

Settlement Resources for Ukrainian Arrivals in Durham Region

Below is helpful information and links to resources for Ukrainian newcomers and residents that are assisting with resettlement in Durham Region.

Important Local Contacts

Ukrainian Canadian Council (UCC) - Durham Chapter:

The [UCC in Durham Region](#) has organized to support Ukrainian newcomers with various needs, including reception from the airport, transportation and housing, and other supports for settlement in Durham Region. Contact: durham@ucc.ca

Durham Welcome Centres – Immigrant Services:

One of the best sources of support is the staff at the Durham [Welcome Centres](#) and through the SWIS (Settlement Workers in Schools) program. Professional settlement staff at the Welcome Centres speak many languages and are funded by both the federal and provincial governments to provide information, training and resource to newcomers.

At Welcome Centres, you can get assistance with housing, health care, social insurance numbers, childcare, community and government resources, and more. You can also access English language classes, and employment supports such as resume assistance, job search workshops, accreditation and qualifications assistance, and other employment resources. You can also use free internet and fax services at the Welcome Centres.

Call the numbers below to connect with local Welcome Centre Managers:

Ajax Welcome Centre	Manager:	Wosen Yitna Beyene
	Phone #:	(298) 482-1053
	E-mail:	wbeyene@cdcd.org
	Address:	458 Fairall St #5, Ajax, Ontario L1S 1R6
Pickering Welcome Centre	Manager:	Pam DeWilde
	Phone #:	(905) 420-3008
	E-mail:	
	Address:	1400 Bayly St, Pickering, ON L1W 3R2

211 Ontario: For help getting connected to community, social, health-related and government services in your community, dial 2-1-1 on a phone or visit www.211ontario.ca. The 2-1-1 phone line is free, answered 24 hours a day all year round. You can talk to people in more than 150 languages.

Service Ontario: You will have to visit Service Ontario to get a health card (OHIP), a driver's licence and register a vehicle. Contact: ServiceOntario INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 (TTY: 1-800-387-5559).

Service Canada: You will have to visit a Service Canada office to apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN) and access other government services and benefits.

Important: You will need photo identification and a SIN to access many services and benefits, and to work in Canada.

There are multiple Service Ontario and Service Canada locations in Durham Region. [Visit this map to see these and other settlement services locations.](#)

Ukrainian Churches in Durham Region:

[St. John's the Baptist Ukrainian Orthodox Church](#) (Oshawa)

[St. George the Great Martyr Ukrainian Catholic Church](#) (Oshawa)

[Grace Church](#) (Oshawa)

About Durham Region:

[Durham Region](#) is east of Toronto, in the Golden Horseshoe Area of Ontario. It is a mix of rural, residential, and commercial land. Durham Region is one of the fastest growing regions in Canada – much of this growth comes from immigration. Newcomers to Canada choose Durham and come from all over the globe.

Durham has eight unique area municipalities, each with something new and interesting to discover: [Ajax](#), [Brock](#), [Clarington](#), [Oshawa](#), [Pickering](#), [Scugog](#), [Uxbridge](#), [Whitby](#).

Housing in Durham Region:

There are different housing options for people of different income levels and family sizes. This will also vary with the **cost of living** here. Here are some resources for **buying a home** or **renting a home**. As a renters, there are some things newcomers should learn – see the [Renter's Toolkit](#).

There are also **affordable housing** and **temporary housing** solutions. The Region of Durham website has information and resources on **shelters and homelessness**.

Food and Other Basic Needs:

If there is an urgent need for food and other basic needs, please contact [Feed the Need \(FTN\) in Durham Region](#). Contact: Laurie Snyder at laurie@ftnd.ca or call (905) 571-3863.

There are other [local food banks](#) across Durham; however, FTN should be the first point of contact for Ukrainian newcomers. FTN will refer to other local food banks if necessary.

There are lots of large [food stores](#), often called grocery stores, all over the region. There are also bargain stores, bulk stores, whole foods stores, health food stores and international stores. Durham has [farmers' markets](#) where local farmers and food growers sell produce, vegetables, baked goods and homemade items and preserves. You can also [grow your own food](#) and eat it from your personal plants or garden and in public gardens.

Food safety in stores and in restaurants is regulated in Ontario. Learn about [food and cooking safety](#) at home and while you're out.

Sometimes money can be tight, especially when you first arrive. Get tips on how to stay healthy while [eating on a budget](#).

Halenda store website: <https://www.halendas.com/halendas-locations/>

Transit / Transportation:

Durham Region Transit (DRT) is a local transit system serving all of Durham's communities. **GO Transit** is a regional public transit system. They serve the Golden Horseshoe area of Ontario. **Via Rail** offers train services between many Canadian cities.

You will need to purchase and present a transit ticket/pass to ride a bus or train. If you take transit often, or use multiple systems, learn about **PRESTO**.

Learn more about [roads and traffic](#) in Durham Region.

You must obtain a Driver's License to operate a vehicle in Ontario. Learn more about learning to drive and applying for an [Ontario Driver's Licence](#).

There are [car seat safety](#) laws for when you are travelling with your child. Learn this safety information before travelling with your child.

Be sure your child knows how to stay safe when travelling alone, visit our [transportation page for safety tips](#).

Income Assistance / Financial Support:

Ukrainians in Ontario under the [Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel](#) (CUAET) are eligible to apply for Emergency Assistance which provides temporary financial support for basic needs and shelter in crisis situations. If you do not have enough money for things like food and housing, you may qualify for Emergency Assistance.

To apply:

- if you have a Canadian social insurance number (SIN), you can [apply online](#)
- if you do not have a social insurance number, contact your local [Ontario Works office](#)

Ontario Works: [Ontario Works \(OW\)](#) is a social assistance program. It helps people who need money or help finding a job. There are [multiple OW offices in Durham Region](#). OW help includes:

- Income support for living expenses, such as clothing, shelter and food
- Health benefits
- Workshops on resume writing and interviewing for jobs
- Job counselling
- Job-specific training
- Access to basic education

Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP):

OHIP is Ontario's health care plan. Through OHIP, the Province of Ontario pays for many of the health services you may need.

You need to apply and, once you're approved, you'll get an Ontario health card which proves you're covered by OHIP. You'll need to show your health card every time you see a doctor, visit an emergency room, have a medical test or go for surgery.

To apply for OHIP:

1. Get an application form [online](#) or from [your nearest ServiceOntario centre](#).
2. Collect all of the [documents you need](#).
3. Fill out the form and deliver it in-person to [ServiceOntario](#).

The Ontario Drug Benefit Program helps cover the cost of about 5,000 prescription drugs. [Learn how to get help paying for prescription drugs](#).

If you have a long-term physical disability, you can get help paying for equipment and supplies through the [Assistive Devices Program](#).

ServiceOntario INFOline at [1-866-532-3161](tel:1-866-532-3161) (TTY: [1-800-387-5559](tel:1-800-387-5559))

Health Care:

Basic medical care and first aid can be done in doctor's offices or clinics. Doctors will sometimes refer you to a hospital for specialist care. If you are not insured, you will have to pay for treatment.

There are **five hospitals in Durham Region**.

There are many walk-in and urgent care **health clinics in the region**. These include walk-in and **sexual health clinics**. You don't need an appointment for these clinics.

[Find a doctor or healthcare professional](#) in Durham Region.

If you are looking for information in your own language on healthcare topics for your children, visit the [Caring for Kids New to Canada](#) website. It was developed by the Canadian Paediatric Society with experts in newcomer health.

Dental services are not covered under the OHIP. Some jobs offer employee benefits which may include dental coverage for you and your family. You can also apply for private dental coverage. Durham College operates **a low-cost Dental Clinic** for Durham residents. **Healthy Smiles Ontario** offers free dental care to children and youth 17 and under. Children must qualify for the program. Healthy Smiles Ontario covers basic or emergency dental needs.

Mental Health:

Mental health is about how you think, feel and act. We all have highs and lows in our mental health. Good mental health helps you get the most out of life, and helps you cope with life's stresses and reach your goals. The [Region of Durham](#) provides information about mental health and local services and supports.

Below are contacts for some local mental health services and supports:

Distress Centre Durham Hotline: call (905) 430-2522.

Durham Mental Health Crisis Line: call 1-800-742-1890.

Good2Talk: Good2Talk provides confidential support services for post-secondary students in Ontario. Call 1-866-925-5454 or text GOOD2TALKON to 686868.

Kids Help Phone: Available [online](#) or call 1-800-668-6868 for 24/7 support for children and youth under 18.

Mental Health and Pinewood Centre - Lakeridge Health: Centralized access line for Pinewood Centre and Community Mental Health Services - call 905-721-4747.

Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAMM): RAMM has re-opened for new client assessments by appointment only. Please call 905-721-4747 ext. 37226 to leave a message. Calls will be returned same day. Follow-up remains virtual at this time.

[Health Care in Ontario Fact Sheets](#)

For mental support from community members please contact durham@ucc.ca

Telehealth Ontario is a free, confidential service you can call to get health advice or information. It is only offered by phone; email advice is not available. A Registered Nurse will take your call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Assistance is available in more than 300 languages. When you call Telehealth, tell them what language you speak and you will be connected to an interpreter. Contact: 1-866-797-0000 (Toll-free TTY: 1-866-797-0007).

Emergency and Crisis Response:

If you have a health, personal safety, fire or crime-related emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately.

If you are unsure if it's an emergency, call 9-1-1. Explain your situation to the operator. 9-1-1 operators can speak many languages. For any non-emergencies, you can reach **Durham Regional Police** at 1-888-579-1520.

In a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 and explain the situation to the operator. They will often send an ambulance and tell you what you can do to help. If you are able to, you should go to the Emergency Room of the closest hospital.

Legal Help: If you need free legal advice or representation because you cannot pay for a private lawyer's services, contact **Legal Aid Ontario** (1-800-668-8258) or the **Durham Community Legal Clinic** (905-728-7321).

The **Durham Access to Justice Hub® (the Hub)** operates within the Durham Community Legal Clinic (DCLC) through **partnerships** with several agencies and organizations in Durham Region. The Hub provides a one-stop shop for legal assistance (through DCLC), as well as supports for residents of Durham Region living on a low income or precariously employed.

To find a private lawyer or law firm, you can:

- Contact the **Law Society Referral Service**. They can connect you to a lawyer who can provide a 30-minute free consultation to help determine your rights and options. You can reach them at 1-800-268-8326.
- Visit the **Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General** for instructions on accessing a lawyer or paralegal.

Marika Pitolaj, paralegal in Oshawa: <https://www.facebook.com/marika.pitolaj>

Employment:

The Durham **Welcome Centres** provide employment services specifically for newcomers to Canada.

Employment Ontario (EO) can also help find work or training. They can help you with your resume, interview preparation and can even help you with tools and equipment you might need to start your new job.

There are multiple EO locations in Durham Region. Call **1-888-562-4769** to be referred to an agency that can help you. You can **make a free appointment** to speak with an employment counsellor that can help you.

Local EO agencies in Durham include:

- **Agilec**

- **Canadian Hearing Society**
- **Centre D'emploi Francophone De Durham/ Durham French Employment Centre**
- **Durham College Community Employment Services**
- **Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre**
- **John Howard Society Durham**
- **META Vocational Services**
- **vpi Employment Counselling**
- **YMCA Durham Employment Programs**

[Job Bank's Jobs for Ukraine](#) is a resource for new Ukrainian arrivals who are looking for work.

[Jobs First Durham](#) is a local jobs resource which includes a job bank of positions available in Durham Region and a map of their locations.

Employers who wish to support Ukrainians with offers of employment can register on [Job Bank's Jobs for Ukraine webpage](#).

For more options, please contact durham@ucc.ca

Schools for Children:

You can enroll your child in one of many Durham region school systems. If your child is between the ages of 6 and 18, they are required by law to attend a school. You can also enroll children aged 4 to 5 in kindergarten.

Students are enrolled in the elementary school system by birth date. Secondary school students (children aged 14 to 18) are placed in courses appropriate to their learning level.

School boards in Durham Region include:

- **Durham Catholic District School Board.**
- **Durham District School Board.**
- **Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.**
- **Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board.**

To find a school near you, use the [Durham School District Locator](#).

There is a Ukrainian school for children located in Oshawa: [Ivan Fanko Ukrainian School](#).

[Settlement Workers in Schools \(SWIS\)](#) is a program for newcomer families that is available in all elementary and secondary schools in Durham. It connects newcomer families to services and resources within the school and community. Services include:

- Group information sessions about schools in Canada.
- Registration and orientation.
- Assessing needs of new students.

Contact Durham SWIS at swisdurham@cdcd.org or call (905) 686-2661.

Post-secondary Education:

Durham Region has multiple [colleges and universities](#).

You usually need a high school diploma or equivalent to apply for programs. Some exceptions may apply. Contact the individual college or university if you are unsure if you can apply. Many schools have assessment programs and testing for newcomers.

[Bridging programs](#) help you get the license or certification you need to work in Ontario.

There are [grants and student loans](#) available to support your learning. These offer financial assistance for tuition and other expenses.

[Ontario Tech University has created an international emergency bursary](#) for students transferring to Canada due to war or environmental catastrophe.

[International Student Connect](#) provides information online and in-person to support international students in Ontario.

English Language Training: There are many ways to learn and practice English in Durham Region. [English classes](#) are available for newcomers of all different language skills. Before you sign up for language training, you must get assessed. [Find more information](#) about English classes and other ways to learn in Durham Region.

Childcare: There are different types of childcare available in Durham Region, including licensed and non-licensed. Learn more about [childcare and early learning](#) options, and how to [find quality care](#).

Some residents may qualify for [childcare fee subsidy](#).

If your child is differently abled or needs special education considerations, your child may qualify for [special education](#). You can also find information on [mental health](#) for children of all ages.

Public Libraries: Public libraries across Durham offer children's programs, programs for seniors, youth and many also host English Conversation Circles (an informal opportunity for newcomers to chat with neighbours). They're also a great free safe community space for newcomer families to just hang out, read, use the computers and play areas and meet other people who live in the area. Visit the Durham Immigration Portal for a [listing of Durham libraries](#).

"ENEIDA" Ukrainian reading club in
Oshawa: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/350256780231378>

Additional Information

Much of the information in this document comes from the below sites. Please visit to find more information:

Durham Immigration Portal: The [Portal](#) has Durham-specific information on the site for newcomers, people who are planning to come to Durham and those who are supporting them or provide services to newcomers. The Portal can be translated using the Google translate button at the top of the page.

Settlement.org – This [website](#) provides information on settling in Ontario. This site also contains immigration and settlement information specific to [Ukrainians coming to Canada](#).

[Orientation to Ontario](#) provides information, resources and workshops to newcomers in multiple languages, including Ukrainian.