

Alberta announces increased aid program, child-care subsidy for arriving Ukrainians Social Sharing ^[1]

New program to provide up to 6 months of support for food, other basic expenses

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EXCERPTS

Alberta is expanding eligibility for support programs for newly arriving Ukrainian refugees, Premier Jason Kenney said at a news conference Monday.

Starting July 25, new arrivals will be eligible for temporary assistance for six months to cover basic expenses such as food, clothing and rent.

Kenney said the additional supports are expected to cost between \$15 million and \$38 million, depending on how many Ukrainians arrive in the coming months.

Ukrainian arrivals with children under 12 can apply for six months of child-care funding.

The expanded subsidy would mirror the federal child-care agreement with the province, amounting to an average of \$600 a month to cover the cost of licensed child care through the Child Care Subsidy Program, Kenney said.

Eligible applicants must be Ukraine nationals and have a specially issued Alberta health-care card with an expiry date. Children must attend a licensed child care program in Alberta, be 12 or younger and not yet be attending Grade 7. Proof of income is not required.

"We can't take away their fears for those who have been left behind. But we can at least dispel the uncertainties that come with trying to start over and make ends meet in a new country," Kenney told media at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, 45 kilometres east of Edmonton.

Children's Services Minister Matt Jones said the quality of education and child care for evacuees arriving in Alberta is critical. He said many refugees are single mothers with children.

"One of those critical supports is safe, accessible, and high quality child care for parents with young children ... We are committed to ensuring your children are safe, protected, and learning," Jones said.

Kenney also announced increased eligibility for six months worth of financial assistance, saying it would come directly from Alberta's Income Support program, which provides financial aid to pay for basic necessities.

The support will be at the same rates as Income Support payments received by other Albertans in similar financial circumstances.

"This expanded support will be key for people whose lives had been thrown into chaos by the invasion," Kenney said.

Two months ago, Kenney announced an additional \$2 million in support for Ukrainians arriving in the province.

"They can begin to live secure lives here, but also cope with trauma and other challenges that they bring with them from the conflict," Kenney said in April.

Through that program, Alberta allows Ukrainian refugees access to resources that would help them find work, build careers, enrol in kindergarten to Grade 12. The program also provides access to adult learning programs and English language learning.

Orysia Boychuk, president of the Alberta chapter of the Canadian Ukrainian Congress, said the income support and child-care subsidy are appreciated.

"We are confident this will definitely help support and contribute to the Ukrainian nationals' successful integration in Canadian society," Boychuk said at the news conference.

"We also thank the Alberta government for its unwavering support for the past four months as Russia continues to wage war on Ukraine."

Region: Alberta ^[3]

Tags: child care ^[4]

subsidy ^[5]

income ^[6]

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