individuals-video-gallery/benefits-credits-newcomers-canada.html>

*The filing deadline for
most taxes is April 30,
2022.*

*Don't miss out on getting
credits and benefits!*



LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Information & Updates on recent activities of the QLIP

The Quinte Local Immigration Partnership (QLIP) is a Federal government funded initiative housed at Quinte Immigration Services. The 72 partner agencies of the QLIP work collaboratively with other agencies, governments and institutions along with newcomers in our region to build a better community by coordinating and improving access to services for newcomer integration. The QLIP meets approximately once every two months to discuss partner members' projects and programs related to these types of issues.

As changes have taken place with regards to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the partnership continues to build enduring relationships with health care and mental health services. These kinds of services are also strongly linked with anti-racism efforts. The QLIP has built a solid anti-racism sub-committee over the past year, including 10 community agencies. That committee has identified projects that could increase the capacity of our community for greater diversity and inclusion. Ideas from this committee were presented to the United Nations Association Quinte Branch led "Leadership for an Inclusive Community" event regarding anti-racism in December 2021. The committee has also applied for funding from several sources and awaits results so that planning for a large-scale anti-racism project can take shape. QLIP is also a proud partner on the very successful United Way Community Conversations for Diversity project which has recently sparked excellent community engagement on diversity, equity and inclusion in the month of April 2022.

Refugee needs have emerged from mid-2021 to our current time. The QLIP provides critical information updates, connection, coordination and support to community agencies and newcomers looking to help with the current crises in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Additional projects that the QLIP continues to support are: the Quinte West Community Safety and Well-Being committee where QLIP sits on both the steering committee and the Housing Action Table; the City of Belleville Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee which has planned events for Belleville such as the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in September 2021, the first Diwali festival in October 2021, and the first Caribbean festival taking place in June 2022.

To understand or learn more about the Quinte Local Immigration Partnership, please see our website at: <https://www.quintelip.ca/> or contact us at: lip@quinteimmigration.ca.



QUIS RECEIVES FUNDING TO CONTINUE EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

On Friday, April 22, Bay of Quinte MPP Todd Smith announced that Quinte Immigration Services had been chosen as a recipient of funding through the Skills Development Fund as part of the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. The funding announcement will allow QUIS to continue to provide “soft and hard skills training in multiple sectors of the labour market, such as hospitality, manufacturing, transportation or finance and support facilitators in the hiring process” as quoted in an *In Quinte* news article.

Bay of Quinte MPP Todd Smith announced more than \$800,000 would be invested into the program to allow for the region to attract and retain newcomers to fill the many unfilled job postings throughout the region and help assist employers with matching skilled newcomers to the needs of their businesses.

"People immigrating to our region bring knowledge, skills, and a willingness to work. Quinte Immigration Services is effective in helping them overcome barriers to finding good, stable employment in our region. This funding ensures that vital work continues, benefiting both job seekers and employers in our local economy." - MP Todd Smith

A number of local politicians attended the announcement held at the QUIS office, including Mitch Panciuk, Mayor of Belleville; Jim Harrison, Mayor of Quinte West; Todd Smith, MPP Bay of Quinte; Rick Phillips, Warden of Hastings County; and Ryan Williams, MP Bay of Quinte. Paul Osbourne, President of Board of Directors at QUIS, was also in attendance to represent the agency. See the *In Quinte* news article for further details and related statements - <https://inquinte.ca/story/province-provides-support-to-help-train-newcomers>.



Photo credit: Joshua Thompson



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

*Highlighting the contributions of newcomers and immigrants
in our region*

Photo credit: Terrance Fang

Want a “million dollar” haircut? Visit “Millionhairst” barber shop in Belleville!

In operation since May 2019, Millionhairst is owned by Terrance Fang of Belleville. Terrance is a trained barber with 10 years of experience. Terrance immigrated to Canada from China in November 2009 with his sister and her family. For the first two years they lived together in Kingston, where Terrance’s sister owned a restaurant. When the family decided to sell the restaurant and move to Belleville, Terrance followed. He settled into the Belleville community and studied to improve his English at Loyola School of Continuing Education.

When he felt his English was strong enough, Terrance enrolled in Art and Technique Academy of Hairstyling and Esthetics which was located in downtown Belleville at the time (the school is now permanently closed). The instruction Terrance received at the hairstyling school gave him the skills he needed to work in a hair salon in Belleville’s east end for 3 years. Although it was a great experience for him, he became more interested in barbering. So, for the next 3 and a half years, he gained more experience at a well-established barber shop in Belleville.

When Terrance saw a barber shop for sale on Kijiji, he jumped at the chance, and purchased the shop, which he re-named Millionhairst. As the site had already been a barber shop for many years, he was able to take over and just add his own touches. Terrance said the biggest challenge of owning a business, for him, is just the unknowns. He had to learn the basics of owning a business and he wasn’t sure if he would be able to keep existing customers because he had to raise the prices to compete and keep afloat. He was also worried about getting new customers because the location of the shop was close to the edge of town.

As a newcomer business owner, Terrance advises potential entrepreneurs to, “have a blueprint...of what you want to do to turn it into a business, and then lay the ground work step-by-step”. He also says, “Start small and gain experience until you get more money or improve your English – or whatever you need to do. Everyone is different”.

Terrance wants his customers to know that he and his staff really care about the service they provide. In the future, he wants to make improvements where they can, including small shop renovations and visual improvements, more training for staff, and generally continuing to provide the best possible service.

Millionhairst is located at 600 Dundas St E, Belleville, ON. Their hours of operation are Tuesday to Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm and Saturday from 8:30am to 4pm. The shop follows all the precautions for COVID-19.

To make an appointment, call 613-800-0090. Visit their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/millionhairstbarbershop/> and check out great photos of past clients with great hair styles! Terrance also has Instagram accounts at: millionhairstbarbershop_ OR terrance_millionhairst.



Photo credit: Terrance Fang

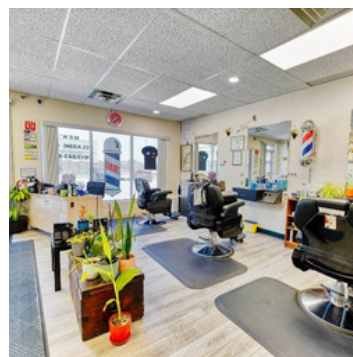


Photo credit: Terrance Fang