

Appendix A

Individuals without immigration status in London

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Free of Fear policy is to enable London residents with uncertain or no immigration status to access City services without fear that the City will ask for and provide information on the immigration status of individuals to other public institutions or orders of government.

METHODOLOGY

To estimate the number of individuals without immigration status in London and to understand their needs, barriers to access services, and how the City of London can make it easier for them to access services, a survey was disseminated in April to different agencies and organizations regarding their interactions with these individuals.

RESULTS

51 respondents answered the survey (21 community organizations/agencies, 13 Ontario Works Customer Service Representatives, and 17 Family Centres - Community Connectors).

Between 71% and 92% of respondents declared that they interacted with clients without immigration status or whose immigration status could not be determined. Although some organizations stated that they do not track the number of individuals without status or that this information is anonymous, those who replied implied that there were over 700 interactions with individuals with no immigration or with uncertain immigration status who were asking for services and information. Currently, due to anonymity and lack of information and tracking, it is hard to conclude that this number truly represents the actual number of individuals in the City. Therefore, it was determined that it would not be possible to measure the number of individuals accessing services either within the Corporation or outside.

SERVICES THAT CLIENTS WERE SEEKING

- Refugee claim procedures and settlement services
- Library cards to access computers, borrow materials, or attend a program
- Housing and income assistance
- Assistance for legal services to assist with immigration process
- Emergency shelter – homelessness
- Food, clothing, and basis needs
- Referrals to different services
- Employment, employment supports, and training
- Immigration, language and translation, and integration services
- Education, enrolment in schools, and postsecondary services
- Access to healthcare and healthcare providers; as well as, health promotion and health education services
- Medications

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- Parenting classes
- Policing services
- Child care and early years programs
- Driver's licence info and driving schools

BARRIERS TO ACCESS SERVICES

Organizations and agencies stated that individuals without immigrant status were not able to access the following services due to lack of status, proof of residency, language, restricting policies and laws, financials, and fear or lack of knowledge:

- English classes- ESL
- Higher education, employment centres, settlement services
- Medical, health care
- Employment
- Housing, child care, bus passes
- Parks and recreation programs
- Social assistance
- Legal representation
- Transportation

WHAT CAN THE CITY OF LONDON DO TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR CLIENTS WITHOUT IMMIGRATION STATUS TO ACCESS SERVICES?

- Help spread the information that London is welcoming and inclusive to all (including those without status) by word of mouth
- Providing information about the services that are accessible to clients without immigration status (available in different languages, such as fact sheets available at CCLC and other orgs.)
- Advertise Neighbourhood Resource Centres that offer services to newcomers
- Hire more settlement workers to help navigate the system
- Municipal government fund newcomer serving agencies to hire staff to serve those with no status which will ensure better and easier system navigation
- Access to health clinic regardless of status
- Interpretation services to help acquiring services at no cost
- Policy that individuals can inquire about services without fear that their status will be reported
- Create an information and referral centre
- Official services forms that will not ask about status
- Advocacy
- "Don't ask, don't tell" policy
- More accommodating housing wait list policies- allow individuals without status to apply for rent geared to income housing and access to OW allowance
- Free transit

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SOME SITUATIONS/STORIES INVOLVING CLIENTS WITHOUT STATUS

Some stories that were told by respondents include:

Current situation of a family facing numerous political challenges with different countries in which either the children or their father can join their mother in Canada where she now has Permanent Resident status. Case continually causing excess stress to mother with no positive result in the near future

Young mother with status, 3 children under 5, partner's work visa expired, had to return to his home country. She has to get OW to survive, meaning she can't sponsor him as family class, this broke the family apart. She ends up in shelter with the children as she could not maintain housing.

Desperate father/husband looking for immediate housing for his young family.

A newcomer family came into the Family Centre to learn about the programs and services we offered, after spending time learning about everything the dad asked if his wife would be able to use the centre too even though she was not a Permanent Resident and asked if he paid a fee could she attend the programs. After assuring him his whole family was welcome she hesitantly came in. It took her a few visits before she finally felt comfortable coming without her husband.

Client is in London on student Visa but quit school and had no money to return home. Couldn't work or get Ontario works without particular documents.

A family came in that was living in a shelter. They were spending nearly the amount they might need to rent a modest place, as they were a fairly large family. They had some difficulties getting out of the shelter that we felt we might have been able to resolve if we had the money and the support of the city.

Problem 1: no money for 1st and last month's rent. **Problem 2:** no guarantor to be able to rent more appropriate housing.

Solution to #1: Agencies such as ours are given a fund from which to pay first and last month's rent for a number of families/individuals annually. **Solution to #2:** The client/family is taken through and signs a (rather non-legally binding) contract or "Bill of rights and responsibilities" in their own language that a settlement worker takes them through. The service provider then acts as guarantor for the renting family, possibly with a property manager or with a number of landlords who are receptive to renting to immigrants. In addition, the settlement worker would provide training (as with Orientation to Ontario) on the norms and expectations of living and renting in Canada. These norms and expectations would become part of the Bill of rights. The agency would have someone on staff to seek landlords or property management companies. There are advantages and disadvantages to renting to immigrants and service providers (or the city) could bridge some of the gaps between renters and landlords through training, interpretation services, and by acting as a resource to both.

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Questions for Community Connectors on clients without immigration status

This work supports the City's work on the Free of Fear Services for All policy (see <https://www.london.ca/city-hall/city-council/AZ%20Documents/Free%20of%20Fear%20Services%20for%20All%20Policy.pdf>). The purpose of the policy is to enable London residents with uncertain or no immigration status to access City services without fear that the City will ask for and provide information on the immigration status of individuals to other public institutions or orders of government.

The questions below concern your interaction with individuals without immigration status or whose immigration status may be uncertain.

Please complete the survey by March 31, 2019.

We truly appreciate your time and input.

Thank you

1. At the Family Centre, have you interacted with clients without immigration status or whose immigration status you could not determine?

_____ Yes

_____ No

2. If the answer to the above question is yes, approximately how many people without immigration status did you interact with in 2018?

_____ (Approximate number)

Please tell us about your experience dealing with clients without immigration status at the Family Centre:

3. Which services were the clients seeking?

4. Were you able to provide them with services? Yes No (if your answer is No, please let us know why)

5. Were there other services that the client(s) expressed an interest in receiving, but could not either due to immigration status or lack of proof of residency?

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6. Have you referred someone without immigration status or with uncertain immigration status to another service?

_____ Yes

_____ No

- If yes, which type of services did you refer them to?

7. In your opinion, what were the main barriers for clients without immigration status to access the requested services?

8. In your opinion, what can the City of London do to make it easier for clients without immigration status to access services?

9. Do you remember a situation involving clients without status that you would like to share with us?

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Questions for Organizations/Agencies on clients without immigration status

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The questions below concern your interaction with individuals without immigration status or whose immigration status may be uncertain.

Please complete the survey by April 5, 2019.

We truly appreciate your time and input.

Thank you

Name of Organization (optional):

1. To your knowledge, have you interacted with clients without immigration status or whose immigration status you could not determine?

_____ Yes

_____ No

2. If the answer to the above question is yes, approximately how many people without immigration status did you interact with in 2018?

_____ (Approximate number)

Please tell us about your experience dealing with clients without immigration status:

3. Which services were the clients seeking?

4. Were you able to provide them with services? Yes No (if your answer is No, please let us know why)

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5. Were there other services that the client(s) expressed an interest in receiving, but could not either due to immigration status or lack of proof of residency?

6. Have you referred someone without immigration status or with uncertain immigration status to another service?

_____ Yes

_____ No

- If yes, which type of services did you refer them to?

7. In your opinion, what were the main barriers for clients without immigration status to access the needed services?

8. In your opinion, what can the City of London do to make it easier for clients without immigration status to access services?

9. Do you remember a situation involving clients without status that you would like to share with us?

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Questions for CSR staff on clients without immigration status

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The questions below concern your interaction with individuals without immigration status or whose immigration status may be uncertain.

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We truly appreciate your time and input.

Thank you

1. To your knowledge, have you interacted with clients without immigration status or whose immigration status you could not determine?

_____ Yes

_____ No

2. If the answer to the above question is yes, approximately how many people without immigration status did you interact with in 2018?

_____ (Approximate number)

Please tell us about your experience dealing with clients without immigration status:

3. Which services were the clients seeking?

4. Were you able to provide them with services? Yes No (if your answer is No, please let us know why)

5. Were there other services that the client(s) expressed an interest in receiving, but could not either due to immigration status or lack of proof of residency?

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6. Have you referred someone without immigration status or with uncertain immigration status to another service?

_____ Yes

_____ No

- If yes, which type of services did you refer them to?

7. In your opinion, what were the main barriers for clients without immigration status to access the needed services?

8. In your opinion, what can the City of London do to make it easier for clients without immigration status to access services?

9. Do you remember a situation involving clients without status that you would like to share with us?
