

Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support (MCRS) and COVID-19: UPDATE June 16, 2020

We are thrilled about the steps we are all able to take to engage more in our community and to reconnect with those we have not seen since March. However, uncertainty and challenge around Covid-19 remains. With this in mind, MCRS is committed to care-filled and proactive steps to protect our staff, volunteers, donors, and especially the 1,639 people we have the honour of assisting, accompanying, and advocating for.

- ✓ We remain on an in-office staff rotation for **remote client services**, with staff otherwise working from home. Our goal is to provide **in-office client services** by September. 
- ✓ We are so thankful for the **volunteers** who have been able to support our clients and staff through remote service. We are working to further develop this volunteer pathway so that many others can serve in this way.
- ✓ We are doing a lot of learning as we work on a reconfiguration of our main office and the Guest House that will allow clients, staff, donors, and volunteers to be in a **protected space**. We miss everyone and look forward to being able to see you again! 
- ✓ We held an online **Host Café** with people who have opened their homes or who have partnered with hosts in our Guest Home program. They were gracious in sharing their vision, concerns, and passion to see this radical hospitality program continue in safe, well-supported ways. We learned so much and we look forward to working with our hosts more to form a stronger program that continues even in the midst of a crisis like Covid-19.
- ✓ We are over-the-top excited about the changes to Ride for Refuge this year. We already have three churches who have agreed to **RIDE Freestyle** for MCRS. We look forward to many other churches and individuals joining us. Covid-19 has eliminated all of our other events and speaking engagements which have been vital to us raising the funds needed to fulfill our mission. That means this year's RIDE will be more important than ever for us so please, **GET INVOLVED!** 
- ✓ As we shift to strengthening our **online presence**, we are humbled by the continued support of donors. We are developing new ways of telling our story and encouraging people to join us in mission through secure **ONLINE GIVING** at www.mcrs.ca/donate. Thank you for staying the course with us!
- ✓ **Thank you for your continued encouragement and prayers** as we navigate this current reality. Like a compass, we have been able to compassionately assist, accompany and advocate for people as they journey through the fog and uncertainty that Covid-19 has brought on us all. We have stayed on mission with our eyes on: our priority of relationship; our values of empathy, respect, empowerment, and inclusion; and, our foundational call to **love God, love our neighbour, and love the foreigner**. 

IMPACT STORY

We received a call at the beginning of June from someone who had recently submitted their refugee claim through a lawyer, but had run out of personal resources and now needed help to access income supports and apply for a work permit. When we said we would be glad to do what we could, he was overtaken with gratitude and joy. He had already called six other organizations who had turned him down for various reasons.

THANK YOU to all those who support MCRS through donations. We were able to say yes to this man, and so many others, because of your generosity that has kept all of our staff working and ready to serve!

Thank you