



Executive Directors Report

October/November 2025



Update on IRCC/Provincial Funding/Federal

➤ IRCC Settlement Review

Following the reduction in Federal immigration levels announced in October 2024, IRCC amended the terms of the CFP launched in January of 2024 to a 3-year contract, down from the CFP based 5-year contracts. As shared with the Board, many SPOs across Canada, including RODS, experienced significant reductions in funded programs resulting in closing language classes, exiting learners from the classroom, reducing the depth of settlement services and laying off many staff.

As RODS and others have worked to adapt to the new reality, IRCC has announced that it is undertaking a ***'Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Program Renewal: Adapting to Evolving Funding and Client Needs'***, to align with immigration levels scheduled for announcement in November 2025 and the Federal 'Comprehensive Expenditure Review' requiring Federal Departments to find reductions in program spending of 7%, 10% and 15 % over the next 3 years.

The framework for the renewal falls under 6 themes:

1. *Renewed Digital Strategy* – determining cost efficiencies by providing settlement services using digital means, looking to shift to digital-first approach, with in person the secondary strategy. What services would be best served by a digital-first approach, SPO capacity to manage security and privacy, requirements for IRCC support. There are hints at CRM models or a central system.
2. *NAARS Transformation (Needs & Assets Assessments and Referral Services)* – rollout of a standardized NAARS Tool within and between agencies. Will require Agencies to assess and refer, possible common platform.
3. *Revising the length of clients' eligibility for settlement services* – placing a limit on eligibility to receive services as a way to manage fiscal restraint. How can clients be encouraged to access services earlier in their settlement experience, with consideration to vulnerable high needs clients.

Update on IRCC/Provincial Funding/Federal

4. Supporting Skills for Economic Success – with perceptions from IRCC of high student turnover rates in LINC classes, what are the alternatives to the in-class model. Assessing the effective of employment related services, looking for efficiencies and improve effectiveness, funding duplication between levels of government. Do LIPS and Umbrellas have an impact.

5. *Alignment of RAP services delivery and GAR levels* -analyze receiving communities, RAP SPO capacity, destined arrivals and funding. Effective cost per client based on community

6. *Stronger alignment with Provinces and Territories* – possible joint planning, funding and services provision.

The framework and the immigration levels/expenditure review place status quo SPO delivery models in the midst of significant change, refocussing and funding reductions. Initial consultation and requests for feedback with the sector has been funneled into limited preconceptions of the future, disconcerting at best.

Please see the attached IRCC document outlining the ***Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Program Renewal***.

- *IRCC has also made changes to the Case Management client distribution to providers in Regina.* Previously cases were distributed for assistance based level of need, with RODS having lower level need clients (1 & 2) and Rooted Connections being send the higher level need clients (3 & 4). A recent change will see both agencies provide services to all levels of client need, with clients sent to one of the 2 agencies based on client postal code. The initial draft of the postal code allocation has some significant errors in it, the Settlement Team have met with our Program Officer to have this resolved. This could potentially see RODS be allocated additional staff to assist higher level need clients.
- Our Bridging contracts funded by the Province of Saskatchewan, Immigration and Career Training (ICT) appear to have cleared the Advanced Contract Award Notice on Sask Tenders (ACANS). We anticipate carrying on with our 1 year agreements

Reception House, Smith Street Properties & Daycare

- ▶ We are now under contract for the Reception House at 1610 Toronto Street. An offer of \$320,000 was received, and after reviewing the offer with our Realtor and discussing it with Executive Committee and the Finance Chair, the offer was accepted. The risks of maintaining the property through out the winter months was a major factor, as was the risk of having a vacant property for such a long period of time. The Realtor advised that based on viewings and perceptions given the recent opening of the new City of Regina Shelter at the former Eagles Club, 3 blocks west, the offer seemed reasonable.
- ▶ The RODS building at 1855 Smith Street and adjacent parking lot continues to remain listed for sale with Avison Young at an asking price of \$1,590,000. There has been recent interest from a investor, who is considering buying the building and renovating it if they can secure a new long term tenant. Linely stated that the lower level of interest into Smith Street is not surprising given the current climate for commercial real estate in the downtown, as well as the challenges caused by & negativity surrounding the 11th Avenue infrastructure project.
- ▶ Following the approval of an additional 26 seats to our licensed childcare, we have met with Bogdan from RRME (Restoration Renovation Management Experts/Campbell & Halliburton) as well as Kurt Dietrich from KREATE Architecture & Design, continuing our due diligence on the feasibility of the Woodbine location. Our contractor expressed concern over some possible code issues associated with the 'new use' of the space and fire control requirements. We had an initial meeting with an Architect who echoed concerns over code compliance and fire control, specifically a sprinkler system. The architect has provided us a quote (\$16,500) to undertake work to establish possible code requirements and engage the City of Regina about requirements. Recent communication with Daycare Branch has confirmed that **Daycares do not require sprinkler systems** as part of fire control. The architect has quoted RODS the above mentioned \$16,500 for initial code compliance issues and \$42,500 for the entire project. We will be following up with the architect to determine next steps based on the new information, as well as considering scaled back options for service.
- ▶ We have been told that Federal/Provincial negotiations have begun on an extension to the \$10 a daycare agreement.

RODS Update

- ▶ RODS Employment Services is in ongoing discussions with the NorthPine Foundation to establish a refugee employment track within the Employment Services Team. Given the literacy needs and low language levels of many of our GAR clients they tend to not qualify for the LINC Benchmark Level 4 requirement of the current program. Our next scheduled meeting to discuss the proposal is mid November
- ▶ RODS Employment Services has been successful in receiving grant funds from RBC for a new mentorship program as well as ongoing support of our Job Fairs. The previous Youth Employment Initiative no longer fits the RBC funding priorities.
- ▶ RODS is currently contracted to provide CELPIP language testing and is in the final stages of discussions to also host IELTS language testing. These contracts generate some additional revenue for the programs.
- ▶ The Language Team is now operating 2 ENACT class **(Empowering Newcomers through Access to Community and Training)**.
- Language training, both Federal and Provincial Programs, have significant wait lists. The Federally funded LINC Program has a wait list of **289** learners, and the Provincially funded Stage 1 & 2 has a wait list of **90** learners.

RODS Update

- **Arrivals Update**

- GAR client arrivals from April 25 to October 22/25: **96**
- There are **64** GAR clients remaining to arrive from November 1 2025 to March 31 2026
- Clients' country of citizenship is: Somalia, Syria, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Eritrea
- Clients' top language is: Somali, Arabic, and Swahili

- **Service Update**

- 3444 newcomers served and 7462 services provided to (1,570 male, 1,697 female, 177 unknown or others) were served in Settlement between April – September 2025
- Top countries of citizenship: India (741), Nigeria (337), Vietnam (292), Philippines (282), China (253), Eritrea (204), Pakistan (148), Syria (135), Somalia (130), Bangladesh (118), and others (804).
- In-person was provided to 1981 clients with 5124 services; telephone or emails were provided to 2611 clients with 3972 services, and 1306 clients were provided staff led online service constituting 1517 services



RODS Update

- ▶ The construction of the 8' fence for the gated parking compound behind the Donahue Building has been delayed until mid November due to Vendor workload. SHA had approved funds from the KidsFirst accumulated surplus to fund the installation of an 8' fence, 2 electric vehicle gates and 2 manual entry gates in the parking area behind the Donahue Building. KidsFirst vehicles, Settlement Fleet vehicles and assigned staff parking are all within the Donahue lot. The construction of the compound and direct access to the building for the compound will support staff safety.
- ▶ As reported in September, RODS has submitted 2 applications to the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (SSCF) to support the ongoing portal construction and work of the Communications Department with RODS Departments. We have not yet heard back on our applications.
- ▶ RODS has submitted an application to the Minister of Public Safety [National Cyber Security Strategy](#), Cyber Security Cooperation Program (CSCP). We will attempt to secure funding to further our security efforts in building secure portals for confidential client forms and information for Departments, as well as educational programming for clients and staff on AI and cybersecurity. We have not yet heard back about our applications.

Other Information of Interest

- ▶ The Federal Government has tabled a revised version of Bill C-2, a bill that proposes many changes to border security and increased personal information access and sharing, and also proposes to make significant changes to the asylum claim system in Canada.
- ▶ There is no updated data on refugee claimants in Canada or Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan, 280 refugee claimants were processed by Canada Border Services (CBS) and IRCC for the period January 2025 to June 2025, with 255 refugee claimants processed in the same time period in 2024, and 40 in same time frame in 2023 (a 9% increase from 2024 and a 142% increase from 2023). There have been 57,000 refugee claimants processed by CBS and IRCC during the first 6 months of 2025, compared to 91,540 in 2024 and 56,720 in 2023
- ▶ Anti immigration sentiment continues to appear in the political realm and within polling data.
 - The Federal Conservatives are calling for changes to birthright citizenship, requiring at least one parent to be a citizen or a permanent resident.
 - A recent Leger Poll indicates growing sentiment against Canada needing immigration.

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/politics/klein-poll-shows-majority-of-canadians-reject-endless-immigration/ar-AA1NNHHy?ocid=socialshare>

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/conservatives-want-to-end-birthright-citizenship-for-children-of-temporary-residents/ar-AA1O6amK?ocid=socialshare>