

HALIFAX



Municipal Immigration Strategy

Origin

As part of the regional business plan for the Office of Diversity & Inclusion/African Nova Scotian Affairs, there is a commitment to produce a municipal immigration strategy. This new strategy will build on the first Immigration strategy, Welcoming Immigrants Action Plan 2013-2017.



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Recommendation

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve and adopt the updated Immigration Strategy as set out in Attachment 1.

Background

- In 2013, Halifax Regional Council approved hosting the Halifax Local Immigration Partnership (HLIP). This project has been renewed numerous times and now is funded to 2025 and supports two staff members
- Through HLIP the Welcoming Immigrants Action Plan 2013-2017 was created.
- The *Immigration Strategy* provides a framework for how all business units, employees, and citizens of the Halifax region can continue to improve services to and relationships with the local immigrant community.
- Consultations both internally and externally provided input into the development of the strategy



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Rationale

- Since 2014, Nova Scotia has seen an unprecedented rise in immigration. Between 2018 and 2020, Nova Scotia welcomed approximately 17,000 immigrants in a number of different categories including economic, family, and refugee classes. Numbers continue to increase as most recently we are supporting Afghan and Ukrainian refugees.
- Individuals settle in cities and the need for coordinated and integrated efforts supports successful integration into communities.



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Inclusive Public Service

To ensure that municipal services are inclusive, reflective of, and accessible to immigrants and newcomers:

1. Conduct annual inventory and evaluation of municipal services geared towards immigrants and newcomers
2. Hold staff awareness events (Diversity Cafés awareness sessions)
3. Continue providing Diversity and Inclusion training modules
4. Incorporate immigrant and newcomers' voices in the development of new plans, policies, and programs through community consultations
5. Continue providing Welcome in Halifax (WIH) transit and recreation pass



Inclusive Public Service

6. Create and implement client satisfaction survey about the use of the WIH
7. Schedule consultation meetings in spaces immigrants are comfortable at and times that accommodate their diverse needs
8. Annually host Mayor's International Students' Reception.
9. Facilitate access to the affordable access program
10. Facilitate access for registration in recreation programs (MyREC)





Safe Work Environment

To create a workplace that embraces and facilitates equal participation and equitable growth for all immigrants and newcomers:

1. Review existing policies and practices to ensure that Diversity and Inclusion are supported and systemic barriers preventing immigrants and newcomers' inclusion are addressed
2. Remove barriers that prevent immigrants' participation in programs and services
3. Provide resources for employees to ensure awareness of policies related to diversity, inclusion, and systemic barriers as it related to immigrants
4. Staff at all levels of the organization participate in Diversity and Inclusion training



Safe Work Environment

5. Diversity and Inclusion are highlighted within the organization through an internal communication plan
6. Partner with Local Immigration Partnership to host collaborative community-based events that support ongoing relationships with newcomer service groups
7. Host cultural competency sessions offered by ISANS and other immigrant serving organizations





Equitable Employment

To attract and retain immigrant and newcomer talent to HRM's workforce:

1. Promote immigrants and newcomers' participation in municipal workplace opportunities
2. Continue reaching out and holding information session on job opportunities within the Municipality
3. Ensure municipal representation at job fairs and community events geared towards immigrants
4. Collaborate with the Halifax Partnership and ISANS to create publications celebrating immigrants and newcomers' communities and their impact on the Municipality's economic development



Meaningful Partnerships

To initiate and build internal and external partnerships that include immigrants, newcomers and immigrant serving organizations:

1. Establish/maintain partnerships with immigrant-serving organizations to help ensure the successful integration of immigrants
2. Identify opportunities for the Municipality to work with community partners to create an accessible, welcoming and inclusive Municipality
3. Encourage initiatives aiming to enhance immigrant talents



Accessible Information and Communication

To provide timely and accessible information to newcomers and immigrant communities about municipal programs and services:

1. Update, maintain and promote immigrant portal on Halifax.ca
2. Ensure the use of plain language in communications
3. Translate and promote information on municipal services
4. Provide entrepreneur immigrants with information on municipal regulatory requirements for start-up business
5. Reduce regulatory barriers for immigrant businesses by creating a human-centered customer approach to navigating services



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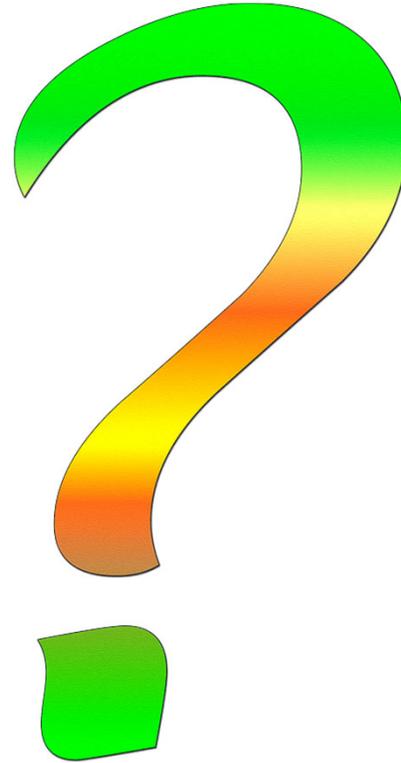
Accessible Information and Communication

6. Participate in the development of a pathway to immigration toolkit for international students
7. Support community events to welcome immigrants and newcomers such as the Annual Welcome BBQ
8. Continue hosting recreational activities and events that support immigrants' integration
9. Work with ISANS and other immigrant serving organizations to create recreation programs based on community interest
10. Promote the Fire Safety program for Immigrants

Financial Implications

- No financial implications at this time

Questions?



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