



Welcome Place



Annual Report 2024-2025

Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director

At Welcome Place, we remain guided by our vision of a Manitoba where refugees are warmly welcomed and supported to build safe, dignified, and independent lives. Each day, our mission is clear: to make it easier for refugees to succeed in Manitoba.

This past year brought both significant challenges and meaningful progress. Refugee claimant arrivals reached levels not seen in years, stretching community resources and placing extraordinary pressure on Winnipeg's shelter system. In response, Welcome Place acted quickly and decisively.

On October 1, 2024, we expanded our Refugee Housing program, transforming three floors of our residence into transitional housing for claimants. With capacity for up to 155 residents, the facility has already welcomed hundreds of new arrivals. Residents receive daily meals, safe shelter, and access to settlement advisors, legal supports, and life skills trainers. The program goes beyond providing a bed—it offers stability, dignity, and community. Claimants contribute through volunteering in food distribution, cleaning, and peer mentorship, helping to build skills and connection.

Our In-Canada Protection services adapted to meet rising demand. Between April 2024 and March 2025, 916 new claimants were registered, resulting in nearly 5185 service interactions. Clients were assisted with claim preparation, work permits, and referrals to employment and housing partners. Volunteer law students, supported by a new on-site Legal Aid Manitoba lawyer, provided critical legal assistance, while weekly information sessions offered guidance on housing, employment, finances, and cultural orientation.

Our Sponsorship Program also remained strong. 59 new applications were submitted, representing 158 individuals, while 171 individuals arrived from past applications. Each represents real families striving to reunite and begin new lives in Manitoba. As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder, we continue to ensure this process is transparent, fair, and effective.

Collaboration was another defining theme of the year. We worked hand-in-hand with sector partners—including MANSO, Salvation Army, New Journey Housing, Siloam Mission, Canadian Muslim Women's Institute, IRCOM, and Legal Aid Manitoba—to coordinate services, reduce duplication, and strengthen wraparound supports. These relationships, built on trust, position Welcome Place as both a leader and a reliable collaborator in Manitoba's refugee-serving sector.

Through it all, our staff remained the backbone of our work. Many bring lived refugee experience, and all demonstrated resilience, compassion, and professional excellence in a demanding year.

Looking ahead, we expect high claimant numbers to continue. Guided by our renewed strategic plan, we will deepen our culture of care, expand outreach, and strengthen partnerships. With the support of funders, donors, and volunteers, together we are not only welcoming newcomers but ensuring they thrive and contribute to the fabric of Manitoba.



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Johan Maccès
Board Chair



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Shane Henderson
Executive Director

ABOUT US

Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. (MIIC Welcome Place) has provided comprehensive holistic settlement services to refugees and newcomers arriving in Manitoba for over 75 years.

OUR PURPOSE

MIIC Welcome Place exists to foster dignity, independence, and compassion in the lives of people who have come to Canada as refugees.

OUR MISSION

Every day, we make it easier for refugees to succeed in Manitoba.

OUR VISION

We see a world where refugees are warmly welcomed and well-established as upstanding, contributing members of communities across Manitoba.

OUR VALUES

Empathy Dignity
Collaboration Inspiration
Multiculturalism Accountability

Executive and Management Teams

Executive Director: **Shane Henderson**
Executive Assistant: **Marchris Gladys**
Director, Special Projects: **Marta Kalita**
Manager, Client Services: **Felicien Rubayita**

Board of Directors

Chair: **Johan Maccès** (CHRISTIAN)
Vice Chair: **Anton Safronov** (CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE)
Secretary/Treasurer: **Merdia Imame** (MUSLIM)
Past Chair: **Bruce Waite** (COMMUNITY AT LARGE)
Director: **Sharan Tappia** (SIKH)

OVERVIEW OF CLIENT SERVICES

Settlement Services provides linguistically and culturally appropriate in-person support to newcomers in their native language. Settlement support includes providing assistance to apply for various subsidies, teaching how to complete important document applications and renewals, providing referrals to specialized services and notarization of documents required by newcomers.

Sponsorship Services works with active and potential sponsors to ensure they are aware of and fulfilling their obligations to Privately Sponsored Refugees. We provide wrap-around support guiding them through the process to sponsor and welcome their loved ones. We also work with newly arrived refugees to ensure they are receiving the support they need to settle successfully.

In-Canada Protection Services provides paralegal and settlement services to refugee claimants as they navigate the complex legal and social systems. MIIC Welcome Place Advisors, with support from community partnerships and volunteers from the University of Manitoba Law Students, help refugee claimants prepare for the refugee hearing process. Refugee claimants are offered individualized settlement support, including referrals to Employment and Income Assistance, medical services, housing resources etc. according to their needs.

Life Skills Services helps newcomers with multiple barriers develop the practical skills necessary for successful independent life in Canada. Training topics include Canadian culture, safety, hygiene, neighbourhood orientation, home upkeep and cleanliness, banking, public transportation, nutrition, economical shopping, and registering for programs in the community. Life Skills Trainers work with newcomers in their native language and provide hands-on teaching focusing on mastering fundamental skills.

Volunteer Services connects newcomers to people and resources in the community.

Newcomers are invited to actively participate in regular social, cultural, and recreational group activities and they can attend Conversational English, computer, and cooking classes. These activities, run by our family of volunteers, are free and available on a weekly schedule.

Interim Housing provides safe, short-term shelter for refugee claimants:

- For stays until set up with Employment and Income Assistance and rental accommodations found
- Provided with three meals a day
- Receive free Wi-Fi, laundry, and basic toiletries
- Receive seamless access to onsite settlement services and life skills training

UNITED WAY WINNIPEG

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN AT WELCOME PLACE

United Way Winnipeg funds our Volunteer Services department. It is through this funding that our clients receive access to many social and learning opportunities.

As a recipient of United Way Winnipeg funding, MIIC Welcome Place is happy to fundraise and give back to United Way Winnipeg so that other agencies have an opportunity to receive funding as well.

During the Fall 2024 fundraising campaign, staff at MIIC Welcome Place raised a whopping \$1,415! This remarkable number averages out to approximately \$70 per employee! We are tremendously proud of our selfless staff for their gifts for the benefit of others.



NAVIGATING A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Navigating a Changing Landscape

The 2024-2025 fiscal year challenged Welcome Place to dig deep and develop a new plan for the future. With the ever-changing political landscape and shifting government priorities, it became essential for the agency to continue evolving and adapting to maintain its relevance and active role in the refugee settlement sector.

A Legacy of Welcoming Newcomers

Since its founding in 1945, Welcome Place has been a beacon for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs). The residential units on the top three floors of our building served as the very first Canadian homes for thousands of newcomers. Families would stay with us for up to two weeks while we supported them in securing permanent housing and provided them with a strong foundation of settlement information crucial to their success in Canada.

Governmental Shifts and New Realities

However, a change in government priorities in 2019 led to a decision to redirect GARs to another agency. This transition meant that Welcome Place would no longer receive GARs, leaving our 30 residential units empty.

Rather than see these resources go unused, Welcome Place swiftly adapted by opening its residential units to all newcomers, including refugees, for short-term stays. These accommodations were offered at exceptionally low rates—often below Employment and Income Assistance rates—and came with numerous benefits, such as: furnished units, paid utilities, complimentary Wi-Fi and laundry facilities, and seamless access to the expertise and support of Welcome Place Advisors

Responding to a Critical Need

By early 2024, the City's homelessness situation had reached a crisis point. Many refugees, especially refugee claimants, found themselves living on the streets as homeless shelters struggled with overcapacity. With the ongoing political tensions south of the border, it became evident that the situation could worsen.

Recognizing the urgency, Welcome Place identified an opportunity to transform its residential units into a temporary shelter for refugee claimants. After discussions with the government, an agreement was finalized in September 2024 for Welcome Place to provide interim housing for up to 156 refugee claimants.

A Rapid and Successful Transformation

With only one month's notice, Welcome Place mobilized its resources and converted its residential units into an interim housing facility by October 1, 2024. This achievement would not have been possible without the extraordinary time, dedication, and effort contributed by our staff, and most importantly, our volunteers, who worked tirelessly to ensure that the shelter was ready to welcome those in need.



INTERIM HOUSING FOR MALE REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

Facility Opening and Objective

On October 1, 2024, Welcome Place officially launched its three residential floors as an interim housing facility for male refugee claimants (RCs). This facility offers short-term accommodations intended to support RCs until they are enrolled in Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) and successfully transition to permanent rental housing.

Residential Accommodations

Each residential unit accommodates four to eight individuals and is furnished to ensure basic comfort and functionality. Units are equipped with:

- Heavy-duty bunk beds and bed-bug-proof mattresses
- Bedding
- Kitchen table and chairs
- Refrigerator and microwave
- Essential dishes and utensils
- Basic hygiene supplies
- Basic household cleaning products

These provisions aim to offer a safe, clean, and supportive living environment during the interim settlement period.

Meal Provision

Welcome Place ensures that RCs receive three meals daily:

- Breakfast is provided weekday mornings in the Multipurpose Room, fostering opportunities for RCs to meet, share experiences, and build supportive networks.
- Lunch and dinner are prepared by a partner agency within the settlement sector. Meals are individually packaged and designed for convenient reheating for consumption.
- Welcome Place staff are responsible for delivering lunch and dinner to each residential unit.

This meal service ensures that RCs' basic nutritional needs are consistently met during their stay.

Settlement Education and Support

To further promote successful integration, all RCs residing at Welcome Place are required to participate in weekly information sessions. These sessions provide essential settlement knowledge, including:

- Employment preparation and opportunities
- Rental housing navigation and renter rights and responsibilities
- Accessing and utilizing community resources
- Other key skills for successful settlement

These educational components are integral to supporting RCs in achieving self-sufficiency and stability within the Canadian community.

Refugee Claimant Engagement in Volunteer and Employment Opportunities

Welcome Place actively encourages refugee claimants (RCs), both those residing in our interim housing facility and those living elsewhere, to engage in volunteer roles or paid employment opportunities within the agency.

RCs contribute in a variety of ways, including:

- Assisting in the kitchen during breakfast service
- Delivering meals to residential units
- Unloading and organizing food donations
- Participating in yard maintenance and cleanup activities
- Supporting basic repairs and maintenance tasks
- Translation services
- Teaching basic computer literacy classes for newcomers
- Providing onsite security services

These opportunities offer RCs valuable practical experience that enhances their skills, strengthens their resumes, and improves their prospects for future employment within the broader community.

INTERIM HOUSING FOR MALE REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

Breakfast preparation with staff and refugee claimant volunteers



Breakfast in the Multipurpose Room



Lunch and dinner meal delivery - meals delivered to each unit by refugee claimant volunteers



Evening downtime in one of the common areas



Winter indoor recreation



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Newcomer Programming to Build Community Connections

The Volunteer Program at Welcome Place is a cornerstone of our work supporting newcomers. This program provides newcomers with access to free programs and services, ensuring they have opportunities to connect, share experiences, and build their new lives in Canada.

Transportation assistance is an essential component of our Volunteer Program. For many newcomers, limited access to reliable transportation can hinder participation in programs, events, and community activities. By providing this support, a major barrier to participation is eliminated, thus ensuring equitable access for all individuals.

Volunteers greatly extend the reach of our services and help ensure that our programs are accessible, inclusive, and meaningful. Their time, skills, and compassion allow newcomers to socialize, connect with peers, experience Canadian culture, and receive vital support during their settlement journey.

In addition to volunteers from the community, we actively encourage our clients to volunteer with us, providing them with valuable opportunities to gain practical Canadian experience. Many contribute by teaching computer and cooking classes, assisting with translation and interpretation to bridge language barriers, and participating in community initiatives. Their involvement not only strengthens our programs but also empowers clients to build skills, confidence, and community connections.

Welcome Place utilizes volunteers in a variety of ways, including:

Teaching & Skill-Building: Volunteers lead conversational English, computer literacy, and cooking classes, providing newcomers with practical skills for daily life in Canada.

Community Engagement: Volunteers serve as chaperones at community events, supporting safe, welcoming spaces for cultural exchange and socialization.

Food Security: Volunteers assist with food preparation and meal delivery in our interim housing, ensuring that newcomers have access to healthy meals during resettlement.

Language Support: Translation and interpretation.

Legal Support: Law student volunteers assist with asylum claims, giving newcomers valuable guidance as they navigate the immigration system.

Community Help Projects: Our Volunteers help where there is the need.

The programs offered through our Volunteer Program continue to be in high demand. This reflects both the critical role they play in supporting newcomer settlement and the value participants place on opportunities to learn new skills, connect with peers, and engage in community life. The consistent demand underscores the importance of sustaining and expanding volunteer-supported

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Newcomer Programming to Build Community Connections

Breakfast preparation with staff and refugee claimant volunteers



Clients at Manitoba Moose Game



Computer Class taught by Newcomer Volunteers



Conversational English Classes



Refugee claimant volunteers setting up a shelter for wildfire evacuees at the Winnipeg Convention Centre



STATISTICS

April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

Settlement Services

Clients Served:	3543
<i># New Clients</i>	1697
<i># Returning Clients</i>	1846
Top Countries of Origin	Eritrea, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan
Services Provided	6361

Sponsorship Services

New Cases	59
Individuals Sponsored	158
Cases/Individuals arrived	73/171
Sponsorship Agreement Holder Program Cases/Individuals Submitted	59/158
Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR)	3

In-Canada Protection Services

Refugee Claimants Served (new and returning)	2202
New Refugee Claimants	916
Services Provided	5185
Volunteer Law Students (University of Manitoba)	10
Volunteer Hours (by University of Manitoba Law Students)	366
Volunteer Lawyer	1
Immigration Consultant (Partnership with Legal Aid Manitoba)	1
Volunteer Hours by Volunteer Lawyer and Immigration Consultant	300

Life Skills Services

Life Skills Trainers (LST)	10
LST Hours Worked	5924
Number of languages served	11

Volunteer Services

Volunteers	84
Volunteer Hours Worked	4903
Classes and Social Outings	226
Clients Participating (non-unique)	825

UKRAINIAN INITIATIVE	#	Partici- pants
CUAET Visa Holder files opened	443	
Information sessions on rural living	19	179
Exploratory visits to rural communities	1	
Individuals relocated to rural communities	28	
Communities relocated to	7	

Interim Housing (October 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025)	#	Partici- pants
Number of available beds	156	
Number of refugee claimants received	281	
Number of information sessions/ participants	18	612
Number of recreational activity outings/ participants	13	130
Top Countries of Origin		Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Guinea

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



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Independent Auditors' Report

To the Directors of
Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc.

Opinion

The summarized financial statements, which comprise the summarized statement of financial position as at March 31, 2025, and the summarized statement of operations for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. for the year ended March 31, 2025.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, on the basis described below.

Summarized Financial Statements

The summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summarized financial statements and the auditors' report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements and the auditors' report thereon.

The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated September 10, 2025.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summarized financial statements on the following basis:

The summarized financial statements include the major totals and subtotals from the related complete financial statements dealing with matters having a pervasive or otherwise significant effect on the summarized financial statements.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summarized financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements".

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Booke & Partners".

Winnipeg, Canada
September 10, 2025

Chartered Professional Accountants

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. Summarized Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31

2025

2024

Revenues

Province of Manitoba	\$ 1,248,192	\$ 450,000
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada:		
Settlement services	583,278	575,660
Interest	129,791	175,255
United Way	118,930	130,547
Amortization of deferred contributions	99,683	84,493
Rental income	75,105	167,139
Other grants	45,567	16,129
Fundraising and donations	41,950	40,718
Privately sponsored refugees - administration fee	23,950	19,750
Fee for service	8,400	8,700
Miscellaneous	7,788	2,848
Winnipeg Foundation	-	7,500
	<u>2,382,634</u>	<u>1,678,739</u>

Expenditures

Amortization	150,552	137,320
Food - interim housing	452,484	-
Mortgage interest	29,589	31,160
Other	619,036	477,855
Rent and parking	6,942	7,008
Salaries and benefits	1,118,700	1,097,328
	<u>2,377,303</u>	<u>1,750,671</u>

Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures

\$ 5,331 \$ (71,932)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. Summarized Statement of Financial Position

March 31

2025

2024

Assets

Current

Cash	\$ 620,693	\$ 91,399
Accounts receivable	174,160	197,818
Prepaid expenses	5,198	38,865

800,051 328,082

Property and equipment

3,003,496 2,922,552

Funds held in trust

4,502,541 4,965,696

\$ 8,306,088 \$ 8,216,330

Liabilities

Current

Payables and accruals	\$ 120,859	\$ 119,085
Deferred contributions	621,245	157,279
Current portion of long-term debt	51,198	49,711

793,302 326,075

Long-term debt

932,766 984,224

Deferred contributions for property and equipment

1,990,664 1,858,851

Funds held in trust

4,502,541 4,965,696

8,219,273 8,134,846

Net Assets

Internally Restricted

120,348 120,348

Unrestricted

(62,401) (68,630)

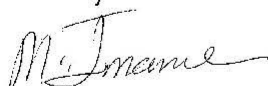
Invested in property and equipment

28,868 29,766

86,815 81,484

\$ 8,306,088 \$ 8,216,330

Approved by the Board



Director



Director

Thank You

We would like to thank our funders, community partners, donors, supporters, and volunteers for investing in the services we provide to newcomers and for recognizing the difference we can make together.

MAJOR FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Service
Canada



RICHARDSON
FOUNDATION



United Way
Winnipeg

Manitoba



Funders and Supporters

Ariu Dental Centre

Assiniboine Park Zoo

University of Manitoba Law
Student Volunteers

Waterfront Foundation Inc.

ValourFC

Legal Aid Manitoba

Manitoba Children's Museum,
Free2Play Access Program

University of Manitoba Law
Students Association

Harvest Manitoba

PBSC Manitoba

Volunteers

We would like to thank our incredible family of volunteers for investing their time and expertise to enrich the lives of newcomers. The impact of your contribution cannot be measured in dollars and cents, but it is measured by the impact of your compassion and care you bestow upon others.

Your Support

Funding and donations allow us to continue providing the highest level of service and support to newcomers. With your help, we hope to add to our resources and expand our programs.

If you would like to learn more about programs we offer or to donate, please visit our website at www.miiic.ca. If you would like to donate by cheque, please make your cheque payable to [Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc.](#) and mail it to us at 521 Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3A 0E4.