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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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***Edmonton Newcomers Centre Closes its Welcome Centre for Immigrants Location***

*Edmonton, Alberta*

Edmonton Newcomer Centre closes the Welcome Centre for Immigrants located at 7609 38 Avenue NW Edmonton (Millbourne Mall) on March 14, 2025 following operational restructuring for service efficiency and fiscal reviews in line with consultations with Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

While WCI has been a service hub and a first point of contact for immigrants in South Edmonton for over two decades, our approach to operations and service delivery has pivoted to embed ourselves deeper into the community through collaborations with Service Canada located at Milbourne Mall, recreation centres and community partners located in South Edmonton.

Considering the concentration of immigrant population in South Edmonton, our focus is to meet newcomers with employment and settlement services right where they are, in manner that optimizes resources while ensuring that immigrants to Canada receive the supports they need to thrive and no one falls through the cracks.

“WCI has been a community hub where we made positive contributions to people’s lives. I am certain that with the passion, dedication, and resilience of Newcomer Centre’s team as well as support from community partners, we will have more presence and accessible service in South Edmonton. “

Laurie Hauer, Acting Executive Director, Edmonton Newcomer Centre

Other matters arising from the fiscal review with IRCC relate to the reduction of the scale of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) programming due to the following:

- The closure of the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) visas, meaning Ukrainians arriving after March 31, 2025, will no longer qualify for federally funded settlement and language services.

- The planned reduction in overall immigration numbers over the next three years, leading to fewer newcomers eligible for IRCC funded programs.
- The decision to no longer fund CLBA levels 5 and 6.

Language services is a vital component of newcomer's settlement, and we are actively exploring community collaborations to continue to provide high quality language instruction within the bounds of available resources.

We would like to thank the government of Canada on all levels, stakeholder groups, staff and community members across the board for supporting us as we continue to fulfil our mandate of fostering a community where we all thrive individually and collectively.

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#### Company Description

The Newcomer Centre serves up to 17,000 newcomers every year and offers almost 30 programs and services to support the entire settlement journey. These include English language learning, specialized care for newcomer children, mental health and therapeutic supports, in-school liaisons for children and youth, job search support and employment training, cultural awareness training for employers, and community development.

To learn more about how the Newcomer Centre supports people to thrive here in Edmonton and how community members can become involved, all are welcome to attend one of the free, monthly Community Information Sessions (registration at [www.newcomercentre.com](http://www.newcomercentre.com) or by calling 780-424-7709).