



Executive Directors Report

February 2026



Update on IRCC/Provincial Funding/Federal

- On Friday, February 13th, the Settlement Sector received an invitation to attend a zoom meeting presentation from IRCC regarding the pending budget reductions as part of the Comprehensive Expenditure Renewal. Shortly after that invite, the sector received breakdowns of the IRCC funding reductions for the next 3 years, by province and territory.
- There is an overall 9.0% reduction to the sector nation wide, with specific provincial and territory reductions ranging from 1.7% to 14.6%. Saskatchewan will see a 13.3% reduction in previously budgeted/contract funding for 26/27, a reduction from \$44,336,517 to \$38,452,620.
- The 27/28 IRCC allocations reflects an additional 4% reduction nationwide from the reduced 26/27 allocations, and in 28/29 IRCC allocations reflect an additional 12.5% reduction nationwide from the reduced allocations in 27/28. No provincial level % reductions are available for the 27/28 or 28/29 fiscal years. Please see the attached IRCC information releases for the complete detail, Annex 1 & Annex 3.
- While we have the overall percentage reductions, we will not know what the impact will be on RODS until we are provided our new 26/27 notional budget amounts. The notional budget amounts usually provide us a fixed dollar amount, set delivery expectations, and then leave it up to individual agencies to manage the reductions and 'make it work'. The objective is to have reduced/revised 26/27 contracts signed in May 2026.
- Updated Information: IRCC hosted a call for the sector in Western Canada on Monday. They shared the financial data previously released, but noted a few things.
 - Service eligibility of Economic Class Newcomers and their families will be capped at 6 years effective April 1, 2026 and to 5 years April 1, 2027.
 - Notional budget allocations will be released by the end of February.
 - Reductions will focus on unutilized capacity/vacant LINC seats, program efficiency, service load for now ineligible clients(Economic Class), client service volumes and arrival patterns, new waitlist requirements.
 - For agencies 'unable' to manage their reductions IRCC will provide a 3 month window for program closure.
- The Saskatchewan Settlement Agencies, through SAISIA, will be meeting on February 24th to collectively discuss the pending reductions. There will be many conversations at Metropolis.

Update on IRCC/Provincial Funding/Federal

- ▶ RODS Settlement Management met with IRCC Settlement Management on February 2nd and discussed the challenges caused by IRCC 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 two agencies based on client postal code. There was an error in the IRCC postal code heat map, with IRCC interpreting government and medical service addresses in the downtown area, where RODS escorted clients to appointments, as client personal postal codes. We await a reply to our concerns.
 - ▶ RODS is in conversations with the Province of Saskatchewan, ICT, about possible additional language training seats to offset Federal seat reductions.
 - ▶ IRCC and the Interim Federal Health Program (IFH) have announced changes to the program effective May 1, 2026. The IFH Program provides interim health care coverage to GAR clients until they become eligible/enrolled in Provincial Health Care, as well as for refugee claimants and other categories of protected individuals. Provincial Health Care charge back to the provinces expenses for GAR clients within their first year in Canada and for expenses incurred treating refugee claimants. IFH expenses have received attention of late from the Province of Alberta as well as the Federal Leader of the Opposition. Please attached media articles.
 - A **30% co-payment** will be implemented for supplemental products and services, including vision care, assistive devices, urgent dental care and occupational therapy.
 - A **\$4 co-payment per prescription** will be implemented for prescription medications and renewals.
 - The balance of the IFH program, basic health, pre-departure medicals and Immigration Medical Exams remain unchanged with no co-pay component.
- RODS Management will assess the impact of these changes on our clients, determine if there will be any special consideration for GAR clients, as well as review the terms and conditions of the current RODS Board approved Newcomer Emergency Fund and assess its potential suitability to address possible challenges

Smith Street Properties & Daycare

- ▶ 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. We have received word from our Realtor that *Sask Builds and Procurement* and the *Department of Justice, Government of Saskatchewan* have expressed initial interest in the property. This expression of interest is at a very early stage, given the current timeline on the Provincial Budget and required approval stages. The nature of the interest is somewhat unclear, but the parking lot is definitely of interest as is the building lot itself. There were 2 previous potential buyers, there is no update on their level of interest.
- ▶ Following our conversation with an Engineer from the City of Regina Building Code Unit we have hired KREATE Architecture and Design to initiate the initial phase of determining building code status and compliance issues. While the City of Regina Engineer believes that no sprinkler system will be required, but he did flag several other potential code issues including fire rating of the building roof, 2nd floor load capacity, fire control system as well as containment of the access elevator as per code. KREATE has begun their work on the property, and we hope to be under the \$16,500 Phase 1 cost quoted by the architect. We have reached out to the Architect for an update on progress.

RODS Update

- ▶ RODS Employment Services met with the NorthPine Foundation on November 28th to review our application for a program establishing a refugee employment track within the Employment Services Team. We await further discussions to finalize the submission.
- ▶ RODS is currently contracted to provide CELPIP language testing and has finalized discussions to also host IELTS language testing. We continue to work to address technical requirements to deliver the IELTS testing, including IELTS installation of a lab camera system as well as waiting room cameras. These contracts generate some additional revenue for the programs.
- ▶ The Language Team continues to operate 1 ENACT class (**Empowering Newcomers through Access to Community and Training**). The Saskatoon Open Door Society has launched its own version of our ENACT program, with the same fee structure.
- Language training, both Federal and Provincial Programs, have significant wait lists. The Federally funded LINC Program has a current wait list of **236** learners and the Provincially funded Stage 1 & 2 has a wait list of **87** learners.

RODS Update

Settlement Family, and Community Services Department

Monthly Report to Executive Director

Month: January		Date of Submission: 02-19-2026	
Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)			
Arrivals	Month: April - January		Total:124
Expected Arrival	Month: February 2026		Total: 8
Countries of Citizenship	Sudan, Mali, Syria, South Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Iraq, Uganda		
Service Updates			
No. of Newcomers served	Month: April-January		Total: 6,123
Clients' top Language	Gujarati, Arabic, Tigrinya, Mandarin, Somali, Tigrigna, Hindi, Dari, Swahili, Hausa,		
No. of Services provided	N/A		
No. of Clients by Gender	Male: 2944 Female: 3179 Unknown: N/A		Total: 6,123
Countries of Citizenship	Top countries of citizenship: India, Nigeria, Vietnam, Philippines, China, Eritrea, Pakistan, Syria, Somalia, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Burmese		
In-person Services: January 2025			
No. of Clients served	594		
No. of services	630		
Mode of Services	Telephone or emails Staff -led online		
Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW)			
No. of Clients Served	28		
No. of Services	36		
Refugee Claimant			
No. of Claimants	10		
Countries of Origin	Bangladesh (1), Gambia (2), Ghana (1), Nigeria (5), Uganda (1)		

RODS Update

- ▶ The construction of the 8' fence for the gated parking compound behind the Donahue Building has been delayed until the Spring of 2026. West Oak, Donahue Property Managers, were not able to provide new lot configuration and drawings in time before the ground had frozen. SHA has confirmed that it will continue to financially support the project on the new timeline.
- ▶ We have been undertaking some facility maintenance on the Donahue Building, including painting, replacing damaged flooring and preparing for the eventual movement of teaching materials and resources from Smith Street to Donahue.

Other Information of Interest

- ▶ Following the Alberta Governments announced intention hold a fall referendum, including questions about immigration and immigration assistance in Alberta, and the release of Federal health care spending (IFH) for refugees, The Federal Leader of the Opposition is calling for a probe into refugee classes receiving Federal support.

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/health/other/conservatives-calling-for-probe-into-asylum-seekers-access-to-health-care/ar-AA1WSMBq?ocid=socialshare>

- Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta has announced the intention to hold a public referendum, including questions about immigration and immigration assistance in Alberta.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/alberta-danielle-smith-fall-referendum-9.7098568>

- ▶ Debate continues on the Federal Governments Bill C12, with many groups expressing concern over the impact on refugee claimants.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/article/diab-says-c-12-could-ease-some-refugee-claims-critics-call-it-a-two-tier-system/>

- ▶ The federal Government has announced an additional Express Entry program stream to attract skilled workers in key fields as well as those for certain military positions. An Express Entry program stream was established for physicians in December 2025.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/diab-expands-express-entry-program-streams-9.7095598>