

TAKING STOCK for TAKING ACTION



Capacity for Newcomer Settlement and Integration in Saskatoon



INTRODUCTION

All newcomers to Saskatoon have something to offer our city, and at times they need help finding ways to use their knowledge and skills to meet their goals.

This guide is based on the Taking Stock for Taking Action report (visit www.saskatoon.ca, click I for Immigration and go to Resources) which looked at how well the City of Saskatoon and other groups are currently able to support newcomers coming from other countries and made suggestions for where more work needs to be done.

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The report found that our ability to connect newcomers is growing in all sectors including:

- Settlement
- Housing
- Health
- Economic Integration: Employment
- Economic Integration: Business
- Education
- Aboriginal Community
- Policing and Justice

Saskatoon has hundreds of initiatives to offer newcomers, to meet their social, economic and civic integration needs, and we need to organize in a way that will result in a better use of resources. We need a model where a newcomer only has to reach out to one initiative to be connected to all the services available.

TAKING ACTION

- Consider how we can apply all of our resources.
- Use our resources wisely, for example, only offer the same service in more than one place when needed.
- Help groups to connect with each other so they can share resources and programming.
- Encourage take-charge behaviour that builds positive relationships between groups and individuals who help newcomers.

References and further reading:

Capacity for Newcomer Settlement and Integration in Saskatoon: Taking Stock for Taking Action, 2013

Executive Summary, pages 6-8.

1.0 Introduction, pages 9-13.



SETTLEMENT

Feeling comfortable in a new community can be a challenge. The Taking Stock for Taking Action report found newcomers need help with:

1. Initial welcoming, and getting to know the city
2. Finding temporary and longer-term housing
3. Getting enough affordable food
4. Obtaining important documents

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Some newcomers get help from family or friends already living in Saskatoon. People without family or friends, or people who do not speak English may need help from community groups.

Located in downtown Saskatoon, the **Newcomer Information Centre** is the first place newcomers can go to find help. **Settlement organizations** as well as Saskatoon's many **ethno-cultural groups**, also provide many settlement and integration services to support newcomers.

TAKING ACTION

- Create a partnership between different groups to run a newcomer reception program.
- Install a "Welcome to Saskatoon Kiosk" with multi-lingual signs and information at all ports of entry.
- Services for newcomers should try to be located near each other to make it easier for newcomers to visit.
- Make sure welcoming services are available and being used by newcomers.

References and further reading:

4.2 Settlement Needs, page 18.

7.2 Settlement: Overview of Capacity Building Initiatives, pages 42-44.

Appendix 1, 1.2 Reception of Newcomers, page 74.



HOUSING

Newcomers often have specific housing needs. The Taking Stock for Taking Action report found newcomers' housing needs include:

- Better access to rental housing
- Help finding housing
- More help building credit for mortgages
- More low- to mid-range housing
- More transitional housing
- Safe and adequate short-term housing
- Affordable housing
- Rent controls
- Help understanding housing terms
- Housing close to grocery stores

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The **Planning and Development Division at the City of Saskatoon** is working to make sure the city has a mix of housing types, so all residents, including newcomers, have a better chance to find affordable homes.

The National Affordable Housing Corporation helps low and moderate income earners buy their first homes. They partner with housing providers, land developers, and home builders, and offer education programs, and credit building and financial assistance.

TAKING ACTION

- Governments could give information about finding housing to potential newcomers before they arrive.
- All housing groups could work together to deal with the housing needs of newcomers.
- Housing groups should also think about improving the ability for newcomers to find affordable transitional housing in Saskatoon.
- Find ways to make sure people and communities are connected.

References:

6.3.3.5 Planning and Development Branch Initiatives, page 34-35.

7.2.2.2.2 Housing Initiatives, page 44.

Appendix 1, 1.3 Housing of Newcomers, page 74-75.

Appendix 2, 1.1.1, Housing Needs, page 82.



HEALTH

The Taking Stock for Taking Action report found newcomers' health needs include:

- Better access to medical and dental care
- Multilingual information about health care
- More translators for health care
- Getting health care sooner upon arrival
- Help with mental health and culture shock
- Better disability care
- Health care and better nutrition while waiting to become a citizen
- Help learning about local food products and budgeting for food

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In recent years, the **Saskatoon Health Region** has learned to better understand the health needs of newcomers. They now offer health information and other services just for newcomers. Also, research has been done at the **University of Saskatchewan** to learn about the health needs of newcomers.

Another program that has made health care more available is the **Mobile Primary Health Unit**. Also known as the "Health Bus," it gives health care to low-income residents in the west-central parts of Saskatoon.

TAKING ACTION

- Think about how to deal with the special health needs some newcomers have, such as language barriers and cultural differences in health care.
- Health workers in Saskatoon could learn more about how to help newcomers learn and use the healthcare system.
- More research is needed on newcomer health.
- Groups could create a way to track the health services available in Saskatchewan.

References and further reading:

7.2.2.2.3 Health Initiatives, page 46.

7.2.2.2.4 Food and Nutrition Initiatives, page 46.

Appendix 1, 1.4 Health of Newcomers, page 75.

Appendix 2, 1.1.2 Health Needs, page 82.



EMPLOYMENT

Many newcomers can earn enough money to meet basic needs. But others find themselves unemployed, or settling for part-time employment, low-wage employment, or underemployment.

The Taking Stock for Taking Action report found newcomers have a hard time finding a job that matches their skills and knowledge for two main reasons:

1. Jobs were lacking or hard to find.
2. Some employers would not hire newcomers at all.

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There are several programs to help newcomers get a start in the Canadian workforce:

- The Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition program
- The Saskatchewan International Physician Practices Assessment
- The Internationally Educated Health Care Professionals Career Pathing Project
- The Immigrant Access Fund of Saskatchewan

The **City of Saskatoon** has job postings and information about how to apply. Newcomers can also talk to the City of Saskatoon's **Diversity Coordinator** to get information about recognition for their non-Canadian qualifications, and to get help improving their resume.

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- Groups could help improve job search services in Saskatoon to help newcomers find more meaningful work.
- Develop more workshops and other opportunities to introduce newcomers to employers.
- Develop programs to help young adults enter the workforce.
- Create public support for hiring newcomers.
- Reward employers who hire newcomers.
- Create a list of immigrant-friendly businesses.
- Make sure newcomer youth don't feel pressured to take jobs that keep them from schooling.

References and further reading:

4.3 Economic Integration Needs, page 18.

4.3.1 Challenges Faced by Prospective and Actual Workers, page 18-19.

6.3.2 Human Resources Department Initiatives, p. 30

7.3.2.1.2 Foreign Credential Recognition Initiatives, page 48-49.

Appendix 1, 2.3 Employment, Mentorship, and Internship Services, page 77.

Appendix 2, 1.2.1 Employment, Entrepreneurship, Internship, Mentorship Needs, page 83.



BUSINESS

Newcomers who want to start their own business or invest in business face challenges such as:

- Getting enough help to find business and investment opportunities
- Learning about Canadian business culture
- Understanding how to set up a business or become an investor
- Finding multilingual business services

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The Planning and Development Division at the City of Saskatoon has several programs to help all entrepreneurs, like the **Business Start-Up Guide**, and the **Saskatoon Business Directory**. The **Business License Program** also has special meetings for newcomers with translation and interpretation.

Other groups that offer help to newcomers who want to run their own business include:

- Community Partnerships and Settlement
- Saskatchewan Immigrant and Nominee Program, Entrepreneur and Farm Category
- Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority (SREDA)
- Global Infobrokers' Praxis School of Entrepreneurship

TAKING ACTION

- Partner with other groups to create entrepreneurial training programs. The program could include information on how to start and run a business in Saskatoon.
- Support co-operative business models.
- Newcomers need more support starting and running businesses in Saskatoon. For example, business licensing services should be offered in more languages.

References and further reading:

4.3.2 Challenges Faced by Entrepreneurs and Investors, page 19-20.

6.3.3.5 Planning and Development Branch Initiatives, page 34-35.

7.3.2.2.2 Entrepreneurship Initiatives, page 51.

Appendix 1, 2.2 Business and Entrepreneurship Services, page 77.

Appendix 2, 1.2.1 Employment, Entrepreneurship, Internship, Mentorship Needs, page 83.



EDUCATION

The Taking Stock for Taking Action report found newcomers' language and literacy needs include:

- More job-specific English classes
- Pre-school literacy programs and childhood education
- Programs for people 18-21 who only need language training
- Easily available language and educational assessments
- More English as an Additional Language (EAL) training and opportunities for conversation in English
- Smaller EAL classes
- More EAL teachers
- More work-related skill development programs in high schools
- More bridging programs for students who do not have university-level English but are academically skilled
- More informal learning options
- More language tutors

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Good language skills can help newcomers at work, at school, when getting help, and socially. The **Settlement Support Workers in Schools** program and the **Saskatoon Public Schools Newcomer Student Centre** help students and their families get into the education system.

Many community groups host informal conversation circles and reading circles. Many other community organizations in Saskatoon offer programs like:

- English as an Additional/Second Language
- French as a Second Language
- Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
- Enhanced Language Training
- Life and Enhancement Program

TAKING ACTION

- Host more workshops that focus on learning career-related skills and knowledge.
- Offer more language classes for people over 18 who cannot be taken in by the K-12 system.
- Offer more language training and conversation opportunities in workplaces.
- Teachers should have more cultural awareness training so they can better understand the needs of their students.

Reference and further reading:

7.3.2.1.1 Language and Literacy Initiatives, page 47

7.3.2.1.3 Other Educational Initiatives, page 49

Appendix 1, 2.4 Educational and Training Services and Programs, page 78.

Appendix 2, 1.2.2 Education Needs - Language and Literacy Needs, pages 83-84.



ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

Teaching newcomers about Aboriginal traditions is important in helping them understand their new home. Many groups have worked hard to teach newcomers about the history and culture of Aboriginal people. Learning about Aboriginal culture through the media, speaking with family and friends, and making personal observations is not always the most accurate way to get information.

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Newcomers are being taught about Aboriginal treaties, rights, citizenship, governance, and history. Also important is the creation of partnerships between newcomer and Aboriginal groups.

Both the **Saskatoon Open Door Society** and the **Saskatchewan Intercultural Association** have worked with the **White Buffalo Youth Lodge** to host employment programs for both the newcomer and Aboriginal communities.

Programs like these are driven by a shared belief that they benefit both Aboriginal and newcomer community by:

1. Helping them with their search for work.
2. Creating a better understanding between cultures.

TAKING ACTION

- Make sure newcomers understand the history, rights, and roles of Aboriginal people in Canada.
- Learn how to share knowledge of Aboriginal people and culture through the Office of the Treaty Commissioner's **Champions of Understanding program**.
- Think about whether any Aboriginal governments could help with welcoming newcomers and teaching them about Aboriginal history and culture.
- Foster understanding between newcomers and Aboriginal people to help create a connected community.
- Include Aboriginal elders in citizenship ceremonies.

References and further reading:

7.4.2.2 Capacity Acquired to Meet Social Understanding Needs, pages 53-54.

8.3.2.3 Consider Consulting Aboriginal Governments, page 63.

Appendix 1, 3.2 Aboriginal-Newcomer Relations, page 78.



POLICING AND JUSTICE

Newcomers need to learn how law and policing works in Canada. They need to know how to use those services if they need help or protection, and what to do if they or a family member might be charged for breaking the law.

Some newcomers also need good experiences with police officers, especially those refugees who may fear authority figures.

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The Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) meets the needs of newcomers by:

- Teaching newcomers about laws in Canada
- Going to community events to share knowledge and get to know both people and groups
- Hosting the Race Against Racism event, which draws a large number of people from many different cultures

The SPS has also created the video “An Overview of Canadian Law Enforcement,” which was translated into 16 languages. And they have started the Interpreter Training for Police Program, which helps those who are fluent in languages other than English to work as interpreters for SPS.

Two SPS initiatives that work directly with newcomers are:

1. The Cultural Resource Unit
2. Interpreter Training for Policing

TAKING ACTION

- Groups should think about how to make sure newcomers understand the Canadian Criminal Code and policing and justice in Canada.
- More forums should be hosted about policing and justice.

References and further reading:

4.5 Civic Integration Needs, page 20.

6.3.4 Saskatoon Police Services Initiatives, page 35-36.

Appendix 1, 4.2 Orientation to Policing and Justice Services, page 79.



KEY POINTS FOR ENHANCING CAPACITY AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

The Taking Stock for Taking Action report says Saskatoon has been doing better in meeting the needs of newcomers, and there is still more work to be done.

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The report says the needs of some newcomers are not met because:

- Not all newcomers have the same types of needs at the same time after arrival
- Not all newcomers know about programs and services that would help them meet their needs
- Not all newcomers know how to use some of the programs and services
- Not all newcomers are eligible for all programs and supports
- Not all newcomers choose to use existing programs and services
- Not all newcomers are able to use some programs and services because space is limited

Also, some programs and services are only offered during their first few years after arrival, even though some needs may last longer. And most groups simply cannot meet all the needs of all newcomers.

TAKING ACTION


- To better help newcomers, think about the gaps in meeting the needs of newcomers and what could be done to fill those gaps.
- Take the time to read the full Taking Stock for Taking Action report, which has a lot of great ideas about how to better support newcomers.

References and further reading:

7.6.3 Key Points for Enhancing Capacity at the Community Level, page 58.





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