

Refugee and Immigration Services Situational Assessment

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Final

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Summary & Findings

Legal Aid Saskatchewan's vision calls for inclusive, responsive, and equitable justice; its mission champions access to justice through professional legal services. Its values include compassion, collaboration and courage, fearless advocates for leading transformation through innovation and continuous improvement.

In 2022, LAS developed its Strategic Plan which articulates a modernization strategy with key priorities to include:

Client-Centered Experience • Improve the client experience • Provide culturally responsive service • Seamless, innovative service delivery models	Champions for Access to Justice • Enhance Legal Aid Saskatchewan's reputation and visibility • Advance reconciliation principles in justice reform • Sponsor partnerships for holistic response and system change
Purpose-Driven Teams Producing Exceptional Outcomes • Strengthened organizational culture and staff engagement • Improve staff recruitment and retention	Accountable and Responsive Stewards • Proactive and responsive decision-making • Optimize funding

A situational assessment of the need for refugee and immigration services and an appropriate response reflects Legal Aid Saskatchewan's vision and mission; LAS champions access to justice as a leader in the transformation of legal services for low income individuals living in Saskatchewan.

In 2024, the Department of Justice (Legal Aid Directorate) contacted LAS to discuss the possibility of funding refugee and immigration services. The Department of Justice wanted to ensure national coverage

- to reduce barriers refugees and immigrants might face moving to Saskatchewan due to the lack of legal aid funded services, and
- to lessen the refugee and immigrant pressures on legal and social services in other provinces.

Saskatchewan is one of two provinces that does not provide legal aid funded refugee and immigration services, the other being PEI. Seven provinces have legal aid plans funded by the Federal Government, Department of Justice, to provide these services: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. The Justice Department’s 2023-24 data points to a continuing increase in legal aid funded refugee and immigration cases and expenditures in the seven provinces currently in response to a growing need:

- 2022- \$47M
- 2023- \$60M
- 2024- \$85M

In 2024, an estimated **120 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced** due to persecution, war, famine. This number increases annually. Canada was the **world’s fifth largest recipient** of new individual refugee applications in 2023 – approximately 147,000. The 2025 temporary resident target reductions (student and work visas) by the Federal Government is likely to **increase refugee claims and humanitarian and compassionate applications**, as international students and workers seek legal avenues to remain in Canada. Federal Court stays of removal, and Pre-Removal Risk Assessments are also expected to increase as Canada pursues more deportations.

LAS staff and management believe there is a gap in access to justice for refugees and immigrants in Saskatchewan; service demand exceeds capacity (too few service providers – both non-fee and fee paying), service quality is sometimes poor (lack of adequate experience and knowledge), and service cost is prohibitive for many (private bar, consultant services). In May 2025, to capture some quantitative data, LAS’ Application Centre recorded online application inquiries and telephone applications for refugee and immigration services. **LAS received 16 refugee and immigration service inquiries in one month to which it was unable to respond.** Staff think the number of refugee and immigration inquiries is growing.

Non-fee refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan are provided by *Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan (PBLS)* and *Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City (CLASSIC)*. Neither of these two organizations receive funding to provide refugee and immigration services.

Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan (PBLS) offers primarily advice in family, criminal, wills and estates, civil and residential tenancy law with a few volunteer lawyers providing representation in exceptional circumstances. **PBLS offers limited refugee and immigration advice only.** PBLS Executive Director has seen an increase in demand for refugee and immigration advice over the past three years, with legal need becoming more complex.

R&I Client Appointments	
2022	55
2023	77
2024	269

One PBLs staff lawyer provides advice in refugee and immigration matters, together with private bar volunteers. **PBLs believes that LAS refugee and immigration services are needed to reduce the demand on PBLs and augment the overall legal capacity in Saskatchewan to serve the vulnerable.** PBLs believes it has a role to play in immigration matters, like student visas.

CLASSIC, depending on funding, operates with three or four lawyers and students, and offers a range of refugee and immigration services, including representation. CLASSIC has financial eligibility criteria which clients must meet prior to receiving services. CLASSIC's financial eligibility threshold is higher than LAS, allowing applicants with more income to access services. **CLASSIC requires its clients to reside in Saskatoon;** it does not generally provide services to persons who reside elsewhere in Saskatchewan.

In 2024-25, **immigration and refugee law surpassed housing as CLASSIC's top area of practice.** CLASSIC had 313 refugee and immigration files, consisting of approximately 29% of CLASSIC's full service representation. CLASSIC is not funded to provide refugee and immigration services. Costs associated with refugee and immigration translation and interpretation services, recently received some pilot project funding.

In 2024, CLASSIC had its **government funding cut.** And the **student model at CLASSIC was suspended for the 2025-26 year,** with the future to be determined. All of this poses a risk to refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan. CLASSIC sees the greatest need for services related to refugee claims, deportations, and humanitarian and compassionate applications.

Saskatchewan has a small private bar that provides refugee and immigration services for a fee. Veeman Law consists of the firm's founder, Chris Veeman, two Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCIC) and a legal assistant/notary public. The firm has seen an increase in demand for services. The Firm's fee schedule is below. **These fees are beyond the means of many refugee claimants.**

- Lawyer consult (1 hr.) = \$450
- Immigration Consultant (1 hr.) = \$325
- Refugee Claim = \$5,000 -7,000

Some private bar practitioners see the need for service providers with greater expertise, knowledge and experience in the area of refugee and immigration law. **Some practitioners commented that some members of the bar deliver these services "off the side of their desks", impacting client outcomes.**

Saskatchewan Immigration and Employment Consulting Services Inc.(SIECSI) is Federally and Provincially licensed and provides refugee and immigration services as **Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCIC).** SIECSI handles approximately 5-10 refugee claims and 5-10 humanitarian and compassionate applications a year. SIECSI's fees are beyond the means of many refugee claimants.

-
- Consult (30 mins) = \$105
 - Refugee Claim = \$4,000-\$6,000
 - Humanitarian & Compassionate Application = \$4,000-\$6,000

Should LAS decide to provide immigration/refugee services, the SIECSI Director hopes LAS will include consultants in the service model and offer adequate compensation.

Due to the sense of **vulnerability** experienced by immigrants and refugees, language and cultural barriers, **many are uneasy speaking with ‘government’**; their voices are critical to an understanding of service need. Three refugee claimants were interviewed.

One refugee claimant from Ghana, arrived in Montreal and travelled to Saskatchewan to join friends. Unable to locate counsel in Saskatoon and wanting to ensure his refugee claim was filed on time, **the claimant submitted his Basis of Claim Form without legal advice**, compromising his chances of a successful outcome. The Claimant later retained a consultant in Saskatoon to represent him. A claimant from Nigeria expressed satisfaction with the refugee services he received from CLASSIC. A claimant from Bangladesh arrived in Ontario in 2023 and made a refugee claim, paying for a lawyer in Ontario to assist. The claimant subsequently moved to Saskatchewan where he has relatives but retained his Ontario lawyer to represent him at his virtual Refugee Hearing. The claimant worries that **if his claim is rejected, he will not have the means to appeal**.

Port of entry or inland refugee claimants arriving in Ontario and Quebec, are making their way to Saskatchewan in search of work and housing, connecting with family and friends. They increase Saskatchewan’s population, bring skills and knowledge and develop the economy. Ensuring refugee claimants and immigrants can find the legal services they need in Saskatchewan, is important to the Province’s success.

The Canadian Bar Association President confirmed that **there are few refugee and immigration practitioners in Saskatchewan (both *pro bono* and fee for service)**. Most *pro bono* practitioners are over capacity. And many refugees and immigrants do not have money to pay for immigration and refugee advice or representation.

An advocate with the Saskatoon Refugee Coalition / Amnesty International believes there are **fewer and fewer lawyers prepared to do *pro bono* in refugee and immigration law**. The area has become more complex and requires specialization, greater knowledge and experience.

Global Gathering Place provides limited settlement services to refugee claimants for which they are not funded. In 2024-2025, Global Gathering Place received 60 refugee claimants seeking legal assistance who were referred to CLASSIC. The number of claimants is on an upward trend and few lawyers are available *pro bono*.

Saskatoon Open Doors Society (SODS) is a settlement agency that provides services to refugees for which it also is not funded. Lack of services in Saskatchewan for refugee claimants creates hardship and sometimes negative outcomes with failed refugee claims. **In 2024, SODS served 150 refugee claimants** in Tier 2 (settlement support, case management, referrals). 150 refugee claimants represents 22% of SODS total Tier 2 clients.

Some refugee claimants, arriving in Saskatchewan, come through Quebec, Ontario and BC. Some have been advised that the claim processing is faster in Saskatchewan. Some have family or community connections. **Recently, there has been an increase in persons on work or student visas in Saskatchewan making refugee claims.**

The Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) is dealing with a **significant increase of refugee claims filed (110,000 in 2023 to 190,000 in 2024) and refugee appeals filed (5,669 in 2023 to 9,432 in 2024) , and immigration appeals filed (2,377 in 2023 to 3,641 in 2024) across Canada as well as a significant number of pending decisions.**

The IRB, as of June 2025, had a total of **1,010 Saskatchewan refugee claims pending (710 principal claimants)**. There were **92 “no listed counsel” and 22 “no fee representative”** on 470 finalized claims between January 2022 and June 2025.

Refugee claims referred to the IRB from Saskatchewan have almost tripled, from 215 claims in 2024 to 635 claims in 2025. Humanitarian and compassionate applications have increased in much the same way, a low of 210 in 2023 to a high of 720 in 2025.

The number of persons detained in Saskatchewan by the Canada Border Services Agency has increased from 17 to 25 from 2023-25. And the number of removals from Canada in the Prairie Region has increased from 668 in 2023 to 851 in 2025.

The volume of **Federal Court refugee matters in Saskatchewan is small relative to other jurisdictions, about 10-15 applications annually.** Clients seeking Federal Court judicial review or stays of removals are represented by Pro Bono Law and CLASSIC, who have limited capacity, or the fee-for-service private bar. **Federal Court Counsel believes that the volume of federal court matters is low because clients cannot afford to pay.** The lack of legal aid funded services impacts access to justice for refugees and immigrants as well as the desire to settle in Saskatchewan.

Findings

There are currently no government or foundation funded refugee and immigration legal services in Saskatchewan. There is evidence of increasing demand for these services based on interviews and data from various sources: the Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada, Immigration & Refugee Board, Canada Boarder Services Agency, local legal & settlement agencies. Some refugee claimants appear unrepresented before the Immigration and Refugee

Board and likely in other R&I proceedings such as detention reviews and removals from Canada.

The refugee and immigration legal services that do exist are few, inadequate and potentially at risk as the agencies that deliver these services are not funded to do so and are at capacity; private bar and consulting “fee for services” are beyond the means of many refugees and immigrants. Quality service is affected in some circumstances by inadequate legal experience and knowledge with lack of specialization in this complex area of law.

Access to justice for refugees and immigrants in Saskatchewan is compromised.

LAS has a strong business case to present to the Federal Government for refugee and immigration funding, a Federal Government who wants to ensure national R&I coverage

- to reduce barriers refugees and immigrants face moving to Saskatchewan due to the lack of legal aid funded services, and
- to lessen the refugee and immigrant pressures on legal and social services in other provinces.

Recommendations

The Situational Assessment 2025 confirms the need for legal aid funded refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan.

Below are some recommendations:

1. Commit LAS to a leadership role in responding to the need for refugee and immigration legal services in Saskatchewan to ensure access to justice and quality service consistent with LAS Strategic Plan 2022-25.
2. Provide the Department of Justice with evidence of the need for refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan, submit a preliminary budget, and secure funding.
3. Create a LAS Refugee and Immigration Advisory Committee to inform the development of LAS refugee and immigration services and to afford opportunities for collaboration. Members of the Advisory Committee would include Pro Bono, Classic, Veeman Law, SCEISI, Global Gathering and Saskatoon Open Door Society, and persons with lived experience.
4. Ensure the service delivery model is cost effective and efficient, including the use of resources (e.g., staff model, panel model):
 - a. law students, consultants, staff, clinic, and private bar lawyers, case managers
 - b. translation, interpretation services
 - c. medical, psychiatric reports
 - d. country conditions
5. Develop LAS refugee and immigration standards that promote quality service and specialization required to deliver the best possible outcomes for clients. To provide legal aid funded refugee and immigration services, staff and service providers would be required to meet these standards.
6. Build an accessible model with services in key regions of the Province to allow for some “in person” connection (e.g., Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert) as well as technology to support virtual hearings. Two models are discussed in this Report under Chapter 8.0.
7. Support LAS organizational readiness for change by retaining a project/change management consultant to add needed resource capacity for success. The development and implementation of refugee and immigration services is complex, requiring specialized skill and knowledge.

1.0 Global & National Refugee-Immigration Context

F#	Findings
1.1	In 2024, an estimated 120 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing the public order. The trend has been on the increase each year since 2013.
1.2	Canada was the world's fifth largest recipient of new individual refugee applications in 2023 – approximately 147,000.
1.3	Canada's Immigration Levels Plan 2025-27 reduces targets for • Temporary residents (student, work visas) • Refugee and protected persons • Humanitarian applications
1.4	The temporary resident target reductions (student and work visas) will lead to an increase in refugee claims and humanitarian and compassionate applications , as international students and workers seek other legal avenues to remain in Canada. Federal Court stays of removal, and Pre-Removal Risk Assessments are also expected to increase as Canada pursues more deportations.

Discussion

Global Context¹: At the end of 2023, an estimated **117.3 million** people worldwide were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing the public order. Based on operational data, UNHCR estimates that forced displacement has continued to increase in the first four months of 2024 and by the end of April 2024 is likely to have exceeded 120 million.

The increase to 117.3 million at the end of 2023 constitutes a rise of 8 per cent or 8.8 million people compared to the end of 2022. The trend continues a series of year-on-year increases over the last 12 years.

One in every 69 people, or 1.5 per cent of the entire world's population, is now forcibly displaced. This is nearly double the 1 in 125 people who were displaced a decade ago.

Canada was the world's fifth largest recipient of new individual refugee applications in 2023:

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends> United Nations High Commission for Refugees

- United States of America: 1.2 million
- Germany: 329,100
- Egypt: 183,100
- Spain: 163,200
- Canada: 146,800

National Context²: A policy increase in the number of temporary and permanent residents applications in Canada in 2023 led to an adverse impact on health and social services, and housing, as well as public opinion. As a result, the government decided to reduce the number of immigrants allowed into Canada.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) released details of the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan (Levels Plan) in October 2024. The Levels Plan includes permanent resident targets and ranges under immigration categories: Economic, Family, Refugees and Protected Persons, and Humanitarian & Compassionate and Other. The 2025-2027 Levels Plan also includes, for the first time, temporary resident targets for international students and temporary foreign workers.

Permanent Residents	New Students (study permits)	New Temporary Workers (work permits)
395,000 Minus 21% from 2024 targets	305,900 Minus 10% from 2024 targets	367,750 Minus 16% from 2024 targets

The 2025-27 Levels Plan projects a decrease in overall permanent resident admissions to

- 395,000 in 2025
- 380,000 in 2026
- 365,000 in 2027

The reduction in refugee and protected persons targets is noted in the chart below.

² <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/mandate/corporate-initiatives/levels.html> Canada's Immigration Levels

TOTALS			
	2025	2026	2027
Refugees and Protected Persons	58,350 (55,000 – 65,000)	55,350 (50,000 – 62,000)	54,350 (50,000 – 60,000)
Humanitarian & Compassionate and Other	10,000 (8,500 – 13,000)	6,900 (6,000 – 9,000)	4,300 (4,000 – 6,000)

The reduction in study permits and work permits is leading to an increase in applications for refugee, and humanitarian and compassionate status, as persons on student and temporary work permits seek other legal means to remain in Canada. Removal orders (e.g. deportation) and Pre-Removal Risk Assessments (PRRA) are expected to increase.

The Federal Government tabled a bill (Bill C-2, *Strong Borders Act*) in June 2025 that potentially limits who can pursue a refugee claim in Canada. Under the bill, anyone who claims asylum after more than a year in Canada would not have their claim considered by the Immigration and Refugee Board but would face removal. They would be offered a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment. This provision, if passed, would be retroactive to June 2020 and apply, for example, to persons who entered Canada on a student visa or work permit. The bill also gives the government authority to pause or cancel the processing of immigration applications if deemed “in the public interest”. This bill could have a significant impact on refugee claims. Whether Bill C-2 will pass and when is unclear. And there are concerns that it may infringe on Charter Rights and is likely to be challenged.

2.0 Legal Aid Plans

F#	Findings
2.1	The Department of Justice (Legal Aid Directorate) funds refugee and immigration legal aid services in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia.
2.2	Refugee and Immigration services are delivered by the private bar, staff offices and clinics. In 2021-22: Newfoundland & Labrador and Alberta provided staff services; British Columbia, private bar lawyers on certificate. Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec, staff, private bar, and clinic services.
2.3	2023-24 data points to continuing increase in legal aid funded refugee and immigration cases and expenditures across the country: 2022-\$47M, 2023 - \$60M, 2024 - \$85M, responding to a growing need.

Discussion

In early 2025, the Legal Aid Directorate (Department of Justice), contacted Legal Aid Saskatchewan(LAS) to discuss the possibility of providing legal aid funded refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan. The Department of Justice was interested in expanding the delivery of legal aid funded refugee and immigration services nationally – Saskatchewan and PEI remain the only provinces not funded to provide these services. In addition, the Legal Aid Directorate and Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) were discussing the possibility of relocating refugee claimants from Ontario to Saskatchewan. These conversations led LAS to carry out a situational assessment to determine the need for legal aid refugee and immigration services in the province.

Immigration and refugee legal aid³

There are 13 recognized legal aid plans in Canada responsible for providing legal aid services to those who cannot afford a lawyer. The Department of Justice Canada - Legal Aid Program provides funding to

1. all provinces for criminal legal aid through contribution agreements.
2. seven provinces to support immigration and refugee (I&R) legal aid: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia.

³ Legal Aid in Canada 2022-23, Research and Statistics Division and Legal Aid Directorate, Department of Justice Canada 2023

Refugee claimants have the right, under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA), to be represented at Immigration and Refugee (I&R) proceedings. Through the Legal Aid Program, the federal government contributes annual funding to the seven provinces where I&R legal aid services are provided. I&R matters are primarily proceedings of persons (individuals, or principal applicants and family) involved in the immigration and refugee determination system under the provisions of *IRPA*. I&R legal aid covers the provision of legal advice, assistance and representation for immigration or refugee proceedings before the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB), the Federal Court, or Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

In 2021-22, Newfoundland & Labrador and Alberta had the highest proportion of staff lawyers working on I&R matters (100% and 77%), while in British Columbia, 100% of I&R legal aid was handled by private bar lawyers on certificate. Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec are the only jurisdictions with cases handled through specialized staffed clinics: 91% in Nova Scotia, 34% in Ontario, and 17% in Quebec.

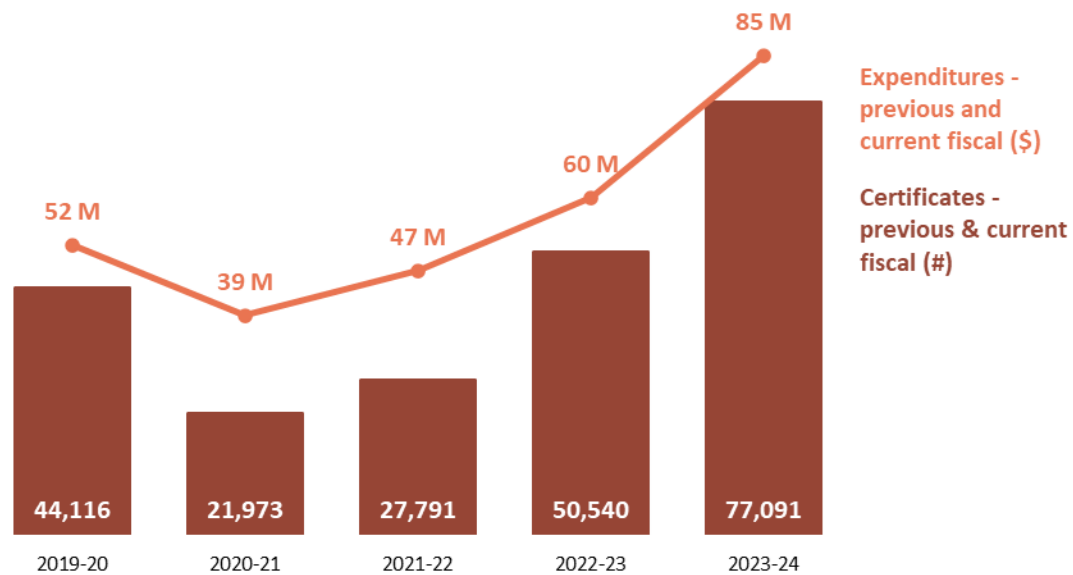
Data obtained from the Legal Aid Directorate for 2023-24 identifies immigration/refugee legal aid applications and increases to legal aid funded refugee/immigration cases and expenditures across the country.

Legal Aid Applications by Type 2023-24 – I & R⁴

Province	Legal Aid applications	Immigration and refugee applications
NL	7,438	142
PE	1,358	
NS	39,313	295
NB	5,085	136
QC	232,299	11,520
ON	149,872	46,880
MB	28,406	730
SK	24,759	
AB	55,790	1,518
BC	38,969	5,448
YK	1,755	
NT	938	
NU	–	
Canada	585,982	66,669

⁴ LEGAL AID IN CANADA 2023-24 REPORT, Legal Aid Directorate, Department of Justice (Draft)

Immigration and refugee legal aid **caseloads** and **expenditures** continued an upwards trend in 2023-24, increasing by roughly 50% compared to 2022-23⁵



⁵ LEGAL AID IN CANADA 2023-24 REPORT, Legal Aid Directorate, Department of Justice (Draft)

3.0 Legal Aid Saskatchewan (LAS)

#	Findings
3.1	LAS is not funded to deliver any refugee and immigration services and has not historically tracked requests for these services. 6 staff lawyers have some refugee and immigration private practice experience and knowledge.
3.2	In May 2025, to capture some quantitative data, between online application inquiries and telephone applications, LAS received 16 refugee and immigration inquiries to which it was unable to respond. Staff think the number of inquiries is growing.
3.3	LAS staff and management believe there is a gap in access to justice for refugees and immigrants in Saskatchewan; service demand exceeds capacity (too few service providers), service quality is sometimes poor (lack of adequate experience and knowledge), and service cost is prohibitive for some (private bar, consultant services).

Discussion

Saskatchewan does not provide any legal aid coverage for immigration and refugee law. If a client, eligible for legal aid services in criminal law, is facing deportation on conviction of an offence, the LAS lawyer will investigate the options and risks to the accused's immigrant status. Since LAS does cover criminal law, there are some requests from the private bar for legal aid funded immigration assistance in these circumstances. As immigration advice is not technically a part of the services provided by legal aid, no data is collected.⁶

During a LAS staff and management focus group, participants identified a need for legal aid funded refugee and immigration services due to:

1. The significant demographic changes in Saskatchewan with increasing immigrant populations
2. Requests for advice from LAS staff regarding the intersection of immigration and criminal and family law.
3. Requests, though infrequent, for LAS services related to sponsorship and citizenship

Most LAS staff believe that not having any legal aid funded refugee and immigration law services represents a gap in service delivery and impacts access to justice. One LAS family staff

⁶ An Analysis of Immigration and Refugee Law Services in Canada, Government of Canada, 2023
https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/other-autre/ir/rr03_la18-rr03_a18/toc-tdm.html

lawyer spoke of challenges related to child protection and asylum status, with a claimant fleeing her spouse, seeking refuge in Canada with her children. With no LAS staff with expertise in refugee and immigration law, the lawyer must seek immigration and refugee advice elsewhere in order to effectively represent the client.

Comments from LAS staff and management were consistent across the Province, all reporting a significant change in demographics and a gap in service from Saskatoon to Regina to Meadow Lake, Yorkton, Estevan and La Ronge.

No LAS staff lawyers practice in the area of refugee and immigration, although 6 lawyers have limited refugee and immigration private practice experience and knowledge.

As LAS does not provide refugee and immigration services, it has historically not tracked requests for these services. In efforts to capture some quantitative data, the LAS Application Centre recorded requests over a 1 month period. Between online application inquiries and telephone applications, LAS received 16 refugee and immigration inquiries in May 2025 to which it was unable to respond. Application Centre staff believe this number has increased over the last year.

4.0 Pro Bono Law, CLASSIC, Private Bar, Regulated Consultants

F#	Findings								
4.1	Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan (PBLs) , located in Regina, primarily provides advice services in family, criminal, wills and estates, civil and residential tenancy law with a few volunteer lawyers providing representation in exceptional circumstances.								
4.2	The PBLs Executive Director has seen an increase in demand for refugee and immigration advice over the past three years, with legal need becoming more complex. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">R&I Appointments</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022</td><td>55</td></tr> <tr> <td>2023</td><td>77</td></tr> <tr> <td>2024</td><td>269</td></tr> </tbody> </table> One PBLs staff lawyer provides advice in refugee and immigration, together with private bar volunteers. PBLs is not funded to provide these services.	R&I Appointments		2022	55	2023	77	2024	269
R&I Appointments									
2022	55								
2023	77								
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4.3	PBLs believes that LAS refugee and immigration services are needed to reduce the demand on PBLs and augment the overall legal capacity in Saskatchewan to serve the vulnerable. PBLs believes it has a role to play in immigration matters, like student visas.								
4.4	Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City Inc. (CLASSIC) offers legal services and programming to people who experience poverty and injustice. CLASSIC's full legal representation clinic, the Walk-in Advocacy Clinic, provides immigration and refugee law, along with approximately 20 other areas of law. Clients are assisted by law students, under supervision, or three staff lawyers. (*Note – the student model at CLASSIC has been suspended for the 2025-26 year, with the future to be determined).								
4.5	In 2024-25, immigration and refugee law surpassed housing as CLASSIC's top area of practice. CLASSIC had 313 refugee and immigration files, consisting of approximately 29% of CLASSIC's full service Walk-in Advocacy Practice								
4.6	CLASSIC does not have ear-marked funding to provide refugee and immigration services. CLASSIC did not have funding for costs associated with translation and interpretation, until just recently, through a pilot project partnership with Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan, funded by the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan's Legacy Grant. CLASSIC sees the greatest need for services related to refugee claims, deportation hearings, and humanitarian and compassionate applications.								

4.7	Private bar: Saskatchewan has a small ‘fee for service’ refugee and immigration bar consisting of less than 6 practicing members.
4.8	Chris Veeman of Veeman Law is considered an expert in the field. Veeman Law consists of the firm’s founder, two Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCIC) and a legal assistant/notary public. Fee schedule • Lawyer consult (1 hr.) = \$450 • Immigration Consultant (1 hr.) = \$325 • Refugee Claim = \$5,000 -7,000 Veeman Law has seen an increase in demand.
4.9	Some private bar practitioners see the need for service providers with expertise, knowledge and experience in the area of refugee and immigration law. Some members of the private bar deliver these services “off the side of their desks”, impacting client outcomes.
4.10	Saskatchewan Immigration and Employment Consulting Services Inc.(SIECSI): is both Federally and Provincially licensed and can provide legal immigration services across Canada.⁷ Daniel Hirschhorn, the SIECSI Director, is a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC). Fee Schedule • Consult (30 mins) = \$105 • Refugee Claim = \$4,000-\$6,000 • Humanitarian & Compassionate Application = \$4,000-\$6,000
4.11	SIECSI handles approximately 5-10 refugee claims and 5-10 humanitarian and compassionate applications a year. SIECSI does not believe there is a need for legal aid funded services. Should LAS decide to provide immigration/refugee services, the Director hopes LAS will include consultants in the service model and offer adequate compensation.

Discussion

Pro Bono Law, CLASSIC, and the private bar currently deliver refugee and immigration services in the Province of Saskatchewan.

⁷ <https://www.siecsi.com/about-siecsi> Saskatchewan Immigration and Employment Consulting Services Inc.

Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan⁸ (PBLs): Established in 2008, and funded by the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan (PBLs) is a non-profit, non-government organization that provides free legal **advice** to low income clients in Saskatchewan. The main office is located in Regina and has seven staff, including three lawyers and four support workers.

PBLs has 15 free legal advice volunteer clinics across Saskatchewan as well as volunteer Panel Programs with lawyers willing to carry files and provide services, including representation, in exceptional circumstances. PBLs tries to fill the gap between government funded legal aid and hiring a private lawyer. Primary areas of law served include family, criminal, wills and estates, civil and residential tenancy.

PBLs is meant to complement, not replace, an adequately funded legal aid system. PBLs primarily provides advice and assistance to those who cannot afford to pay for these services.

The PBLs Executive Director has seen an increase in demand for refugee services over the past three years, with legal need becoming more complex. One PBLs staff lawyer has experience in immigration and refugee matters and handles many of the advice appointments. Most refugee claim appointments are related to “inland refugee claims”, claims made after entry into Canada. PBLs is not funded to provide refugee and immigration services.

Claims filed in Regina require claimants to go to Saskatoon for biometrics and to surrender passports in person. Some refugee claimants seeking assistance made their claims in Ontario; claimants were advised to move West where housing and other services are more readily available. Claimants from Africa make up most of the PBLs appointments.

Year	# of Immigration/Refugee Appointments ⁹	Advice Provided by PBLs Staff Lawyer	Advice Provided by PBLs Volunteer Lawyer
2022	55	26	29
2023	77	51	26
2024	269	170	99

The Executive Director believes that there is a need for refugee and immigration services, with a focus on refugee claims, and that Legal Aid Saskatchewan may be best positioned to provide these services. She noted that few private bar lawyers in Saskatchewan take refugee claims as they are currently no financial incentives to do so. Saskatchewan lacks an immigration and refugee bar. The ED believes that a LAS staff model that provides full refugee claim coverage,

⁸ <https://pblsask.ca/>

⁹ PBLs counts appointments, not individual clients.

from filing of the Basis of Claim to the Hearing, is what is needed. She noted the complexity of refugee law, and the challenges including sourcing interpreters.

The Executive Director believes that offering refugee and immigration legal aid coverage with remove the increasing demand from PBLs and CLASSIC for these services and augment the overall legal capacity in Saskatchewan to serve the vulnerable in other areas. PBLs believes it may have a role to play in providing advice on immigration matters, such as student visas.

CLASSIC¹⁰: CLASSIC (Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City Inc.) provides free legal programming, services, and supports for people who experience poverty and injustice. The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan is CLASSIC's largest funder - approximately 65% of its overall budget of \$1.3M. CLASSIC is also a clinical legal education site. Operating in Saskatoon, CLASSIC has provided legal services to the community since February 2007. It is the only community legal clinic operating in Saskatchewan.

With a commitment to social justice, decolonization, and the dignity of all people, CLASSIC provides:

- free legal services, programming, and supports for people who experience poverty and injustice, and
- clinical legal education to law and interdisciplinary students.

Full legal representation - Walk-In Advocacy Clinic (WAC): CLASSIC offers full legal representation in immigration and refugee law through its Walk-in Advocacy Clinic. WAC provides clients with full legal representation. Clients are assisted by:

- law students, under supervision (Note - the student model at CLASSIC has been suspended for the 2025-26 year, with the future to be determined), or
- three or four staff lawyers and 1 articling student (numbers fluctuate based on year-to-year funding).

Summary advice - Legal Advice Clinic (LAC): LAC connects self-represented or unrepresented individuals who have legal issues in the areas of criminal, family, or civil matters to a practicing lawyer (volunteer from the legal community) for free advice. Most advice sessions are half an hour. CLASSIC had an immigration lawyer who provided summary advice sessions, but they withdrew from volunteering. It is difficult to find volunteer lawyers for immigration law, given how few lawyers practice in this area in Saskatchewan.

In 2024-25, immigration and refugee law surpassed housing as CLASSIC's top area of practice. 313 refugee and immigration clients were served, consisting of approximately 29% of CLASSIC's full service Walk-in Advocacy Practice.

¹⁰ <https://www.classiclaw.ca/>

CLASSIC provides the full range of refugee and immigration services: basis of claim preparation, representation of refugees at the Refugee Protection Division (IRB), appeals at the Refugee Appeal Division, Federal Court judicial reviews, stays, detention reviews, humanitarian and compassionate applications. CLASSIC is not funded to provide refugee and immigration services, including costs associated with translation and interpretation outside of a recent pilot project partnership with Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan, funded by the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan's Legacy Grant. CLASSIC sees the greatest need for services related to refugee claims, deportation hearings and humanitarian and compassionate applications.

CLASSIC addresses systemic barriers and advocates for equal treatment of immigrants and refugees experiencing delays in processing times for income assistance by virtue of their status.

CLASSIC has ten full time staff, including 3 supervising lawyers, 1 lawyer, an articling student and an executive director. CLASSIC usually delivers an Intensive Clinic Law Program for the College of Law University of Saskatchewan.

Private Bar: Saskatchewan has a small fee for service refugee and immigration bar consisting of less than 6 practicing members.

Veeman Law¹¹ is a Saskatoon-based law firm that focuses on personal and business immigration. The firm consists of one lawyer, the firm's founder, Chris Veeman, two Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCIC) and a legal assistant/notary public. Since 2004, Chris Veeman has helped people reunite their families in Canada, assisted employers with employing the international skilled labour that they need, and supported persecuted individuals in finding a safe haven in Canada. Chris is an Executive Member of the CBA's National Immigration Law Section, teaches Immigration Law at the University of Saskatchewan and is considered the leader in immigration and refugee law by many in Saskatchewan.

Veeman Law is a full fee for service immigration and refugee firm. The Firm charges \$450 CDN for an Initial Consultation with a lawyer, and \$325 for a consultation with an Immigration Consultant. The consultation can last up to an hour. Refugee claims, depending on complexity, can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$7,000 CDN (preparation of Basis of Claim Form and representation at the Immigration and Refugee Board).

The Firm has seen an increase in demand for refugee and immigration services, with matters becoming more complex. The Firm believes that based on the fact the federal government is reducing the number of temporary residents from 7.3% to 5% of the population and reducing Permanent Resident targets from 500,000 to high 300,000s, many current temporary residents in Canada will have difficulty finding a legal pathway to stay. The Firm expects to see an increase in refugee claims, H & Cs, and 'out of status' litigation in the coming months.

¹¹ <https://veemanlaw.com/> Veeman Law

Conversations with other private bar practitioners confirmed the need in Saskatchewan for service providers with expertise, knowledge and experience in the area of refugee and immigration law. Some felt that the legal services currently provided by some members of the private bar were done “off the side of the desk”, impacting the chances of the best possible outcome for a refugee claimant or immigrant. One lawyer who has a general practice, including real estate and immigration, handles approximately one refugee claim a year.

Saskatchewan Immigration and Employment Consulting Services Inc.(SIECSI): SIECSI was incorporated in 2006 in Saskatchewan, Canada, as a full service immigration company. SIECSI is both Federally and Provincially licensed and can provide legal immigration services across Canada.¹² Daniel Hirschhorn, the SIECSI Director, is a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC).

The services offered by SIECSI include Citizenship Applications, Corporate and Business Immigration, Refugee Claims before the Refugee Protection Division (IRB), refugee appeals before the Refugee Appeal Division (IRB), Sponsorship appeals before the Immigration Division (IRB), detention reviews. Pre-removal Risk Assessment (PRRA). SIECSI charges \$105 CDN for a 30 minute consultation, \$4,000-\$6,000 for refugee claim preparation and representation, and \$4,000-\$6,000 for a humanitarian and compassionate application.

The SIECSI Director has been practicing in the area of refugee and immigration law for over 18 years. He believes there is a need for highly trained, high quality refugee and immigration service providers in Saskatchewan. He has come across situations of poor representation resulting in devastating client impact. The complexity of the law and the vulnerability of the clients make this an area requiring specialization. Competent professional representation for refugee claimants is often a matter of life or death for persons subject to persecution on return to their country of origin.

SIECSI handles approximately 5-10 refugee claims a year and an equal amount of humanitarian and compassionate applications. SIECSI does not believe there is a need for legal aid funded services. Should LAS decide to provide legal aid funded services, the Director hopes that any service model would include consultants and that all service providers would be adequately compensated. SIECSI would like to see more collaboration between lawyers and consultants in the delivery of refugee and immigration services.

¹² <https://www.siecsi.com/about-siecsi> Saskatchewan Immigration and Employment Consulting Services Inc.

5.0 Refugee Claimants, Immigrants

F #	Findings
5.1	Due to the sense of vulnerability experienced by immigrants and refugees, language and cultural barriers, many are uneasy speaking with ‘government’, yet their voices are critical to an understanding of service need.
5.2	A refugee claimant from Ghana, unable to locate counsel in Saskatoon, filed his Basis of Claim Form without legal advice, compromising his chances of a successful outcome.
5.3	A refugee claimant from Nigeria was grateful for the refugee services provided by CLASSIC
5.4	A refugee claimant from Bangladesh arrived in Ontario where he made his refugee claim. He moved to Saskatchewan to join relatives and continued to retain his fee for service lawyer in Ontario. The claimant is concerned that if he needs to appeal his refugee decision, he will be unable to pay.
5.5	Refugee claimants, whether made at a port of entry or inland, arriving in Ontario and Quebec, are making their way to Saskatchewan in search of work and housing.

Discussion

Ensuring the voice of refugees and immigrants, their experience in accessing legal services is heard, is critical to an understanding of the need. Due to the sense of vulnerability experienced by immigrants and refugees, language and cultural barriers, many are uneasy speaking with ‘government’.

One refugee claimant from Ghana, spoke of his experience making a refugee claim. He arrived in Montreal in 2024 by plane and made a port of entry refugee claim. He made his way to Saskatchewan where he had a connection. Given the 30 days within which he was required to complete and file his Basis of Claim Form, he completed it online and submitted it to the IRB without counsel. During a meeting with IRCC, he was advised by an Immigration Officer that he might want to seek legal services as the refugee process was complex. The Claimant did a Google Search and was able to find a Consultant prepared to help him with his claim. He initially thought the service was free but later came to understand that he would have to pay.

With the Consultant, the Claimant prepared and filed with the Immigration and Refugee Board, a more detailed narrative to explain the basis of his claim. The Claimant is awaiting his refugee

hearing and currently working. At his worksite, he has met a fellow Ghanian who is trying to find a lawyer to help him with his refugee claim.

It should be noted that any inconsistencies between what the Claimant filed without counsel and what was filed subsequently with counsel is likely to have an adverse impact on the claimant's credibility and his chances of success.

A refugee claimant from Nigeria arrived in Montreal in September 2023 where he made an inland refugee claim. He initially sought legal advice and was required to pay a fee. The Claimant did not speak French and could not find work. He made his way to Saskatchewan in January 2024 on the recommendation of a friend, connected with CLASSIC who requested a Change of Venue for the claimant from Montreal to Saskatoon. The Claimant received CLASSIC services from a law student and staff lawyer with which we was very satisfied.

A claimant from Bangladesh arrived in Ontario in 2023 and made a refugee claim, paying for lawyer representation. The claimant subsequently moved to Saskatchewan where he has relatives. He continued to have his Ontario lawyer represent him at his virtual Hearing. The claimant worries that if his refugee claim is rejected, he will not have the means to appeal.

6.0 Associations, Community Services

F#	Findings
6.1	Canadian Bar Association: The President confirmed that there are few refugee and immigration practitioners in Saskatchewan (both <i>pro bono</i> and fee for service). Most pro bono practitioners are over capacity. And many refugees and immigrants do not have money to pay for immigration and refugee advice or representation.
6.2	Saskatoon Refugee Coalition / Amnesty International: A refugee advocate believes there are fewer and fewer lawyers prepared to do <i>pro bono</i> in refugee and immigration law. The area has become more complex and requires specialization, greater knowledge and experience
6.3	Global Gathering Place: Global Gathering Place provides limited settlement services to refugee claimants for which they are not funded. In 2024-2025, Global Gathering Place received 60 refugee claimants seeking legal assistance who were referred to CLASSIC. The number of claimants is on an upward trend and few lawyers are available pro bono. Global Gathering Place fields calls for immigration services including family sponsorships and refusals. Global Gathering Place is interested in collaborating with LAS and its efforts to support refugees and immigrants.
6.4	Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS): SODS provides some settlement services for refugees but is not funded by IRCC to do so. Lack of funded services in Saskatchewan for refugee claimants creates hardship and sometimes negative outcomes with failed refugee claims. Claimants rely on family and community members to provide translation and assist with completion of refugee claim forms. SODS will refer claimants to CLASSIC for support but CLASSIC is overwhelmed. In 2024, SODS served 150 refugee claimants in Tier 2 (settlement support, case management, referrals). 150 represents 22% of SODS total Tier 2 clients.
6.5	Many refugee claimants come through Quebec, Ontario and BC. Some have been advised that the claim processing is faster in Saskatchewan. Some have family or community connections in the Province. Recently, there has been an increase in persons on work or student visas in Saskatchewan making refugee claims.

Discussion

Some associations and community organizations were invited to comment on the need for legal aid funded refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan.

Canadian Bar Association – Saskatchewan: The President of the Canadian Bar Association believes there is a need for legal aid funded refugee and immigration services. In her criminal, family, corporate practice at a Saskatoon firm, she receives cold calls for refugee and immigration services to which she is unable to respond. Moreover, she has difficulty finding practitioners to whom she can refer callers, outside of a partner at her firm who provides pro bono assistance in refugee and immigration matters “when he can”. There are very few refugee and immigration practitioners in Saskatchewan (both *pro bono* and fee for service). Most pro bono practitioners are over capacity. And most callers do not have the resources needed to pay for immigration and refugee advice or representation. As a criminal practitioner, she is often confronted with situations where a client’s status in Canada can be adversely affected by a criminal conviction. Accessing immigration and refugee legal advice in this context can be challenging.

The CBA-Saskatchewan President believes LAS needs a hybrid model (staff/private bar) for refugee and immigration services similar to the one that exists today for criminal and family matters. The hybrid model is flexible enough to address both staff capacity challenges and conflict.

Saskatoon Refugee Coalition / Amnesty International: A refugee advocate of longstanding, a Co-Chair Saskatoon Refugee Coalition and Chair of Amnesty International – Saskatchewan, believes there are fewer and fewer lawyers prepared to do *pro bono* in the area of refugee and immigration law. The area has become more complex and requires specialization, greater knowledge and experience than previously. Legal aid funded services are needed. Some refugees in Saskatchewan are making inland claims, having entered the country through a port of entry with a visa. Circumstances in their homeland have changed resulting in a fear of return. Others, although very few in number, make a claim at the Saskatchewan border with the USA. And others made claims in Ontario and Quebec and moved to Saskatchewan due to the lower cost of living and housing.

Global Gathering Place: Founded in 1998 and located in Saskatoon, Global Gathering Place provides settlement support for refugees and immigrants. Its mission is to engage and support immigrants and refugees to integrate and thrive in Canadian society. Global Gathering Place provides an array of case managed settlement services, assisting with navigation, delivering English classes as well as a full calendar of programs for adults, youth, children and families. The Federal Government (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) is Global’s primary funder.

Global Gathering Place provides limited settlement services to refugee claimants for which they are not funded. Claimants who arrive at their doorstep seeking legal assistance are referred to CLASSIC. Staff have seen an increase in refugee claimants seeking assistance, exceeding CLASSIC’s capacity to respond. And in 2024, CLASSIC’s funding was cut, making matters worse.

In 2024-2025, Global Gathering Place received 60 refugee claimants seeking legal assistance. Staff cautioned that these numbers may underreport the actual count. Some Global clients landed in Canada on a valid temporary visa and subsequently made a refugee claim; these clients remain in the database as holding a student or work visa.

Country	Count	Country	Count
Bangladesh	11	Chad	2
Nigeria	7	Guatemala	2
Pakistan	5	Nicaragua	2
Colombia	4	Uganda	2
Syria	4	Other	14
Turkey	4		
Venezuela	3		

Recently, Global staff are fielding questions from Afghans in Saskatoon who have family in the USA. Afghan family members have come to Canada on a visitor's visa, fear returning to the USA, and are trying to determine what refugee or immigrant avenues are available to remain in Canada.

Staff believe Saskatchewan has inadequate legal services for refugee claimants and immigrants. There are few lawyers to provide services to those unable to pay. Some clients arrive from Ontario having made a claim there and retain their Legal Aid Ontario funded lawyer. In addition to legal services for refugees, there is a need for legal services for immigrants, particularly around family sponsorship and sponsorship refusals. Staff commented on their experience with seeking LAS assistance for clients on family and other matters – LAS staff often seem overwhelmed and unable to assist. Refugee and immigration legal aid funded services would require additional, specialized staff at LAS Staff Offices.

Global Gathering Place expressed an interest in collaborating with LAS to ensure its clients are able to access legal aid funded refugee and immigration services. Settlement agencies are places of first contact and build trusting relationships with refugee claimants, refugees and immigrants. Global Gathering Place plays an important role in the chain of service provision.

Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS): The Saskatoon Open Door Society was founded in 1980 to provide settlement services in Saskatchewan. SODS' primary funder is the Federal Government (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada - IRCC) and has 211 active employees. Programming includes:

- Settlement and Employment Services
- Language Training and Translation Services
- Family, Youth and Childcare Services
- Community Programs and Events
- Local Engagement and Volunteering

SODS is not funded by IRCC to provide services to refugee claimants. SODS provides limited services as a majority of its services are funded by IRCC and refugee claimants are not eligible for these services. Staff indicate that the lack of services in Saskatchewan for refugee claimants creates hardship and sometimes negative outcomes with failed refugee claims. Claimants rely on family and community members to provide translation and assist with completion of refugee claim forms. SODS will refer claimants to CLASSIC for support. CLASSIC uses students and volunteers to deliver the service, together with one or two staff lawyers. The service is often overwhelmed.

In 2024, SODS served 150 refugee claimants in Tier 2 (settlement support, case management, referrals). 150 represents 22% of SODS total Tier 2 clients.

Below is a distribution of refugee claimant clients registered by month in 2024:

Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	6	10	19	10	5	8	12	25	15	17	18

The main countries of origin for refugee claimants are Bangladesh (44 clients or 29% of total refugee claimants), Nigeria (31 clients or 20%), Pakistan (22 clients or 15%). Other countries of origin include Ghana, India, Turkey, Chile, and Kenya.

So far in 2025, SODS has served 32 refugee claimants in Tier 2, which was 47% of SODS total Tier 2 clients.

Many refugee claimants come through Quebec, Ontario and BC. Some have been advised that the claim processing is faster in Saskatchewan. Some have family or community connections in the Province. Recently, there has been an increase in persons on work or student visas in

Saskatchewan making refugee claims. Making an inland refugee claim in Saskatchewan is difficult; persons must make an early morning appointment and travel to the IRCC in Saskatoon. Transportation and accommodation costs to Saskatoon are prohibitive for refugee claimants living elsewhere in the Province.

Saskatoon Afghan Cultural Association (SACA): The SACA is a non-profit that provides opportunities for Afghans to gather, to celebrate their culture, to practice their language, and to make connections. There are about 4,000-5,000 Afghans in Saskatchewan, many of whom came to Canada as government sponsored refugees; they did not require legal services. A few Afghans have made inland refugee claims in Saskatchewan; two entered Canada on student visas and a few crossed into Saskatchewan from the United States. These claimants obtained services from CLASSIC.

Some Afghans, in need of legal services in other areas of law, are financially ineligible for CLASSIC and LAS services. Some Afghans believe the government incentivizes citizens to be on social assistance in order to gain access to legal services many are unable to afford, despite having jobs.

Nigerian Community Leader: A member of the Nigerian-Canadian Association Saskatoon noted that the Nigerian Community in Saskatchewan is growing. The community consists of approximately 5,000 individuals. Most Nigerians come to Saskatchewan via Vancouver, Toronto or Montreal. Some have family or other connections in Saskatchewan and arrive as permanent residents, while others come on student visas or work permits. The cost of living is attractive for many with more affordable housing. Very few have made refugee claims.

There is lack of knowledge in the community of Legal Aid Saskatchewan and the services it provides. There are community members who could benefit from refugee and immigration services to determine options available to them to remain in Canada on expiry of work or student permits.

7.0 IRB, IRCC, CBSA, Federal Court

F#	Findings
7.1	Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB): The IRB is dealing with a significant increase in refugee claims filed (110,000 in 2023 to 190,000 in 2024) and immigration appeals filed (2,377 in 2023 to 3,641 in 2024) across Canada, as well as a significant number of pending decisions.
7.2	The IRB, as of June 2025, had a total of 1,010 Saskatchewan refugee claims pending . The number of non-represented claimants on finalized refugee claims from Saskatchewan has increased. Of 470 finalized claims (2022-June 2025), 356 had paid counsel, 22 had a “no fee representative” and 92 had “no listed counsel”.
7.3	Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): Refugee claims referred to the IRB from Saskatchewan have almost tripled, from 215 in 2024 to 635 claims in 2025. Humanitarian and compassionate applications have increased in much the same way, a low of 210 in 2023 to a high of 720 in 2025.
7.4	Canada Boarder Services Agency (CBSA): The number of persons detained in Saskatchewan has increased from 17 to 25 from 2023-25. And the number of removals from Canada in the Prairie Region has increased from 668 in 2023 to 851 in 2025.
7.5	Federal Court: The volume of Federal Court refugee matters is small relative to other jurisdictions, amounting to about 10-15 applications annually. Clients seeking Federal Court judicial review or stays of removals in Saskatchewan are currently represented by Pro Bono, CLASSIC, who have limited capacity, or the private bar. Federal Court Counsel believes that the volume is low because clients cannot afford to pay. The lack of legal aid funded services impacts access to justice for refugees and immigrants as well as the desire to settle in Saskatchewan (the economy could benefit from more refugees and immigrants).The quality of representation varies, likely because of lack of experience, with few matters making their way to the Federal Court.

Discussion

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB): The data¹³ from the IRB identifies a large volume of refugee claims and immigration appeals across Canada over the last three years, with a substantial spike in 2024:

¹³ <https://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/statistics/Pages/volume-reports.aspx>

REFUGEE CLAIMS	INTAKE	DECISION PENDING (Totals)
2023 (Apr-Dec)	110,027	156,992
2024 (Jan-Dec)	190,517	278,159
2025 (Jan-Apr)	30,879	284,715

IMMIGRATION APPEALS	FILED	NON-STAYED PENDING(Totals)
2023 (Apr-Dec)	2,377	1,570
2024 (Jan-Dec)	3,641	1,747
2025 (Jan-Apr)	1,369	1,849

The IRB¹⁴, as of June 2025, had a total of **1,010 Saskatchewan refugee claims pending (710 principal claimants)**. The two top Saskatchewan cities of current claimant addresses are Saskatoon (48%) and Regina (39%). The top source countries are Nigeria (25%), Bangladesh (17%), India (13%), and Pakistan (8%). Of the Saskatchewan current address non-finalized inventory, 80% have a Western Region file number, 10% have a Central file number, and 10% have an Eastern file number.

Finalized Claims - Saskatchewan Address				
Year	Total Claims	Paid Counsel	Rep without fee	No listed counsel
2022	77	60	5	12
2023	94	64	13	17
2024	190	147	4	39
2025 (June 24)	109	85	0	24
TOTAL	470	356	22	92

The number of non-represented claimants on finalized refugee claims from Saskatchewan has increased. Of 470 finalized claims (2022-June 2025), 356 had paid counsel, 22 had a “no fee representative” and 92 had “no listed counsel”.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): The data¹⁵ below confirms an increasing number of claims referred from Saskatchewan to the Immigration and Refugee Board by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

¹⁴ Preeti Adhopia, Assistant Deputy Chairperson, Western Region & GRTF, Refugee Protection Division, Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada, July 02, 2025

¹⁵ Director General, Asylum Policy & Program | Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Government of Canada, June 2025

RPD Claims Referred from Saskatchewan to the IRB

Fiscal Year	CBSA	IRCC	Total
2022/2023	--	40	45
2023/2024	10	205	215
2024/2025	15	620	635

The top countries of origin and mode of entry for refugee claims in Saskatchewan are captured below. The top country of origin is Nigeria and the mode of entry is “inland”.

Refugee Claims in Saskatchewan by Top Countries of Origin and Mode of Entry

Country	Mode	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Nigeria	Inland	18	70	150
Iran	Inland	--	--	11
Pakistan	Inland	6	47	57
Bangladesh	Inland	--	41	96
India	Inland	--	13	59
Ghana	Inland	--	9	38

(Data counts fewer than five have been suppressed in accordance with IRCC's privacy protection and disclosure protocols.)

In addition to refugee claims, the data also confirms a substantial increase in immigration related humanitarian and compassionate applications originating in Saskatchewan

Humanitarian and Compassionate Applications Originating in Saskatchewan

Category	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
H&C / Public Policy	105	350	360
H&C	85	115	350
Public Policy	20	240	10
TOTALS APPLICATIONS	210	705	720

Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA): Data¹⁶ provided by the CBSA indicates an increase in the number of persons detained in Saskatchewan by the CBSA. Persons detained are eligible for detention reviews and require legal services to ensure access to justice and the best possible client outcome.

Persons Detained by Province

Saskatchewan	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	17	22	25

The CBSA data¹⁷ on removals from Canada for the Prairie Region also indicates an increase in numbers. Persons subject to a removal order can apply to the Federal Court for a “stay of removal”.

Prairie Region	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	668	809	851

Federal Court – Department of Justice (Immigration)

The Department of Justice (DOJ), Prairie Regional Office, Saskatchewan has an assigned Counsel to matters involving refugee claimants, including judicial reviews of manifestly unfounded claims, Refugee Appeal Division decisions and stays of removal. Counsel assigned has practiced refugee and immigration law, was an Adjudicator/Board Member, Immigration and Refugee Board – Immigration Division and currently teaches an Immigration Law course at the University of Saskatchewan.

The volume of Federal Court matters is small relative to other jurisdictions, amounting to about 10-15 applications per year. Clients seeking judicial review or stays of removals in Saskatchewan are currently represented by Pro Bono, CLASSIC or the private bar. Federal Court Counsel believes that the volume is low because clients cannot afford to pay. Pro Bono has limited capacity, relying on pro bono private bar volunteers to represent clients at the Federal Court. DOJ Counsel noted that the quality of representation varies, likely because of lack of experience, with few matters making their way to the Federal Court.

Counsel believes that legal aid funded refugee and immigration services are needed in Saskatchewan. The lack of services impacts access to justice for refugees and immigrants. Counsel supports a hybrid model (staff, private bar) to ensure flexibility and scalability, with

¹⁶ [Annual detention statistics: 2012 to 2024](#), Canada Border Services Agency, June 2025

¹⁷ [Canada Border Services Agency removals program statistics](#), June 2025

practitioners specialized in this complex area of law. The demographics in Saskatchewan, particularly in the urban centers continues to evolve with refugees and immigrants seeking lower costs of living and housing. Counsel emphasized the importance of refugees and immigrants in the revitalization of Saskatchewan as they contribute economically to future growth and prosperity.

8.0 Refugee and Immigration – Models for Service Delivery

The situational assessment reviewed existing services for refugees and immigrants in Saskatchewan, including availability of pro bono and clinic services, fee for service private bar and consulting services, refugee settlement agencies, community associations and persons with lived experience as refugee claimants. In addition, the situational assessment examined data from the IRB and IRCC.

The assessment identified a need for legal aid funded refugee and immigration services to ensure access to justice and quality. Currently, the main non-fee service providers of refugee and immigration services are Pro Bono Law, offering mainly advice, and CLASSIC, both of whom are not funded to provide refugee and immigration services.

Although demand for refugee and immigration legal services in Saskatchewan may appear small, the reason for this is unclear. The fact there are no legal aid funded services in Saskatchewan and settlement agencies are not funded to provide any refugee services may be contributing to fewer arrivals in the Province.

How best to meet the service demand within a fixed budget and respond to client expectations is key. A Plan to meet demand needs to answer the following:

1. What is the model of service delivery given the volume is low (staff, private bar, hybrid, lawyers, paralegals)
2. What model is best suited to provide cost-effective, efficient, high quality refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan?
3. What should be the scope of the services: Basis of claim forms, Refugee hearing, Refugee appeals, Federal court judicial review, humanitarian and compassionate applications?
4. What is the best operational structure and staffing to support the service delivery (legal aid applications, staff office if required, billing and payments, etc.)
5. What are the policies and processes needed to frame the service?
6. What use can be made of technology? Most refugee hearings are virtual.
7. Who at LAS will be accountable for the refugee and immigration services?
8. What performance measures and reporting need to be put in place?
9. How will we measure client service satisfaction?

The Plan to create a service delivery model must focus on some key elements to ensure success:

1. Organization Design & People
2. Policies
3. Processes
4. Technology

-
5. Accountability
 6. Performance Measurement, Reporting
 7. Client Satisfaction

Evaluation would involve the development of some key performance measures at the outset and regular ongoing reporting and monitoring, including client satisfaction.

The model will require resources to succeed, including hiring/training specialized staff, access to interpretation/translation services, medical experts, conference room, videoconferencing, etc.

Below are some key principles regarding the creation of a service model that will meet the complex needs of refugee claimants and immigrants in Saskatchewan:

- Leadership
- Collaboration
- Client focused
- Cost efficient, effective
- Specialization and quality
- Accessible

In order to give effect to these principles, the following recommendations are offered for consideration:

1. Commit LAS to a leadership role in responding to the need for refugee and immigration services in Saskatchewan to ensure access to justice and quality service
2. Create a LAS Refugee and Immigration Advisory Committee. Members of the Advisory Committee would include Pro Bono, Classic, Veeman Law, SCEISI, Global Gathering and Saskatoon Open Door Society, and persons with lived experience. The Committee would work together to ensure clients are well served.
3. Ensure the model is cost effective and efficient, including the use of resources to deliver services
 - a. law students, consultants, lawyers, case managers
 - b. translation, interpretation services
 - c. medical, psychiatric reports
 - d. country conditions
4. Develop refugee and immigration standards that promote quality service and specialization required to deliver the best possible outcomes for clients
5. Build an accessible service model in key regions of the Province to allow for some “in person” connection when required (e.g., Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert) as well as technology to support virtual reality.

Models of Service Delivery

The models below are preliminary proposals based on the situational assessment. The models require further discussion and development with key stakeholders participating on an Immigration and Refugee Advisory Committee.

Model 1 – Refugee and Immigration Panel Services

1. Hire a LAS Refugee and Immigration Services Lead
2. Develop Refugee and Immigration Service Quality Standards
3. Invite service practitioners to apply to join the Panel
4. Develop a tariff for refugee and immigration services:
 - Refugee Protection Division Hearings
 - Refugee Appeal Division Appeals
 - Federal Court Judicial Reviews, Stays
 - Pre-Removal Risk Assessments
5. Issue to panel members
 - legal aid appointments or
 - service contracts to firms (e.g. Veeman) or clinics (e.g., CLASSIC)
6. Monitor and evaluate services based on client outcomes

PROS	CONS
• Low investment in staffing and infrastructure • Offers potential to leverage existing resources (e.g. pro bono, CLASSIC, private bar) • Ensures quality through creation of standards • Limits scope of service to ensure specialization and cost management • Services potentially available in Province's main cities increasing client access • Generally considered cost-effective relative to staff services	• Does not add to existing refugee and immigration legal aid capacity in province – relies on market forces to develop capacity • Tariff may be inadequate to attract service providers to the Panel • Requires active panel management of service providers - staff effort

Model 2 – Refugee and Immigration Staff Services

1. Hire one LAS lawyer, two regulated consultants*
2. Develop Refugee and Immigration Service Quality Standards for staff
3. Limit scope of services to
 - i. Refugee Protection Division Hearings
 - ii. Refugee Appeal Division Appeals
 - iii. Federal Court Judicial Reviews, Stays
 - iv. Pre-Removal Risk Assessments
4. Monitor and evaluate services based on client outcomes

PROS	CONS
• Builds legal aid refugee and immigration services capacity in the Province • Ensures quality through creation of standards • Limits scope of service to ensure specialization and cost management • Offers opportunity to engage cost-effective non-lawyers in service delivery	• Minimally leverages existing legal resources (Pro Bono, Classic, private bar) • Potentially more difficult to scale up should demand increase • May impact client accessibility if staff services located in Saskatoon

*The staff model is based on assumptions regarding service demand. One lawyer and two regulated consultants are likely able to serve on an annual basis, 125-150 refugee claimants (Basis of Claim preparation, representation at Hearing), 10 Refugee appeals, 5 Federal Court judicial reviews/stays, and 10 Pre-Removal Risk Assessments.

Funding & Costs

The choice of model may ultimately rest with the funding available from the Department of Justice.

Appendix 10.02 contains a Chart detailing 2023-24 Immigration and Refugee Legal Aid Certificates and Expenditures by Province and Type of Lawyer. This data requires further analysis to determine the specific legal services provided by the private bar, clinics and staff in the various provinces to ensure “apples to apples” comparison.

Manitoba, for example, has a predominantly private bar model; it issued 619 refugee and immigration private bar certificates and staff covered 29 matters in 2023-24. The private bar expenditure amounted to \$92,000 and the staff services \$14,000, for a total of \$106,000.

Nova Scotia delivers services primarily through a specialized clinic with little private bar service. The specialized clinic service expenditure on 268 certificates was approximately \$790,000, and 37 private bar certificates at \$88,000 for a total of \$878,000.

Should LAS decide to pursue a Refugee and Immigration Panel Services model, further research and financial modelling will be necessary to determine the number of hours Saskatchewan will allow for specific legal services. This can be achieved by comparing hourly tariffs in other legal aid plans and forecasting costs. Appendix 10.03 contains the list of services and hours allocated to different refugee and immigration services by Legal Aid Ontario (LAO).

Below is an example of the costs that can be forecasted for the preparation and filing of a Basis of Claim Form by a Refugee and Immigration Services Panel. Once the scope of service is determined, LAS can calculate the costs associated with each legal proceeding:

LAO - For preparation/filing of a Basis of Claim Form & refugee portal application	9 hrs.
LAS – Civil hourly tariff	\$92
TOTAL	\$828

Should LAS decide to pursue a Refugee and Immigration Staff Services model, the hire of an experienced refugee and immigration lawyer with some management functions would be in the range of \$175,000 - \$200,000. Two experienced regulated consultants would likely cost \$75,000 to \$100,00. Additional costs for this model need to be included (e.g., overhead, benefits, etc.). An analysis of the staff cost relative to the services provided will help determine cost-effectiveness relative to the panel model.

LAS will need to allocate some resources to refugee translation, interpretation services, medical reports whichever model is selected.

Refugee claim translation services per client can cost from \$100 to \$700, depending on the type of document and number of pages. Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) pays 20 cents per word, allows up to \$700 in translation costs without prior approval. And refugee claim interpretation services per client can cost between \$200 to \$400 (preparation of basis of claim form, preparation for hearing).

Refugee claimants often require an interpreter. LAO pays \$39.25/hour for the first hour of interpretation and \$24/hour for subsequent hours (i.e. interpretin2-hourhour meeting would cost \$39.25 for the first hour and \$24 for the second). In Ontario, \$50/hr is now the going rate for Ministry of the Attorney General and the IRB. LAO will pay up to 10 hours interpretation without prior approval.

At LAO, document translation has been budgeted at between 7 and 8.5% of lawyer fees (i.e. \$1M in lawyer fees paid would correspond to around \$70,000 to \$85,000 in translation costs). Interpretation has been between 4.1 and 5.5% of the lawyer fees.

9.0 Organizational Readiness for Change

Legal Aid Saskatchewan is undergoing organizational transformation over the last three years that involves substantial change. Adding refugee and immigration services to its service offering will require management and staff time and effort, some of whom are at capacity. LAS will have to build capacity by adding resources (e.g., project management lead) to deliver on this change.

An organization's ability to change involves two main elements:

- a. individual skill
- b. change enablers.

Individual skill is a measure of an employee's ability to operate in a new environment as well as whether the employee possesses the necessary skill sets and training for a successful transition. Creating a refugee and immigration program will require the hiring of individuals with experience in refugee and immigration law. Enablers are the supporting functions such as finance, HR and technology that facilitate operations in the new environment. These will include the creation of spaces and adding technology for virtual refugee and immigration hearings, for example

Each element must be assessed to understand whether there is sufficient capacity and support to deliver refugee and immigration legal services.

To assist in assessing the LAS's commitment and capability to change, LAS's leaders should evaluate the following, either through surveying or focus groups:

- ☐ Do the people responsible for executing the change have the required understanding of the need for change?
- ☐ Are the stakeholders invested in the change? Do they want to see the change happen?
- ☐ Has the organization assessed its capability to change, including the individual skill and business enablers required to execute the change?
- ☐ Will the employees have the ability and skill to operate utilizing the new processes, and within the new structure?
- ☐ Will LAS be able to mobilize the necessary skills and provide the required training to support the new processes?
- ☐ Are business enablers (HR, IT and Finance) engaged in driving and supporting the change initiatives?
- ☐ Have the impacts of not making the change been identified?

The following are the keys to successfully gaining employees' support as an organization prepares to embark on change initiatives:

-
- ✓ Identify a Champion of change – the individual(s) must be respected within the organization. Who at LAS will lead the change to develop refugee and immigration services?
 - ✓ Ensure leaders demonstrate a willingness to invest and provide the necessary resources to successfully implement the change. Will the initiative be adequately funded by the Federal Government (Department of Justice – Legal Aid Directorate)
 - ✓ Engage the staff, private bar, and other key stakeholders affected by the change. How will staff lawyers, private bar, CLASSIC, consultants and others be engaged in the change?
 - ✓ Hire a project manager who has experience in leading and managing change.
 - ✓ Share the values and vision of LAS across the organization. Access to justice.
 - ✓ Use a team approach in deploying the project, creating employee and stakeholder support and motivation through participation and engagement.
 - ✓ Define short-term goals and milestones. Celebrate successes.
 - ✓ Ensure the change sticks through ongoing support, monitoring and reporting.
 - ✓ Communicate, communicate, communicate

10.0 Appendices

10.01: Key Informants

LAS STAFF, MANAGEMENT - FOCUS GROUP

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Lee Douglas	Legal Director	Meadow Lake
Tyne Hagey	Legal Director	Regina City
Adrian McBride	Regional Director	Swift Current, Moose Jaw
Deanna Harris	Regional Director	South East, Melfort, Yorkton
Chris Bennett	Director	Saskatoon City
Samantha Neil	Legal Director	Saskatoon Rural
Jamie Struthers	Legal Director	Regina Rural
Jonathan Bodvarson	Legal Director	Battleford
Fatima Sarwar	Legal Director	Prince Albert
Joanne Khan	Practice Management Counsel	Saskatoon
Abiodun Obafemi	Staff Lawyer	Yorkton
Daniel Booy	Staff Lawyer	Swift Current
Sarah Mihailovich	Vice-President, Operations, Admin	Saskatoon
Kimberly Earing	Legal Director	La Ronge
Deidre Powell	Staff Lawyer	Regina City
Taylor-Anne Yee	Staff Lawyer	Saskatoon

REFUGEE, IMMIGRATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Chantelle Johnson	Executive Director	Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City (CLASSIC)
Nicholas Blenkinsop	Staff Lawyer	
Catriona Kaiser-Derrick	Staff Lawyer	
Daniel Hirschhorn	Director, Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant	Saskatoon Immigration and Employment Consulting Services Inc. (SIECSI)
Chris Veeman	Immigration, Refugee Lawyer	Veeman Law, Saskatoon
Carly Romanow	Executive Director, Staff Lawyer	Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan
Jake Watters	Private Bar Lawyer	Watters Law Office

REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
David Essien	Refugee claimant - Ghana	Saskatoon
Anonymous	Refugee claimant - Nigeria	Saskatoon
Anonymous	Refugee Claimant - Bangladesh	Saskatoon

ASSOCIATIONS, COMMUNITY SERVICES

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Jessie Buydens	President, Board Member	Canadian Bar Association – Saskatchewan Branch
Helen Smith-McIntyre	Refugee Advocate	Saskatoon Refugee Coalition and Amnesty International
Belma Podrug Lori Steward	Executive Director Manager, Finance & Operations	Global Gathering Place
Ali Abukar	Executive Director	Saskatoon Open Door Society
Sultan Ali Sadat	Board President	Saskatoon Afghan Cultural Association
Edward Agbai	Community Leader	Member of the Nigerian-Canadian Association Saskatoon

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD (IRB), IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES, AND CITIZENSHIP CANADA (IRCC)

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Salim Saikaley	Outreach and Engagement Team	Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB)
Preeti Adhopia	Assistant Deputy Chairperson Western Region & GRT	Refugee Protection Division Immigration & Refugee Board (IRB)
Jason Hollmann	Director General, Asylum Policy & Program	Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

FEDERAL COURT

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Judith Boer	Counsel, Immigration	Prairie Regional Office, Department of Justice

LEGAL AID DIRECTORATE - DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Kelly King	Manager, Programs/Policy	Legal Aid Directorate, Department of Justice

10.02: Immigration and Refugee Legal Aid Certificates and Expenditures 2023-2024¹⁸

Table 16 - Immigration and refugee legal aid certificates and expenditures, by province and type of lawyer, 2023-24

		Certificates ¹ issued in the fiscal year Number (%)		Expenditures for certificates issued in the fiscal year Dollars	Certificates carried over from previous fiscal year Number (%)		Expenditures for certificates issued in a previous fiscal year Dollars	Total number of certificates (previous and current fiscal year) Number (%)		Total expenditures Dollars (%)	
Alberta											
	Private Bar	678	99%	1,162,780	150	67%	183,478	828	91%	1,346,258	75%
	Staff Lawyer	6	1%	10,767	73	33%	442,686	79	9%	453,453	25%
	Specialized Clinics	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Totals	684	100%	1,173,547	223	100%	626,164	907	100%	1,799,711	100%
British Columbia											
	Private Bar	3,822	100%	5,498,174	1938	100%	4,188,546	5,760	100%	9,686,720	100%
	Staff Lawyer	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Specialized Clinics	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Totals	3,822	100%	5,498,174	1938	100%	4,188,546	5,760	100%	9,686,720	100%
Manitoba											
	Private Bar	619	96%	91,352	64	52%	77,687	683	88%	169,039	62%
	Staff Lawyer	29	4%	13,398	60	48%	91973	89	12%	105,371	38%
	Specialized Clinics	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Totals	648	100%	104,750	124	100%	169,660	772	100%	274,410	100%
New Brunswick											
	Specialized Clinics	95	100%	206,363	—	—	—	95	100%	206,363	100%
	Totals	95	100%	206,363	0	—	0	95	100%	206,363	100%
Nova Scotia											
	Private Bar	37	12%	88,273	—	—	—	37	39%	88,273	10%
	Staff Lawyer	—	—	—	—	—	—	0	0%	0	0%
	Specialized Clinics	268	88%	787,572	206	—	—	474	499%	787,572	90%
	Totals	305	100%	875,845	206	—	0	511	538%	875,845	100%
Newfoundland and Labrador											
	Private Bar	3	3%	—	—	—	5324	3	3%	5,324	2%
	Staff Lawyer	83	97%	—	—	—	277,681	83	97%	277,681	98%
	Specialized Clinics	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Totals	86	100%	0	0	—	283,005	86	100%	283,005	100%
Ontario											
	Private Bar	44,761	83%	25,414,059	—	0%	25,882,189	44,761	83%	51,296,248	87%
	Staff Lawyer	29	0%	13,398	60	100%	91973	89	0%	105,371	0%
	Specialized Clinics	8,826	16%	7,446,743	0	0%	0	8,826	16%	7,446,743	13%
	Totals	53,616	100%	32,874,200	60	100%	25,974,162	53,676	100%	58,848,362	100%
Quebec											
	Private Bar	8,480	78%	1,438,770	4,446	100%	4,402,673	12,926	85%	5,841,443	51%
	Staff Lawyer	293	3%	517357	—	0%	—	293	2%	517,357	5%
	Specialized Clinics	2,065	19%	5073765	0	0%	0	2,065	14%	5,073,765	44%
	Totals	10,838	100%	7,029,892	4,446	100%	4,402,673	15,284	100%	11,432,565	100%
Canada											
	Private Bar	58,400	83%	33,693,408	6,598	94%	34,739,897	64,998	84%	68,433,305	82%
	Staff Lawyer	440	1%	554,920	193	3%	904,313	633	1%	1,459,233	2%
	Specialized Clinics	11,254	16%	13,514,443	206	3%	0	11,460	15%	13,514,443	16%
	Totals	70,094	100%	47,762,771	6,997	100%	35,644,210	77,091	100%	83,406,981	100%

¹⁸ LEGAL AID IN CANADA 2023-24 REPORT, Legal Aid Directorate, Department of Justice

10.03: Immigration and Refugee Services - Legal Aid Ontario Tariff¹⁹

87 The following apply to proceedings before the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board.

88 For consultation regarding immigration issues and an opinion to the Corporation as to recommended procedures: 3 hrs.

89 For preparation and filing of a Basis of Claim form (BOC) and refugee portal application for a claimant from a country or claim type not subject to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) expedited process: 9 hrs.

90 For preparation and filing of a BOC, refugee portal application and client disclosure in accordance with the IRB expedited process for a claimant from a country or claim type subject to the IRB expedited process: 12 hrs.

90.1 For items 89 and 90, when a claimant who is covered on the certificate requires their own BOC narrative: 3 hrs.

91 For all services pertaining to representation before the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board, including all preparation and adjournments, but excluding attendance, for claimants from countries and claim types not subject to the Immigration and Refugee Board expedited process: 9 hrs.

92 For all services pertaining to representation before the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board, including all preparation and adjournments, but excluding attendance for claimants from countries and claim types subject to the Immigration and Refugee Board expedited process following referral to a full hearing: 6 hrs.

93 For all services in relation to Cessation/Vacation proceedings before the Refugee Protection Division, excluding hearing time: 16 hrs.

94 For actual attendance at the hearing or prehearing, referred to in items 91, 92 and 93:
(a) attendance time is billable from the time the member arrives in the hearing room and goes on record to commence the hearing or to discuss pre-hearing matters. Attendance time concludes when the member goes off record at the end of the hearing: No maximum (b) breaks taken during a hearing may be included in attendance time with the exception of a lunch break; a lunch break during a full day hearing may not be included as hearing attendance time; (c) excludes wait time and adjournments.

¹⁹ https://www.legalaid.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/Legal-Aid-Services-Act-2020_Rules-EN.pdf.

95 For preparation for a subsequent sitting of the Refugee Protection Division when a first sitting has begun but not concluded: 2 hrs.

96 For preparation of written submissions on request by a member of the Refugee Protection Division: 2 hrs.

96.1 For services related to Minister's interventions or issues of exclusion: 3 hrs.

96.2 For services related to working with a designated representative when the claimant has an inability to appreciate the nature of the proceedings: 3 hrs.