

## PHASE 3 PROVINCIAL “RESTORING SERVICES” – IRCOM Program Changes

**In effect June 26, 2020, unless otherwise stated. Until Phase 4 or other provincial communications**

IRCOM’s main offices are now **open to the public** from 9 am – 5 pm, Monday to Friday. **Our phone line also remains open** weekdays from Monday-Friday, 9am – 5pm. To contact us, please call **204-943-8765** or email **info@ircom.ca**. A new staff directory of direct phone numbers can also be found on [www.ircom.ca](http://www.ircom.ca).

In line with the Province of Manitoba’s Restoring Safe Services Together: Manitoba's Phased Approach Phase 2, and in compliance with all public health guidelines, IRCOM is expanding our in-person services for vulnerable clients, while retaining a certain level of remote services.

IRCOM maintains our commitment to the community through this mix of remote and in-person services. As “community housing,” IRCOM is currently considered an **essential service** by the Province of Manitoba. Specific services including case management for vulnerable refugee families and youth, housing operations and tenant life and safety, and some financial services, are also currently considered essential services by federal and provincial bodies.

**IRCOM has created two new programs to address gaps due to the COVID-19 Pandemic:**

- **Essential Needs:** *For IRCOM tenants (at present).* Food hampers and essential needs hampers (hygiene items, diapers, formula, etc.) are dropped off at tenants’ doorsteps, for those facing income/food security challenges. Donations of food and other essential items are accepted, call 204-943-8765.
- **Outreach Information Services:** *(remains on hold in Phase 3) For IRCOM tenants and registered IRCOM participants in the community.* A cross program team with needed languages (“Interpreters/First Language Delivery Team”) conducted Modified Needs Assessments by phone. They asked a set of questions about awareness of COVID-19 information, food security, income security, knowledge of new benefits and resources, and children’s needs and wellbeing. If needed, a triage/referral process into IRCOM’s specialized services followed (e.g., case management, high-needs youth supports, access to benefits, crisis intervention, access to technology, or to other community resources). Ongoing regular contact by phone was maintained during the early months of the pandemic to the end of Phase 1.

**Existing Programs and How they are Operating**

*Note: All in-person services are delivered using IRCOM’s “In Person Guidelines” based on public health directives and recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (e.g., using screening*

*questions, by appointment whenever possible, limited time, 2 metres apart, floor markings, using a physical distancing table set up on site and physical barriers at all office entrances, using Personal Protective Equipment in certain circumstances, and sanitation guidelines). all IRCOM staff, volunteers and students sign-off on a form requiring compliance with these guidelines.*

### **Community Resource Program ('CRP' - settlement team, case management)**

- On-hold:
  - Some in-person services remain limited or on-hold: some group programs and workshops, most car rides/accompaniment to appointments or hearings (except in high-needs cases), most off-site in-person appointments or off-site meetings
  - In-suite services are limited (e.g., home visits, life skills training)
- Remote Services:
  - Case management and high needs support for tenants (Levels 2-4) is done by phone or WhatsApp, and when required, in-person. There is regular contact, and higher levels have higher frequency of contacts, identifying strengths, gaps, needs etc. This can result in the mobilization of supports, referrals to new /modified resources, liaison with care/service providers and government agencies, etc.
  - Information on community resources- access, changes, etc. is collated and information is passed to tenants or posted.
- Limited in-person services for tenants:
  - Community Resource Program staff will meet with tenants for issues that are a threat to safety, health or wellness in an immediate sense – and that cannot be resolved remotely
  - Information and orientation and basic needs gaps in newly arrived tenants, new move-ins, and newly arrived RAP clients are being addressed in person one-on-one in Ellen and Isabel program areas or boardrooms
  - Initial Needs Assessment and Referrals are being conducted, along with pared down new tenant orientation
  - Drop ins in CRP offices are done with the physical barriers and following the distancing guidelines for IRCOM tenants and a few cases of identified former tenants with pressing needs
  - Limited accompaniment to appointments hearings, higher needs families
  - Limited in-person off-site meetings, higher needs families (e.g., for case coordination)
  - Limited in-suite visits/ap, appointments and life-skills – time limited and where required, always with PPE (with use of WhatsApp work phone the default option, when in-person is not required)

- Food security/essential needs programming – hamper needs assessment process and drop off to tenants/former tenants
- Early Childhood Development Hub (in partnership with Freight House Early Learning and Care) will resume on June 8,2020, at half capacity (8 preschoolers and one infant). Returning families have been pre-selected and notified
- Parenting programs, Women’s Hi Tea, Men’s BBQ will be delivered to small groups following In-Person Guidelines for occupancy, distancing, sanitizing, etc.
- In-person interpreting is provided following room occupancy guidelines
- Greening program begins and runs over spring/summer/early fall, with distancing in place
- Neighbourhood Watch begins for spring/summer, outdoors only

**High Needs Support Team (‘HNST’ - cross-departmental team focused on crisis intervention-primarily tenants)**

- Remote services
  - Primarily for tenants and to some extent for IRCOM registered participants in community continue, including:
    - Crisis intervention by phone and referral to emergency services if needed (e.g., assault, suicidality, mental health crises, arrest, family violence, injury)
    - 24-hour coverage for after-hours emergencies at IRCOM (tenants) will be flagged by Live-In Building Supervisors, who will contact the High Needs Support Team
- Limited in-person services for tenants:
  - On-site crisis intervention will occur when all other services are not feasible or successful or will not arrive in time
  - In-person supportive counselling, in-person crisis intervention, accompaniment, in-person life-skills (for high-needs tenants and youth) where required

**Newcomer Literacy Initiative (‘NLI’ - English Classes for Adults at IRCOM and in the community)**

- On-hold: No in-person classes, in-person assessments will be held on rare occasion, and new student intake is postponed
- Remote services:
  - Assignments are sent by email, ESL Library, WhatsApp, YouTube, and over the phone. There is emphasis on YouTube, WhatsApp, video and phone calls for lower levels
  - Teachers contact students 2-4 times a week with calls, videos, activities or messages

- We will continue to do PBLA and build portfolios where possible
- “Conversation buddies” will happen with IRCOM staff by phone
- We will aid in access to technology for students
- Limited in-person services:
  - Initial drop off of learning packages and binders to higher CLB levels (3/4)
  - Future drop offs of learning packages
  - Coordinating some tech lending to NLI students
  - Supporting essential needs (food hampers, diapers, etc.) drop offs to students

### **Child Care Program (CCP)**

- Remote services:
  - A YouTube channel for NLI students’ children has been developed for tenants and non-tenants, uploaded with stories, activities (new content 2x per week)
  - Available in Isabel MPR or Ellen 109 only. Child care for up to 8 children with 2 staff. For Hi-Tea, Parenting Program, NARS and New Tenant Orientations only.
  - We will not increase child care capacity until after Aug. 28, even if new phases loosen restrictions.
    - To facilitate staggered drop offs, families would be asked to wait on the stickers in the hallways until the adult picking up or dropping of children before them has left
    - Families would be asked a series of health questions before dropping of their children. No one with any illness will be allowed to stay.
    - Staff would sign families in (instead of sharing the clipboard)
  - Distribution of activities packages to IRCOM tenants and EAL students in community (word searches, crafts kits)
  - Snacks will be single serve and disposable

### **Asset and Capacity-Building Program (ACBP)**

- On-hold: Immigration Loan Repayment Program was complete before the pandemic. The new intake will take place in September. There is no in-person Money Management Training Workshops, in-person cash-outs, in-person RESP program and in-person income tax workshops
- Remote services:
  - We will continue to accept referrals from partner agencies and serve low-income newcomers living in the community as well as IRCOM tenants

- Money Management Training will continue remotely
- Income tax services will be by appointment where possible, and take place in person where required, or by phone, app, or on-line with newcomers who meet criteria (e.g., low-income, not self-employed, etc.)
- Referrals from partner agencies for income tax will be in -person where required and remain virtual when possible. Some appointments will be taken in-person at Welcome Place to support their clients.
- Support for EI and EIA set-up will occur, as well as CRA problem-solving, and Identification Support (birth certificate applications and PR card renewal)
- Support to access new benefits such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) will occur, as well as setting up MyAccount with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)
- Limited in-person services:
  - Registered Asset Building Program/Money Management Training and Matched Saving participants will receive homework in the mail. IRCOM staff are in contact with SEED Winnipeg for more details
  - RESP workshops will occur in groups of 10 or less
  - Potential SC and IDA applicants will be called to arrange one-on-one application meetings
  - Application meetings on average are booked for an hour and includes an interview where ACBP staff assess the need for the program
  - Accepted participants will meet Amal and Emilienne one on one to do intake and provide documents to take to ACU. All accepted participants will receive their intake documents by end of June.
  - Identification Support (birth certificate applications and PR card renewal) will take place on site
  - Access to benefits support will be available for those with barriers
  - For any low income newcomers in the community, tax filing support for urgent cases (no previous tax returns, no Canada Child Benefit, language / technology barriers, etc.) will be available. We will support clients with language barriers by hiring an interpreter or by submitting an Authorization Form to CRA
  - Priority of in-person income tax appointments are given to IRCOM tenants
  - Participants with CRA letters who need A to B supports; i.e calling CRA, interpreting, are encouraged to make an appointment and meet in person

To make a referral or appointment:

Amal at 204-306-9849; [amals@ircom.ca](mailto:amals@ircom.ca)

Shalini at 204-306-9852; [shalinis@ircom.ca](mailto:shalinis@ircom.ca)

Rania at 204-306-9851; [ranias@ircom.ca](mailto:ranias@ircom.ca)

### **Volunteer and Community Service Program and the Common Ground Project**

- In-person volunteer selection, interview, training, and placement will occur pending available meeting spaces. Interviewing and orientation services may also be done via Zoom/Skype meetings.
- In-person Common Ground activities (feast, reconciliation circles, etc.) could potentially be held outside following proper social distancing protocols. Ex 100 SB: hold an event “pick up day” where participants can come pick up a package from us while following social distancing protocols.
- Remote services will continue to evolve:
  - Virtual volunteering opportunities available in NLI, homework assistance, tech
  - IRCOM staff will issue communication updates to current volunteer pool
  - We will provide support to foreign practicum student as the situation evolves
  - Virtual connection with Indigenous communities through Common Ground will continue
- Limited in-person services
  - Tech volunteers will hold drop-ins in the Ellen boardroom
  - In person volunteering is possible
  - Technology Support is being provided by appointment to tenants, families, and youth. To address the intense technical knowledge gap, IRCOM is providing 1-on-1 help to families with basic tech support needs. Due to the nature of this support, **masks must be worn** by the participant and the staff/volunteer providing support must wear a **mask and gloves**. Strict sanitation protocols are

### **Housing Department (tenants only)**

- Pest management in occupied suites is done by dusting and baiting them, no spraying so tenants do not have to leave
- In-person services:
  - Repair / maintenance requests done with social distance, and protective clothing (mask and gloves)
  - Cleaners will continue disinfecting high touch areas
  - Suite repairs
  - Move-ins will continue along with new tenant lease signings at social distance

- Tenant exit walkthroughs / damage assessment will occur with social distance. Move-outs will continue based on the family's requests: extensions to their stay are given to anyone that has been at IRCOM more than 18 months as of April 1 for extra year at IRCOM. We need to do rent review for these individuals.
- Urgent maintenance will occur while tenants are outside the suite
- Rent cheques are required to be dropped off in drop boxes, pre-authorized withdrawals are happening, however rent collection assistance (cheque-writing) will be available at a social distance.
- Pest prevention information will occur in-person if remote meetings are not possible. Pest prevention will continue in non-occupied suites as per MHRC
- Tenant drop-ins are available for new keys, laundry cards etc. at social distance.
- Fire, Life and Safety matters continue, including inspections
- All duties required for the operation of IRCOM apartments (cleaning, sanitizing, snow clearing, parking enforcement, etc.) will continue
- Contractor guidance will occur, only as absolutely required

### **After School Program (ASP)**

- Summer programming started on July 6th and will end on August 28th.
- Indoor and outdoor summer programming is running at a limited capacity (smaller # of children/youth attending) in order to maintain the 6' physical distancing guideline.
- Limited in-person summer programming includes: Arts & Crafts, Variety, Open Program, BBQs, Peer Support, Employment, Enrichment, Book Club and Youth4Truth&Reconciliation
- Remote programs include: Children's Literacy, Leadership, and Cooking
- The ASP sporting and recreational program will be on hold until further notice as per Sports Manitoba and Canada Sports Guidelines
- Children and youth are screened once they arrive at program and strict healthy and safety guidelines are adhered to at all times.
- Staff have continued wellness check-ins and contactless distribution of donated devices to youth lacking technology, and distribution of activities packages to tenant children (crayons, colouring, games, etc.)
- On-hold: Rides and transportation, family events are postponed
- Volunteers are on hold in Phase 3 (because of space ratios)
- All children programs are split into two sessions at each site except for literacy program. We will drop off packages.
- We are now hosting Rotary at both of our sites