

LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Collaborative Agreement 2015

*Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS)
Local Immigration Partnership Council*



Funded by:



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Table of Contents

	Page
Purpose	3
Shared Vision, Mission and Values	4
Expectations	5
Accountability	5
Commitment of Partners	6
Definition of Collaboration	6
Principles of Collaborative Practices	7
The Spirit of Collaborative Relationships	8
Referral	9
Culturally Respectful Practice	9
Integrated Services	9
Communication and Dispute Resolution	10
Confidentiality and Sharing of Information	11
Legislation	11
Professional Codes of Conduct	11
Obtaining Consent to Share Information	11
Duty to Report	12
Guidelines for Sharing Information	12
What's relevant?	13
Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships	14
Welcome Centre	15
References	17
Appendices	
A. Community Partners	18
B. Welcome Centre: Dispute Resolution	19
C. Youth Consent	19

Purpose

This Local Immigration Partnership Community Collaborative Agreement has been drafted for the Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS) Local Immigration Partnership Council, who are committed to the idea of collaboration.

As part of the New Westminster Community Settlement Plan, this agreement has been developed by the Council's Settlement Strategy Working Group to identify common ground that can help local community agencies and organizations work together more effectively.

This Document should be regarded as a Living Document open to change. It will evolve to reflect its purpose and will adapt to new circumstances.

The core values of collaboration include recognizing and respecting differences, valuing diversity, and trust.

The intent is to work together to enhance opportunities for newcomers. Collaboration means providing more encompassing support while still offering choice within an array of services that meet individual needs and preferences.

The ultimate goal of LIPs is to further streamline and integrate services for new immigrants and refugees through:

- Coordination of referral and support
- Seamless service delivery
- Sharing of best practices
- Increased community receptivity

Shared Vision | Mission | Values

Vision

Our vision is a diverse, inclusive and caring community where all feel welcome and valued.

Mission

To work collaboratively and creatively to break down barriers, ease access to settlement-related services, promote social and economic inclusion, and develop opportunities for and with newcomers.

Values

-  Acceptance
-  Collaboration
-  Compassion
-  Inclusion
-  Integrity
-  Respect
-  Trust

Expectations

Every agency or organization in a collaborative relationship is distinct, each with its own history, vision, mandate, priorities, organizational culture and operational practices.

The impact of these differences will be reduced by clearly defining the process of collaboration and agreeing to adjust expectations, when reasonably possible, to accommodate differences.

Accountability

Accountability reflects what is expected, and if expectations are met.

It is understood that individual agencies and organizations have separate legal personalities and accountability mandates.

In the collaborative relationship partners roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined.

Partners will

- Agree upon realistic objectives and expectations
- Clarify roles - who is accountable for what and to whom
- Clarify how accountability will be assessed or reported
- Take responsibility for their own performance
- Take opportunities to assess whether expectations are met
- Be open to make adjustments based on review and assessment
- Use recommendations based on review to strengthen the collaborative process
- Provide opportunities to demonstrate achievements and celebrate success

It is important to note that strong, respectful and enduring relationships serve as a pre-requisite for progress and underlie the lessons learned about collaboration, moving toward service integration and enhancing service accessibility.

Human Early Learning Partnership, 2015

Commitment of Partners

Partners committed to this agreement agree to:

- Work together for the best interest of newcomers in the community
- Explore ways to collaborate to ease the settlement of newcomers
- Maintain trust and goodwill in their work together
- Design services that respect diversity
- Provide services in a culturally sensitive manner
- Engage in review and evaluation in order to ensure continuous quality improvement of service delivery

Partners commit to support collaboration over the long term.

Definition of Collaboration

Collaboration is a reciprocal, well-defined relationship in which multiple agencies and key community stakeholders philosophically and strategically choose to work in partnership towards shared objectives and common goals. In the case of this agreement, the goal is to support the successful settlement of newcomers in New Westminster.

Principles of Collaborative Practices

Collaboration will be mutually beneficial for all parties and support the capacity of agencies providing settlement and settlement-related services.

Council Partners are committed to:

- Invest time and energy in developing strong collaborative working relationships that will improve settlement outcomes for newcomers and build community capacity
- Ensure collaboration is not detrimental to any agency or organization
- Ensure newcomers benefit from collaborations
- Maintain an array of services to fit newcomer's needs

Community agencies and organizations are committed to:

- Develop partnerships where possible
- Refer newcomers to services and supports which will best meet their needs
- Support, acknowledge and build on the strengths of each organization
- Respect the mandates, cultural norms and values, methods, practice and approach, expectations, limitations and boundaries of other agencies and organizations
- Clearly articulate level of commitment to collaboration
- Compromise and be flexible where possible
- Make decisions through consensus where possible

*Collaborative
relationships must be
mutually beneficial.*

Collaborating Partners are committed to:

- Provide culturally respectful services
- Clearly define roles, responsibilities and expectations
- Cultivate trust and respect
- Be accountable
- Be open to the collaborative process

The Spirit of Collaborative Relationships

- All parties involved in collaboration will foster a climate of caring and respect.
- All parties will demonstrate dignity and compassion for others.
- All parties will acknowledge the expertise and perspective of others.
- All partners will seek to understand the roles, responsibilities and mandates of others.
- All parties will recognize the opinions of others with respect.
- All parties commit to model positive and open communication.
- All parties will be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that they take.
- All parties will maintain clear accountability practices.
- All parties will identify and address conflicts in a professional manner; suggestions and concerns will be offered with discretion and tact.
- All parties will protect privileged information.

*Collaboration is developed
over time with shared
experiences.*

Referral

Collaboration is key to offering newcomers services beyond the boundaries of any one agency, and referral of individuals to a network of community services provides *choice*.

Efforts will be made to ensure that settlement and settlement-related agencies and organizations are aware of all services available for newcomers in the community. This includes settlement services, employment and housing support, education, social support, language development, family programs, child care and pre-schools, support for physical and mental health, and other supports.

Ultimately, successful settlement is the goal of all agencies and the chief return of collaboration.

Partners agree:

- To recognize the role of other agencies and organizations in contributing to the successful settlement of newcomers.
- To refer newcomers to the programs and services that will best meet their needs.
- To strive to stay up-to-date about services for newcomers in New Westminster.

Culturally Respectful Practice: Diversity and Inclusion

All partners will demonstrate culturally respectful practice. Services provided through collaboration will be inclusive and respect diversity.

Diversity includes race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental health, religion, language, education, socio-economic status, and other factors contributing to an individual's identity.

Integrated Services

In collaborative partnerships, especially when services are co-located, there will be opportunities for integrated services to support clients with complex needs. Not all clients will have the need for an integrated approach.

Determining whether or not a client receives one service or multiple services will be resolved through a pre-determined screening process/approach. The primary objective will be to effectively address service gaps and to ensure that services are delivered in an appropriate, co-coordinated and holistic way.

Communication and Dispute Resolution

Effective communication is transparent, respectful, and essential to the success of collaboration.

With this in mind, all partners commit to:

- Model positive and open communication practices with all partners, service providers and stakeholders
- Treat each other with respect and listen when others are speaking
- Encourage others to speak
- Use humor positively and avoid sarcasm, ridicule or putdowns
- Listen to understand other perspectives and ask for clarification when needed
- Address misunderstanding

To promote effective communication and reduce misinterpretation or misunderstanding, when working collaboratively, partners commit to:

- Ensure partners are aware of incidents, meetings and events
- Meet regularly to discuss emerging issues, potential concerns, exchange information and share expertise
- Collaboratively build on suggestions and discuss concerns of others
- Recognize barriers to communication such as misconstrued words, tone, body language and/or facial expressions
- Ask for clarification when needed

When there is a disagreement, there is a commitment to:

- Discuss the underlying assumptions
- Seek differences of opinion to gain understanding
- Consider different points of view
- Clarify the issues; for example, identifying the real issues from surface issues
- Listen carefully to identify interests
- Look for “win-win” outcomes

Disputes arising out of or in connection with this agreement will follow this process:

Stage one: Address the situation directly

Stage two: Notify the supervisor of your agency

Stage three: Mediation

For Disputes arising out of or in connection with a Welcome Centre, see Appendix B.

Confidentiality and Sharing of Information

Understanding limits of sharing of information is especially significant when agencies collaborate closely, for example, in a Welcome and Integration Centre where agencies may co-deliver programs, integrate services, and/or work with the same clients.

Partners are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are intentionally or unintentionally exposed while working in a collaborative relationship.

Partners recognize that collaborating partners will have different levels of confidentiality obligations in regard to sharing of information.

Legislation

In BC, the legislation governing privacy and sharing of information includes:

- *BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA)* applies to school districts, municipalities and provincial bodies including the New Westminster Police Department
- *Child Family and Community Services Act* applies to MCFD information
- *Federal Privacy Act* and *Access to Information Act* govern the RCMP

Other acts that may be relevant include, but may not be limited to:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Immigration and Refugee Protection Act | • School Act |
| • Canadian Multiculturalism Act | • Infants Act |
| • The Health Act | • Youth Criminal Justice Act |
| • Employment Equity Act | |

Professional Codes of Conduct

Many professions have codes of ethics which guide professional behavior including confidentiality and information sharing.

Obtaining Consent to Share Information

The general intent of access to information and protection of privacy legislation is to limit the sharing of personal information without the consent of the person. Agencies are accountable for their clients' confidentiality. **No information should be shared without the individual's consent.** When consenting to share, the individual should be fully aware of what he/she is consenting to, and understand the result of the intended disclosure. The individual must also be aware that he/she can withdraw consent at any time by giving written or verbal notice. The requirement for proper consent includes:

- a clear authorization of what information will be disclosed;
- with whom the information will be shared;

- the purpose of the information to be shared;
- the length of time the information will be shared;
- an indication that the individual understands the risks and benefits of providing or not providing consent.

For specific details about Youth Consent, please see APPENDIX C.

Duty to Report

There are exceptions to confidentiality and these include the duty to report:

- If a client poses a risk to self or other
- Child protection disclosures

When an individual is in possession of information that suggests there is an imminent danger to the health and safety of any person or persons and the source of the information is reliable; the information can be shared without consent. If information is shared without consent the individual shall be advised with whom the information was shared.

Guidelines for Sharing Information

Generally speaking personal information can be shared under the following circumstances:

- with written consent e.g. release of information
- to avert or minimize imminent danger to the health or safety of any persons
- to report a youth/child who might need protection under CFCSA
- where organizations that are subject to FOIPPA are involved in a common program or integrated service
- by order of the court
- under the Youth Criminal Justice Act to facilitate the rehabilitation of a young person
- to cooperate with a police and or/child welfare investigation (Section 96 Child Family and Community Services Act)

Generally speaking, health information can be shared if the situation meets at least one of the following:

- written consent
- to avert or minimize imminent danger to health or safety of any person
- to report a child/youth who might need protection under CFCSA
- by order of the court
- to a person/agency who is responsible for providing continuing treatment and care to the individual

Use caution in sharing information:

- if consent is not provided or refused or where there may be a health or safety issue for any individual or group
- to report criminal activity to police (pursuant to FOIPPA)
- where there is a demand or request to produce information for a legal proceeding
- when a professional code of ethics may limit disclosure

Information can NEVER be shared if:

- there is a legislative requirement barring disclosure
- no consent and no need to know nor overriding health/safety concerns
- consent but no need to know
- no overriding health/safety concerns

What's relevant?

Information should be shared on a “need to know” basis.

The following process may help you decide whether or not you can share information.

- Think about it - what do you need to know or disclose to best serve the individual?
- Talk about it – sometimes people disagree on what needs to share. Discuss why you need to know and what you hope to accomplish.
- Try to understand and reach agreement – reaching an agreement on what information should be shared will require ongoing communication, patience and trust.

Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships

In a collaborative partnership, role and responsibilities for joint activities will be defined in a clear and concise manner.

Opportunities will be provided so all parties have mutual understanding regarding expectations, roles, responsibilities, decision-making and accountability.

In the case of co-location in a facility such as a Welcome and Integration Centre, roles and relationships will be defined. This could include, but not be limited to:

1. WINS Local Immigration Partnership Council:
 - a. Set the strategic direction of the Council
 - b. Create a Steering Committee from membership
 - c. Role and responsibility to be determined
2. Lead Agency in a Welcome Centre will be responsible for:
 - a. Communication between partners
 - b. Compilation and reporting of service data
 - c. Development of an evaluation framework
 - d. Financial statement reports
 - e. Formal agreements with partners
 - f. Hiring and supervision of Welcome Centre staff
 - g. Implementing an evaluation framework
3. Partner Agencies:
 - a. Are accountable to collaborating partners
 - b. Work collaboratively with partners, lead agency and steering committee
 - c. Provide description of services
 - d. Provide statistics and data as determined
 - e. Participate in formal evaluation
 - f. Abide by conflict resolution process
 - g. Follow building use protocols
 - h. Are not liable or responsible for activities of other members, except when acting as a signatory for a specific project
4. Other Roles may include a Management Committee, Steering Committee, Coordinator, Newcomer Advisory Committee

Welcome Centre

In the case of agencies working together in an environment such as a Welcome and Integration Centre:

- All parties will invest a significant amount of time and energy in the development of a Welcome Centre in order to improve outcomes for newcomers in New West.
- All parties involved agree to foster a climate of respect.
- Procedures based on the governance and model of the facility will be developed.
- All parties using a Welcome Centre will agree to, but not be limited to, the following:
 1. Governance
 2. Organizational Structure
 3. Decision-Making Protocols
 4. Service Delivery Principles, Policies and Procedures
 5. Team Approach and Integrated Services
 6. Welcome Centre Procedures
 - Room Booking
 - Available Space
 - Supplies and Equipment
 - Leaving the Building (Security and Worker Safety)
 - Emergency Procedures
 - Incident Reporting / Debriefing
 - Client Screening for Support / Referral
 - Tracking Data and Service Provision
 - Facility Maintenance/ Building Insurance
 - Dispute Resolution
 - Job Action / Union Strike

A *Protocol Agreement* to guide the use of a Welcome and Integration Centre will be created and may include but not be limited to the following:

1. Definition of 'Collaboration'
2. Principles of Collaborative Practice
3. Confidentiality of all organizations sharing space.
4. Evaluation
5. Insurance
 - Agency, staff and volunteer
6. Occupational Health and Safety regulations.
7. Management
8. Change Management:
9. Room Booking Procedures
 - Equipment and Supplies
 - Building Security and Maintenance
 - Emergency Procedures
 - Supervision of Clients/Participants
10. Rental and Other Applicable Charges
 - Insurance Coverage
 - Long Distance Phone Charges
 - Computers and Computer Maintenance
 - Move in Costs
 - Office Supplies
 - False Alarm/Runner Charges
 - Key Deposit Charge
11. Termination of the Agreement

References/Background Documents

Burnaby Youth Services Hub (BYSH) Steering Committee. (2011). *Burnaby Youth Services Hub Collaborative Agreement*. Burnaby: BYSH..

Canadian Council for Refugees. (1998). *Best settlement practices: Settlement services for refugees and immigrants in Canada*. Montreal, Que.: Canadian Council for Refugees. Retrieved from www.ccrweb.ca/bpfina1.htm

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. (2000) *Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 38*. Chapter 5-Effective referrals and collaborations. Viewed online at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64299

The Collaboration Roundtable. (2001). *The Partnership Toolkit: Tools for Building and Sustaining Partnerships*. Retrieved from www.pcrs.ca/uploads/7L/_A/7L_ATXdmJI3bp9lgOtVTKA/partnershiptoolkit.pdf

Ministry of Children and Families. (2007). *Collaborative Practice Guide for the Community of New Westminster: New Westminster's Approach to Integrated Case Management*.

Poon, B.T., Rowcliffe, P., Forer, B., Wiens, M., Matean, M., & Biferie, M. (2015). Evaluation report 2015. *BC Early Years Centres (EYC) initial lessons learned*. Vancouver, BC: Human Early Learning Partnership, School of Population and Public Health.

Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS). (2014). Terms of Reference (ToR). New Westminster.

APPENDIX A

Community Partners: Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS)

Membership to WINS is open to local agencies, organizations and community members via an expression of interest. To date, this includes representatives from

local immigration partnership council

- Century House
- City of New Westminster (Council)
- City of New Westminster (Economic Development)
- City of New Westminster (Parks, Culture and Recreation)
- City of New Westminster (Development Services)
- Community members
- Douglas College
- Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association
- Elizabeth Fry Society
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver
- Fraser Works Co-op Employment Services Centre
- Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia
- Lower Mainland Purpose Society (Host Agency of LIP Initiative)
- MOSAIC
- New Westminster Chamber of Commerce
- New West Early Childhood Development and Middle Years Committee
- New Westminster English Language Centre
- New Westminster Family Place
- New Westminster Public Library
- Pacific Immigrant Resources Society
- School District #40 (New Westminster)
- Spirit of the Children
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
- Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op
- Western Society for Children

APPENDIX B

Welcome Centre: Dispute Resolution

Disputes arising out of or within a Welcome Centre in connection with this agreement will follow this process:

Stage one: Address the situation directly

Stage two: Notify the supervisor of your agency and the Welcome Centre Coordinator

Stage three: Mediation

APPENDIX C

Youth Consent: In deciding whether a youth can give independent consent to release his/her personal information, the following can be taken into account:

- the governing legislation
- the age of the youth
- the youth's level of maturity. Is the youth able to understand the requirements of consent (what, who, why and how long)?
- the sensitivity of the information and the consequences of releasing it. For example, there may be information about a youth that should not be shared with a parent; there may be information that must be shared or withheld for the safety or best interests of the youth.

Factors to consider in determining whether a youth can consent:

- the ability to consent should be determined on a case-by-case basis through the application of the mature minor rule
- agency seeking the disclosure of the youth's personal information must determine if the youth is capable of appreciating the nature of the intended sharing of information and the consequences of its disclosure
- where consent is required the youth consent should always be obtained