

Asylum claimant response

Supporting asylum claimants in Peel's communities

The province-wide one-time \$13 million budget enhancement in 2023–24 for asylum claimant settlement services was greatly appreciated. It helped stabilize services and enabled local agencies to respond to urgent needs. However, with this funding ending in December 2024 and no confirmed allocations for 2025, Peel service providers are under increasing pressure. Agencies have already begun reducing staff and scaling back services due to ongoing federal and provincial funding shortfalls.

While the federal government is responsible for asylum claimants, Peel Region has stepped in to fill critical service gaps. Without continued federal funding, especially as the Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) sunsets in 2027, the Reception Centre and related supports will be at serious risk. Additional support is also urgently needed for asylum claimants with dependants still living in hotels.

Federal support needed

Peel Region is seeking the province's support in urging the federal government to:

- Maintain and enhance IHAP beyond 2027.
- Collaborate with provinces and municipalities to coordinate asylum claimant settlement and job placement.

Should federal funding decline, provincial support may also be required to address emergency shelter pressures. A transitional cost-share model could sustain services.

Without renewed federal support, the Reception Centre may not be sustainable, putting further pressure on Peel's homelessness system and delaying asylum claimants' path to employment and housing.

Continued provincial partnership is essential to protect vulnerable newcomers and maintain system stability.



Multi-level government response

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) investment through Interim Housing Assistance Program in Peel:

- 2023: \$22.4 million, reimbursing 95% of operating costs for Peel's asylum claimant response.
- 2024: \$73.2 million, including \$22 million for capital and operating for the Peel Reception Centre, and more than \$51 million for operational and emergency shelter/hotel costs.
- January 2025 to March 2027: IRCC committed \$103.5M to support operating costs for Peel's asylum claimant response and to acquire and operate a family shelter for asylum claimants.



Asylum claimant response

Ensuring long-term success requires the following:

Sustained settlement funding

- Renew and expand provincial funding with multi-year commitments to support agency planning and stability.

Stronger federal-provincial coordination

- Advocate for the continuation of the IHAP program beyond April 2027.
- Improve federal data sharing to support local planning.

Housing and employment support

- Increase housing assistance, address rental discrimination, speed up work permit and SIN processing, and identify settlement locations with job and housing availability.

Support for nonprofits

- Provide stable operational funding and workforce development supports to help community agencies meet rising demand.



Key takeaway

Predictable funding, coordinated planning, and joint advocacy are essential to sustain critical services, respond to rising demand, and support the successful integration of asylum claimants. These efforts are key to protecting vulnerable individuals and ensuring long-term community stability across Ontario.

