

Frequently Asked Questions about LGBTIQ2+ Refugee Sponsorship For United Church of Canada Communities of Faith

When did Canada start its program for LGBTIQ2+ refugees?

Canada's [LGBTIQ2+ refugee sponsorship program](#) began in 2011.

Why is it important to sponsor an LGBTIQ2+ refugee?

LGBTIQ2+ refugees are some of the [most vulnerable refugees in the world](#) and have some of the most vulnerable resettlement profiles (heightened physical and legal protection risks). They suffer physical, sexual, and verbal abuse and discrimination, and many face imprisonment and death. They urgently need church sponsors that can support their journey to a new and safe life.

In 2016, the United Nations' Security Council issued a resolution condemning violence against LGBT people. Soon after, the UN Human Rights Council announced the appointment of an "independent expert" to monitor [LGBT violence around the world](#).

Many communities of faith want to welcome families, especially children who are at risk. Both The United Church of Canada and Affirm United celebrate and understand this. We would encourage communities of faith who are sponsoring a family to also sponsor one or more LGBTIQ2+ people at the same time.

Who else sponsors LGBTIQ2+ refugees?

Canada is one of only a few countries in the world with an [LGBTIQ2+ refugee program](#) and the United Church is one of only three* national faith groups that can sponsor LGBTIQ2+ refugees in Canada. This gives United Church communities of faith the ability to offer safety to people fleeing persecution because of their gender and/or sexual identities.

** The Unitarians, Christian Mission Alliance, and The United Church of Canada are the only national faith sponsorship agreement holders. Metropolitan Community Church Toronto (MCCT) is a regional sponsor.*

What organizations work with LGBTIQ2+ refugees in Canada?

- [Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\)](#)
- [Rainbow Refugee](#)
- [Capital Rainbow](#)
- [Rainbow Railroad](#)
- [Francoqueer](#)

How do these organizations support churches with LGBTIQ2+ refugee sponsorships?

By way of an example, here is how [Rainbow Refugee](#) works with Sponsorship Agreement Holders like the United Church:

- **Blended Visa-Office Referred (BVOR) LGBTIQ2+ Refugees:** United church communities of faith cosponsoring a newcomer with Rainbow Refugee can offer the newcomer financial support (start-up costs plus three months' support) through the Rainbow Resettlement Assistance Program (RRAP). This is in addition to the three months of financial support available through the federal government's Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). The sponsoring group would provide financial support for the remaining six months of the one-year sponsorship. In addition, the sponsoring group provides practical and emotional support for the newcomer. For more information on BVOR, see [Frequently Asked Questions about Refugee Sponsorship](#).
- **Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Cases:** The LGBTIQ2+ newcomer would receive three months' income support and start-up costs from RRAP. The sponsoring group may need to assume additional financial responsibility. For more information on PSR, see [Frequently Asked Questions about Refugee Sponsorship](#).

What financial support is provided for sponsors of LGBTIQ2+ refugees?

Sponsoring an LGBTIQ2+ Refugee is the same process as regular refugee sponsorship—same process, same paperwork. However, the federal government offers **increased financial support** for LGBTIQ2+ refugees (start-up costs plus three months' support) that they don't offer other refugees. Additionally, LGBTIQ2+ cases can be expedited.

Where can I learn more about LGBTIQ2+ refugee sponsorship?

Learn more on the Sponsoring an LGBTIQ2+ Refugee page on the [United Church website](#).

Who can I contact for more information or to express interest in sponsoring an LGBTIQ+ refugee?

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