

**Immigration** plays a vital role in the development of Canadian society, responsible for 71 percent of population growth and 90 percent of labor-force growth, in addition to the linkages it creates in an increasingly globalized world, adding to the richness and strength of Canada as a country.

Frontline settlement counsellors are one of the initial points of contact for newcomers, helping them to settle, adjust, adapt and participate in Canadian society. Settlement counsellors play a role in strengthening labor market outcomes of newcomers, increasing absorptive capacity of welcoming communities, and enhancing public support for immigration. As immigration levels rise and the diversity of those settling in Canada increases, the value of the service provided by these workers will rise.



## WHAT THEY DO

**Settlement counsellors** work predominately for non-governmental, community-based settlement organizations or government agencies i.e. libraries or school boards to provide support to immigrants and refugees to adapt to life in Canada and participate in the life of society.

- Advocating wellbeing
- Build unity in diversity
- Needs assessment
- Navigate systems
- Forster sense of belonging
- Conduct with integrity
- Promote learning
- Foster initiative

### EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE NEEDED

- University degree, preferably in human services.
- Experience with newcomers, whether paid or volunteer.
- Experience working with diverse populations.
- Extensive volunteer experience in the settlement sector.
- Second language & awareness of newcomer experience, first-hand or through work.

### KNOWLEDGE

- Immigration & refugee system's aims, policies, regulations & procedures.
- Broader issues affecting immigrant & refugee communities.
- Essential social & economic systems newcomers interact with e.g. legal, housing, healthcare, employment, taxation etc.
- Relevant federal, provincial & local legislation, regulation & policies guiding Canada's social & economic systems.
- Extensive knowledge of programs, service, & community resources for newcomers
- Human rights legislation & policies.



## BEFORE ENTERING THE FIELD



## ENTERING THE FIELD

- To work independently.
- To learn in a self-directed manner.
- To manage time effectively.
- To work well under pressure.
- To be a team player.
- To pay simultaneous attention to their own wellbeing and to the work of helping others.

### ABILITIES

- To communicate both written and oral in English.
- Fluency in at least one other language.
- First-hand experience of being a newcomer or working with newcomers.
- To enjoy working with people and have excellent interpersonal & communication skills.
- To work well with diverse populations.

### QUALITIES AND ATTITUDES

- Empathy
- Sympathy
- Compassion
- Gentleness
- Kindness
- Patience
- Flexibility
- Open & welcoming



## ADVANCING IN THE FIELD

### CAREER PROGRESSION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PEOPLE/PROGRAM MANAGER/DIRECTOR

PROGRAM COORDINATOR, TEAM LEADER

SETTLEMENT COUNSELLOR

VOLUNTEER, PROGRAM ASSISTANT, INTERPRETER

From *The Competencies of Frontline Settlement Counsellors in Canada* research report. To learn more, visit:

[ceric.ca/settlement](http://ceric.ca/settlement)