



COVID-19 Update – CWICE Remains Open for Service

Peel CAS has been actively monitoring the COVID-19 situation and potential impact to staff and the community. The health and safety of our staff and children, youth and families we serve are our highest priority. We are continuing to deliver child welfare services, with a differential approach.

We want you to know that the Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence (CWICE) remains open and available to you, should you need to consult on an immigration/settlement or border-related situation. Our team is working remotely, and continues to respond to your requests.

We know you continue to support children, youth, and families across Ontario with varying needs, and we want to share updates and information to consider while providing service and resources.

Updates:

- At times, there are emergency situations when our partners at Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) or Global Affairs Canada (GAC) ask us to respond to situations when children and youth are in need of protection. These may be situations where children have been separated from legal guardians and/or need to repatriate to Canada.
 - At present, the only airport open in Ontario is the Toronto Pearson International Airport. The situation there has been rapidly changing over recent days, with flight cancellations and varying volume of travelers. For up-to-date information, please see: <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>
 - As of Friday March 20, 2020, refugee claimants/asylum seekers will be turned away from the Canadian border.
 - Please note that some clients, who have been reporting to Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), may need to continue to report during this period.
- Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has cancelled all citizenship ceremonies and tests until further notice.
 - They have also postponed in-person refugee claim appointments and resident landing appointments until April 13, 2020.
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html>
- The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) has postponed in-person hearings and mediations.
 - They will continue to have Detention Reviews, but have implemented a number of precautionary measures, which include hearings by phone or video-conferencing.
 - They are further granting temporary extensions of time limits for Filing a Basis of Claim Form and the Practice Notice on the Temporary Extension for Time Limits for Filing a Notice of Appeal and Perfecting an Appeal.
 - <https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/Pages/index.aspx>

Information about the types of requests we may encounter:



- All children, youth, and families we serve in the community may experience additional stressors during this period, and immigration status could compound these stressors. Please consider the following when assessing/providing assessment and ongoing service to families:
 - Do families have strong informal networks or support systems?
 - What is their level of social isolation, and ability to remain connected using technology?
 - Are they worried about family member(s) in another country?
 - What is the family's access/eligibility to services?
 - Where would they seek medical information or advice if needed?
 - Consider providing them with resources and information that is accurate and up-to-date

Resources available for families:

Legal Supports:

Legal Aid Ontario

Apply for legal aid certificate by phone

1-800-668-8258

To find a local office: <https://www.legalaid.on.ca/more/corporate/contact-legal-aid-ontario/>

Refugee Law Office

They are working remotely so intakes and appointments can be completed by phone

Phone 1-800-668-8258

Email refugee@lao.on.ca

Steps to Justice

Frequently asked questions

<https://stepstojustice.ca/covid-19>

Settlement supports for newcomers:

OCASI

Ontario-wide council on agencies serving immigrants.

<https://ocasi.org/>

Canadian Council for Refugees

National not-for-profit organization for refugee rights.

<https://ccrweb.ca/>

For local recommendations, please make a referral to CWICE (see below).



Financial supports:

Government of Canada

Several programs announced to assist families during COVID-19, which many families will be entitled to:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#individual>

Health Related Resources:

Telehealth Ontario

Free advice by phone
1-866-797-0007

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-medical-advice-telehealth-ontario>

Cover Health

Speak to a Canadian licensed doctor over the phone or by video and it's covered by OHIP
10am-7pm (with possibility of hour expansion)

<https://cover.health/>

Public Health

Up to date health information

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

Public Health Canada

Up to date national health information

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html>

World Health Organization (WHO)

Up to date global health information

<https://www.who.int/>

Mental Health and Addictions Supports:

Ontario residents – can call 211
Toronto residents – can call 311

Connex Ontario

Addiction, Mental Health and Problem Gambling

<https://www.connexontario.ca/>

1-866-531-2600

Mental Health Helpline

1-866-531-2600

Good2Talk



For young people ages 17-25
1-866-925-5454

Kids Help Phone
For children ages 5-20
1-800-668-6868

Refer to CWICE for additional assistance:

- We know many families are encountering barriers, and we want you to know we are here to assist. Please let us know if you are seeing any trends and/or need to consult.

Email: cwice@peelcas.org

Online: peelcas.org/cwice

Additional CWICE Resources:

<https://oacas.sharepoint.com/OACASDocuments/Guide%20-%20Immigration%20Status%20Matters%20-%20September%202019.pdf>