

# **A Newcomers' Guide to Guysborough County**



**A Program of the Antigonish Women's  
Resource Centre  
Funded by the Nova Scotia Office of  
Immigration**

1st Edition: March 2020.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Dennise Molina and Sophia Antonello for their hard work in compiling, editing, and formatting this guide for Guysborough County.

Our special thanks to Marcia Connolly and Vangie Babin of the AWRC&SASA who shared their resources and materials from the local community upon which this booklet is based.

*Jubanti Dhan Toppo*  
*Immigrant Support Program coordinator*  
Antigonish Women's Resource Center & Sexual Assault Service Association.

## Table of Contents

Emergency Assistance .....	4
Living in Canada Checklist.....	5
Apply for a Permanent Resident Card	6-7
Services for Newcomers.....	8
Apply for Social Insurance Number .....	9
Health Insurance .....	10
Canadian Medical System .....	11-12
Local Health Services .....	13-15
Doctors and Walk-in Clinics .....	16-17
Drugstores and Pharmacies .....	18
Other Community Services .....	19-20
Employment .....	21
Financial Services .....	22
Language & Literacy Support .....	23
Recreation .....	24
Housing .....	25
Resources for Children .....	26
Transportation .....	27-28
Postal Services .....	29
Bibliography .....	30-3

## **Emergency Assistance**

- **For serious emergencies:** call 911
- **Poison Control:** 1-800-565-8161
- **NS Telecare:** 811 Health Information and Advice 24 hours/day.
- **Environmental Emergencies:** 1-800-565-1633
- **To inquire about community or other social services:** 211
- **St. Martha's Regional Hospital:** 902-867-4500
- **Guysborough Memorial Hospital:** (902) 533-3702
- **Mental Health Mobile Crisis-Memorial Hospital:** 902-429-8167

If you have a medical emergency, go directly to the Emergency Department at Guysborough Memorial Hospital (open 24/7) or call an ambulance (911).

## **Living in Canada: Checklist**



### **In your first few weeks**

You may need to:

- Exchange your money for Canadian currency
- Find accommodation
- Apply for health insurance
- Fill out forms for a Social Insurance Number
- Register your children in school

### **In your first few months**

You will likely need to:

- Get a family doctor;
- Have your children immunized;
- Open a bank account;
- Look for a job;
- Get a valid driver's license
- Apply for Canada Child Tax Benefit (call 1-800-387-1193); and
- Apply for GST/HST Credit; call 1-800-959-1953

## **How to Apply to Become a Permanent Resident of Canada**

A permanent resident is someone who has been given permanent resident status by [immigrating to Canada](#), but is not (yet) a [Canadian citizen](#). Permanent residents are citizens of other countries.

### **Permanent Resident Card**

The permanent resident (PR) card is the official proof that you are a [permanent resident of Canada](#). You use this card when you travel and return from another country.

### **What Permanent Residents Can Do**

As a permanent resident, you have the right to:

- get most social benefits that Canadian citizens receive, including health care coverage
- live, work or study anywhere in Canada,
- apply for [Canadian citizenship](#),



**Services for Newcomers page of  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

[www.servicefornewcomers.cic.gc.ca](http://www.servicefornewcomers.cic.gc.ca)

**Antigonish/Guysbrough Immigrant  
Support Program**

The AGISP can:

- answer questions
- get you connected in the community
- help you navigate local services

We provide information and settlement support to newcomers and their families in Antigonish and Guysborough counties. Call us at 902-870-1853 to set up an appointment or drop by our office on the second floor of the Kirk Building, 219 Main Street.

**Pictou Antigonish Regional Library:  
Newcomer Welcome Centre**

We are working towards providing in-person information and help in each of our public libraries as one-stop Welcome Centers.

<http://parl.ns.ca/newcomers/index.php>

## **How to Apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN)**

Social insurance numbers (SINs) are needed to work in Canada, open a bank account or to obtain your tax credit. Your employer will ask you for this number. More information on documents needed to apply for a SIN found here: [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)

You will be issued a paper document with your SIN.

This website also provides job bank access, employment insurance information and filing, as well as counseling and program support for individuals and communities.

- **Telephone:** 902-863-7069
- **Toll-free:** 1-800-537-9573

In Guysborough, the Service Canada Centre is located at 9996 Highway 16

## Health Insurance

You will need an MSI card to access most health care services without being charged.

### Maritime Medical Insurance (MSI)

- Handles free of charge any inquiries dealing with MSI and/or Pharmacare services. Deals with first-time applicants, landed immigrants and people on work visas.
- **Telephone (Toll-free):** 1-900-563-8880
- **Email:** [msienquiry@medavie.bluecross.ca](mailto:msienquiry@medavie.bluecross.ca)
- **Website:** [www.gov.ns.ca](http://www.gov.ns.ca)



## **Canadian Medical System**

### **Some useful hints about the Canadian medical system:**

- Be on time for your appointment. If you decide not to keep the appointment, ensure the doctor's office is informed as early as possible so they can give the appointment to another patient.
- Be prepared to wait at the doctor's office. Although you may arrive on time, it is not unusual to have to wait to see the doctor. Emergency department visits typically take many hours.
- The doctor may not always give you medication. In Canada, a doctor does not always prescribe medicines; s/he may give you advice only. Canadian doctors seldom treat with injections.
- Ask the doctor questions. If you do not understand what the doctor is saying, or instructions are not clear, ask for clarification. You have a right to know about your health and to understand the diagnosis and

treatment. If you do not ask a question, the doctor may assume that you understand everything clearly.

- If medication is recommended, ask if it is a prescription or "over-the-counter" medication. Over-the-counter medications are displayed on shelves in the pharmacy and can be bought without a prescription. You are responsible for paying for over-the-counter medications. It is recommended that you ask the pharmacist for directions and precautions about all medication you are buying (over-the-counter and prescription).
- Prescription medicines can be very expensive. Please note that medications you may be able to purchase without seeing a doctor in your own country may be classified as "prescription" medications in Canada. Prescription medicines can be expensive and you might want to verify what is covered by your health plan.

## **Local Health Services**

### **Guysborough Memorial Hospital**

**Telephone:** (902) 533-3702

**Website:** [www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

### **Guysborough Medical Clinic**

**Telephone:** (902) 533-4040

**Location:** 115 Main Street

### **Guysborough Mental Health**

**Telephone:** (902) 533-3300

**Location:** 9996 Highway #16

### **St. Martha's Regional Hospital**

- St. Martha's Regional Hospital providing a range of primary and secondary health services

**Telephone:** 902-867-4500

**Website:** [www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

### **Nova Scotia Health Authority**

Provides health services to residents of Guysborough and other counties.

**Website:** [www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

## **Mental Health & Addictions Services**

- Provides psychiatric and social work services for adults and children on-site or outreach.

**Intake Line: 1-888-291-3535** (Have your health card on hand)

Need Help Now?

**Mental Health Crisis Line: 1-888-429-8167**

Available 24 hours, seven days a week

## **Public Health Services**

- Responsible for a variety of health services including health promotion and education, illness and injury prevention activities, inoculations, communicable disease control, active living, nutrition, dental health, and community social supports.

**Telephone: 902-867-4500 ext. 4800**

**Public Health Services**

**Guysborough: 533- 3505**

## **Lindsay's Health Centre for Women**

- Services are provided by a multi-disciplinary team that includes Mental Health & Addiction Services, a Nurse Practitioner, Women's Centre Services, and a physician. Open to all women and adolescent girls.

**Telephone:** 902-863-6221

- **Men's Health Centre** is open to all men and boys 12 years and older. Services are provided by a team of health professionals including: a physician, Mental Health & Addiction Services and Family Services of Eastern NS.

**Telephone:** 902-863-2358

<http://ensfamilyservice.ca/programs/mens-health-centre/>

## **Doctors and Walk-in Clinics**

For an appointment with your family doctor:

Doctors usually schedule appointments between 9:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday to Friday. You can book an appointment by calling your doctor's clinic during the day.

It may not always be possible to obtain an appointment the same day you ask- you may have to wait a period of time.

To see a doctor in the evening:

Guysborough Medical Clinic:

Monday- Friday 10:00-7:00pm

115 Main Street

Telephone: 902-533-4040

Atlantic Super Store Walk-in Clinic:

**Telephone:** 902-338-3000

**To see a doctor in the evening and on Saturday:**

- **Walk-in Medical Clinic:**

Monday 6:00pm- 9:00pm & Saturday  
1:00pm- 5:00pm

Atlantic Superstore, 2nd floor

**Telephone:** 902-338-3000

- Instructions: You can book an appointment beginning one hour before the clinic opens or you can walk in and wait for an appointment.

**\*Please note:** appointments at the clinics are very quick and doctors will only address ONE problem at an appointment.

**For Emergencies:**

If you have a medical emergency go directly to the Emergency Department at Guysborough Memorial Hospital or Call 911.

Nurses Helpline call 811

## **Drugstores and Pharmacies**

There is one place you can go in town if you need to purchase medication, toiletries, or other items.

### **Guysborough Pharmacy LTD.**

133 Main Street  
(902) 533-2224

Additionally, there are various pharmacies and drugstores you can visit in Antigonish.

Main Street Sherbrook

**Shoppers Drug Mart** (open until 10PM)  
Sherbrook 522-2010

**Canso Pharmacy** 366-2976  
**Haliburton Pharmacy** 533-2224

## **Other Health and Community Services**

- **Antigonish Women's Resource Centre** is there to support adolescent, girls and women of all ages with

education, counselling, self-esteem and many other programs. It is located in Kirk Place Building, Room 204, 219 Main St.

**Telephone:** 902-863-6221

**Website:** <http://awrcsasa.ca/>

- **Men's Health Centre** is open to all men and boys 12 years and older. Services are provided by a team of health professionals.

**Telephone:** 902-863-2358

<http://ensfamilyservice.ca/programs/mens-health-centre/>

- **Antigonish Community Grief Support** program is offered to those who have lost a loved one. Call to see if they have a program open.

**Telephone:** 902-863-1375.

All services are free.

- **Kids Help Phone** is a free 24-hour a day service for children experiencing abuse or emotional distress. Counseling and referrals are provided.

**Telephone:** 1-800-668-6868

**Website:** [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

## **Employment**

- **Nova Scotia Works: Career Connections**

Provides employment services to Guysborough county.

9996 Highway 16 Unit C

**Telephone:** 902-533-2805

**E-mail:**

[guysborough@careerconnections.ca](mailto:guysborough@careerconnections.ca)

- **Service Canada** provides access to an online job bank; employment insurance information, as well as information about SIN numbers. Additionally, it provides services for employers.

Located at 9996 Highway 16

**Telephone:** +1 800-622-6232

**Website:** [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)

## **Financial Services**

- **Banks:** The Royal Bank of Canada is

the only bank in Guysborough.

110 Main Street  
(902) 533-3604

- Wire transfers can also be made at the Money Gram agency. Location: 120 Main Street.

Charges for wire transfers differ depending on the amount of money being transferred and destinations. Inquiries can be made in-person, by visiting the website <http://www.moneygram.ca/>, or by calling at (902) 533-3501

## **EAL and Literacy**

### **Guysborough County Adult Learning Association (GALA)**

- GALA provides free education opportunities for adults by promoting learning and improvement of various skills, and by identifying learning needs. The programs are classified into three categories: Adult Learners, Seniors Literacy, and Family Literacy. Additionally, GALA has partnerships

with different organizations in order to provide diverse services to people in the community.

- **Telephone:** 902-533-4252
- **Website:**  
<https://www.guysboroughlearning.ca/>
- **Location:** 9996 Highway 16

The **Cyril Ward Memorial Library** has books and other resources available for loan, and four computers for public use.

Address: 27 Pleasant Street

Telephone: (902)533-3586

cyrilwar@nsme.library.ns.ca

**Canso Library** 366-2955

**Mulgrave Library** 747-2588

**St. Mary's Library.** 11 Main St. Sherbrooke  
(902) 522-2180

## **Recreation**

The **Municipality Recreation Department** is dedicated to providing sport, recreation and leisure activities for the citizens of the District of Guysborough.

Director of Recreation: Angie Tavares  
782-452-4003

The **Chedabucto Lifestyle Complex** is a fitness centre at Guysborough that houses the Chedabucto Fitness Centre, an elementary gymnasium, and different offices.

[www.municipality.guysborough.ns.ca/residents/recreation/](http://www.municipality.guysborough.ns.ca/residents/recreation/)

Phone: 902-533-2088  
60 Green Street

**St. Mary's Recplex** 522-2642

**Town of Canso** 366-2525

**Town of Mulgrave** 747-2243

**St. Mary's Trails Association** 328-2284

## Housing

### **Eastern Mainland Housing Authority:**

Administers existing public housing. This includes housing for seniors and families needing housing support. Rent is geared to income.

- **Location:**  
10016 Highway 16
- **Telephone:** 902-533-2292

Some websites that may be useful in finding temporary rental housing:

Rent Gorilla:

<https://rentgorilla.ca/>

Kijiji Nova Scotia (search “real estate” + “Guysborough”)

<http://www.kijiji.ca/b-real-estate/nova-scotia/antigonish/k0c3419002>

## **Resources for Families with Children**

### **Kids' First Family Resource Centre:**

Kids First builds confidence, stability and hope in families with children 0 to 6. Some programs include: Moms (parents) & Tots; Learning library; School readiness; Back to school and Canadian pre-natal/post-natal nutrition program.

- **Telephone:** 1-888-533-3881
- Queen Street in the Village of Guysborough
- **Website:** <http://www.kids1st.ca>

### **Nova Scotia Early Childhood Intervention 533-2694**

### **Strait Regional Center for Education:**

Administers public schools in the area, including Antigonish, Guysborough and all of Cape Breton. English and French Immersion classes are available. To enroll your child in public schooling, please contact.

- **Telephone:** 902-625-2191
- **Toll-free:** 1-800-650-4448

- **Website:** [www.strait.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.strait.ednet.ns.ca)

## **Transportation**

### **Taxis**

- **Mac's Taxi (24-hour service):** 902-863-8000
- **Student Taxi:** 902-863-2122
- **M&M Taxi:** 902-863-6666
- **Tartan Taxi:** 902 872-0720

Taxi costs are approximately \$5-6/trip in-town and \$7/trip to Superstore (doctor's office).

### **Al Sons Cabs & Vans Ltd**

Company offers bus and transportation services in Guysborough County

- **Telephone:** 902-366-2986  
**Website:** [www.maritimebus.com](http://www.maritimebus.com)

## Transportation

### Antigonish Community Transit

- The Antigonish Community Transit bus has a regular service around town and into the county. Bus stops are located around town.
- Schedules are available online at [www.antigonishcommunitytransit.ca](http://www.antigonishcommunitytransit.ca) or by **telephone** at 902-867-0411.



## **Postal Services**

There is one small post office in Guysborough.

### **Hours of operation:**

8am-5pm, Monday-Friday

10:30am-4:30pm Saturday

For detailed information, visit:

<http://www.canadapost.ca>

### **Location:**

- 115 Main Street

### **Phone Number:**

902-533-3501

## Bibliography

Antigonish Town and County Community Health Board. (2012-2013).

Application for a Permanent Resident Card (PR Card). (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/prcard.asp>

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2007). Welcome to Canada: What you should know. *Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2010 Edition*.  
Coady International Institute: Newcomers Guide to Antigonish

Immigrant services in your area. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/map/services.asp>

Kids First,Pictou, Antigonish and  
Guysborough Counties. (n.d.). Retrieved  
from <http://kids1st.ca/>

Service Canada. (n.d.). Retrieved  
from<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/home.shtml>

## Map of Guysborough

