

YORK REGION

Newcomer Guide













THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

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Information in this Guide is up to date as of March 2024. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers may change, and publications may go out of print without notice. This guide will be reviewed annually, and an updated copy will be posted on york.ca/newcomerservices

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request. Please email aoda@york.ca or call 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72149 or TTY: 1-866-512-6228 (for deaf or hard of hearing).



1. Welcome to York Region

The Regional Municipality of York stretches north from Toronto to Lake Simcoe and includes many hectares of protected Greenbelt. York Region’s diversity is evident in our nine local municipalities, geography, economic development and population.

York Region is home to 1.2 million residents of all ages, backgrounds and interests. As one of Canada’s fastest growing communities, York Region welcomes many newcomers each year to its nine local municipalities, which include:

- Town of Aurora
- Town of East Gwillimbury
- Town of Georgina
- Township of King
- City of Markham
- Town of Newmarket
- City of Richmond Hill
- City of Vaughan
- Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



Town of East Gwillimbury



GEORGINA





Land Acknowledgement for York Region

We acknowledge that York Region is located on the traditional territory of many Indigenous peoples such as the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat and Métis peoples and the treaty territories of the Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Williams Treaties First Nations. This land is now home to many diverse Indigenous peoples. York Region is located within the boundaries of the Nanfan Treaty, Treaty 13 and the Williams Treaties. There are also other land claims and treaty rights involving portions of York Region that have not been resolved. The Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation is a Williams Treaty First Nation and the closest First Nation community to York Region.

In preparing to become Canadian citizens, all immigrants are expected to [learn](#) a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about Treaties with Indigenous Peoples and the history of residential schools. New citizens also take an [Oath of Citizenship](#) that commits them to faithfully observe the laws of Canada, including Treaties with Indigenous Peoples. These actions are in response to the Calls to Action (93 and 94) outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's [Final Report](#).



Did You Know? —

Ontario has Canada's largest Indigenous population, with **406,590** living in the province.

In York Region, there are **5,875** people who identify as Indigenous. Of this, 160 reside on Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, Indian reserve (IRI) with the remaining population residing in York Region communities. Just over half of the Indigenous population lives in Newmarket (17.3%), Georgina (22.5%) and Vaughan (11.5%).



York Region is the seventh largest municipality in Canada by population and the third largest in Ontario. York Region has four provincially chosen growth centres: Markham, Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Newmarket



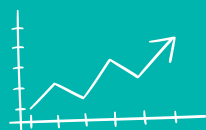
Our Region is made up of urban, suburban and rural neighbourhoods. We have farmlands, wetlands, forests and the built-up areas of our nine cities and towns



People from all over the world live here. Our residents speak more than **120** different languages and come from **238** distinct ethnic origins



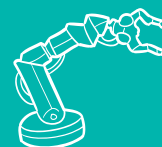
We celebrate diversity. More than 53,495 recent immigrants to Canada live in York Region (Immigrants who arrived in Canada between 2016 and 2021) and **47.8%** of all residents were born outside of Canada



As Ontario's third largest business hub, York Region is a top destination in the Toronto area for business, talent and investment. It is home to more than 54,000 businesses and **650,000** jobs



We are the second largest financial services cluster in Ontario, with more than 2,900 industry related businesses and over **40,000** jobs



We are Canada's second largest technology hub, with more than **4,300** companies in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) cluster



Global ICT giants such as AMD, GE, Huawei, IBM, Lenovo, Nokia, Oracle, Qualcomm, SAP, Siemens and Toshiba have offices in York Region



We are home to a highly educated workforce. About **70%** of the working population has completed post-secondary education



York Region is home to York University and Seneca College campuses and is just a commute away from **18** world-class post-secondary institutions



York Region is home to world-class hospitals. Cortellucci Vaughan hospital, which opened in June 2021, is the first hospital in Canada to have fully integrated "smart" technology systems.



There are lots of activities for families here. We are home to many attractions, including Canada's largest amusement park, art galleries, theatres, heritage sites, beaches, parks and trails, farms, breweries and wineries



2. Arriving

There are many programs and services available to people who have recently arrived in Canada, Ontario or York Region. The federal government legislates in areas of national importance and runs programs, services and benefits nationally. The provincial government legislates in areas of significance across Ontario and runs programs, services and benefits across the province.

Navigating Government Resources

To learn about employment and social development services and benefits available to all Canadians, please visit the [Service Canada](#) website or a local office, or call 1-800-567-6868. Service Canada is a federal institution that provides Canadians with a single point of access to a wide range of government services and benefits, including:

- Employment insurance
- Job searches
- Passports
- Pensions
- Social Insurance Numbers
- Records of employment

[Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) facilitates the arrival of immigrants, provides

protection to refugees and offers programming to help newcomers settle in Canada. It looks after:

- Settlement services
- Visas to visit, study or work in Canada
- Citizenship applications
- Passport applications
- Permanent resident cards
- Refugee protection
- Sponsorship





ServiceOntario

Service Ontario is a division of the Government of Ontario and provides Ontarians with an easy, cost-effective way to access government services. Visit the [Service Ontario](#) website or a local office or call 1-800-267-8097 for information about:

- Ontario photo cards
- Health cards (OHIP)
- Driver's licences
- Driver and vehicle fees
- Hunting or fishing licences
- Marriage, birth and death certificates
- Business registrations

Access York

In York Region, the [Access York](#) (1-866-512-6228) contact centre provides information, referrals and application services for York Region programs and services. Interpreter services are available. A customer service representative can provide you with information about topics such as:

- Child care
- Urgent dental coverage
- Public transportation
- Parks and trails
- Social assistance programs

Good to know



- If you apply for all of your Ontario identification cards on the same day, you will be able to renew them together instead of making separate trips to a Service Ontario office

Call [211](#) to speak with someone, or to get a referral to any of the different health and social services available in your community or through the government. Calls are free, confidential and available in 170 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Live chat and texting services in English and French are also available Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.





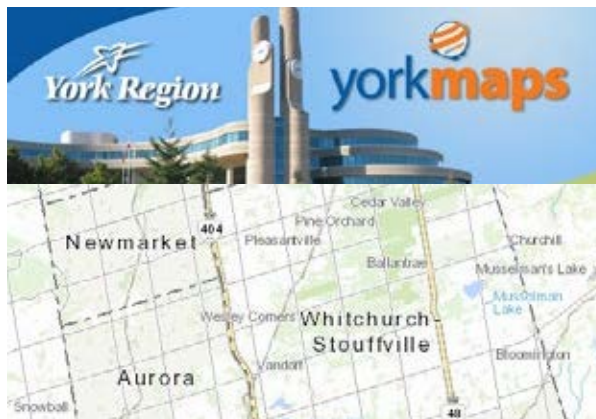
York Region's Website

York Region's website (york.ca) has information about programs and services for its residents and businesses, including health, transportation, environment, community support and recreation.

The [News Room](#) section has media releases, statements, announcements and event postings to keep you up-to-date about the community.

The [Careers](#) section provides [job listings](#), an online application system and other resources that can help you build your career.

The website also offers [interactive maps](#) to help you find things like police stations, bus stops, libraries, places of worship, government offices, settlement services and schools in York Region.



Settlement Services

Free and confidential settlement services are available for permanent residents, refugee claimants and convention refugees, live-in caregivers with work permits, temporary foreign workers, international students with study and work permits, and Canadian citizens. Some services and programs might be subject to eligibility.

Settlement services are offered by settlement agencies to help newcomers adjust to their life in Canada. Settlement organizations may also be known as newcomer service agencies, immigrant-serving or refugee-serving agencies. Some schools, libraries and community centres may also offer some settlement services or programs.

At settlement agencies, experienced settlement workers can answer questions related to living, learning, working and playing in York Region. They can also provide tip sheets and checklists to give newcomers a head start on their new environment. Settlement workers can help with the following:

- Community resources, programs and social services
- Translation and interpreter services information



- Assistance with government applications forms
- Employment support and guidance
- Job search workshop programs
- Accrediting education and work experience
- English language instruction and language assessment
- English classes and registration
- Housing information
- School registration for children and childcare information
- Assistance in building personal and professional networks

Some settlement agencies may offer additional support or referrals for refugees, such as:

- Specialized supports for refugee women and youth
- Trauma counselling and mental wellness services
- Settlement services in a specific language

For additional information on settlement services near you, in either English or French, please use the free newcomer services search tool on the [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) page. The tool will help you find resources close to the postal code or city you provide.

In addition to their core services, many government, community and social service agencies offer a wide range of on-site services, including family counselling, legal resources, health information and supports for youth, women and seniors. If you do not speak English, an interpreter may be provided to help you. To locate a range of support service providers in York Region, please visit [211.ca](#).

If you are new to Ontario, you can also find answers to common questions on immigration and citizenship, housing, health, employment, education, legal services and daily life at [settlement.org](#)

Francophone Settlement Services

Uniquely designed for the needs of the York Region's francophone community, [Association des francophones de la région de York \(AFRY\)](#) has a dedicated Reception and Settlement Centre. It addresses a comprehensive range of settlement and intergenerational needs, and also offers referrals to government and community resources. AFRY runs workshops related to housing education, transportation, employment issues, financial literacy, and inter-cultural skills. To book a meeting, visit AFRY's [website](#) or call 289-552-4297 ext.8.



Good to know



- Some agencies can charge you a fee or request payment for offering you advice or support with your immigration or citizenship related questions. To find out more, please visit the [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) website
- International students should work directly with their school's administration to access settlement services available to them while they are studying
- Individuals may also qualify for pre-arrival services if they have been approved for permanent residence in Canada and are currently living outside Canada. Pre-arrival services can help you prepare for the move to Canada, get your work experience and credentials recognized in Canada, help you search for a job and connect you with free services after you arrive in Canada

Welcome Centres

In York Region, five accessible service hub centres known as Welcome Centres help immigrants settle and integrate into Canada. A mobile outreach unit is also available in certain communities. Welcome Centres may provide services in languages other than English.

Welcome Centres are located in easy and accessible public transit routes and provide a range of settlement related services and information to newcomers under one roof, including employment supports and language classes. For individual program calendars and specific services offered at a Welcome Centre near you, please visit the [Welcome Centre](#) website or contact 1-877-761-1155.

Markham North Welcome Centre

8400 Woodbine Avenue, Units 102-103 Markham,
Ontario, L3R 4N7
289-846-3645

Markham South Welcome Centre

7220 Kennedy Road, Unit 8
Markham, Ontario, L3R 7P2
905-479-7926

Newmarket Welcome Centre

16655 Yonge Street, Unit 26
Newmarket, Ontario, L3X 1V6
289-841-3032

Richmond Hill Welcome Centre

9325 Yonge Street, Unit 31A
Richmond Hill, Ontario, L4C 0A8
289-842-3124

Vaughan Welcome Centre

9100 Jane Street, Unit 56
Vaughan, Ontario, L4K 0A4
905-761-1155

Mobile Outreach Unit

Visits Georgina, Stouffville and East Gwillimbury
areas by appointment
1-877-761-1155



3. Moving Around

Whether you travel within or outside York Region, there are many ways to get to where you need to go. York Region manages more than 4,200 lane kilometers of Regional roads. Roads are maintained and improved regularly, assisting in the safe and efficient transport of goods and people between urban and rural locations. York Region public transportation buses are also readily available, offering a convenient commute throughout York Region.

Public Transportation

York Region is serviced by [York Region Transit \(YRT\)](#) and offers local and rapid transit options in all nine cities and towns. YRT routes keep residents connected within York Region, and to transit services in the [City of Toronto](#), the Regions of [Peel](#) and [Durham](#), [GO Transit](#) and beyond. To search the best route for your next trip, visit yrt.ca/TripPlanner.

YRT offers travellers different fare options, including adult, youth, senior and child. To pay for your transit fare you will need a [PRESTO card](#), the [YRT Pay App](#) or [Transit App](#) on your smartphone, or exact cash. PRESTO cards can be purchased [online](#) or at YRT PRESTO [fare agents](#). Transit [fares](#) and [routes](#) are [subject to change](#).

The [York Region Transit](#) website is regularly updated with the most current information. For trip planning assistance or any other questions, please call the YRT Contact Centre at 1-866-668-3978 or [Live Chat](#) with us.



Good to know



- YRT [Mobility On-Request](#) allows you to request transit when and where you need it. Connect to select locations or other YRT services by booking a ride during service hours with the Mobility On-Request mobile app or call us at 1-844-667-5327. Mobility On-Request is available in all nine municipalities in select service areas. For more information visit the [YRT website](#)



You may qualify for the [York Region Transit Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#) to help make transit more affordable for eligible residents.

myRide Travel Training

A YRT representative will meet you at your home and show you how to take transit to a location of your choice. There is no cost for this service except for your transit fare. Travellers who would like to become more confident riding YRT independently can book an appointment by calling 1-877-464-9675 at ext. 75867 or by emailing myride@york.ca

Good to know



- As a newcomer to Canada you cannot apply for an International Driving Permit (IDP) in Canada to drive in Canada. The IDP is issued by your home country before you arrive. Canadians can apply for an IDP in Canada to operate a motor vehicle abroad
- Once you have a licence, you will have to renew it before the expiry date printed on your licence. If you have a G1 or G2 licence and let it expire, you will need to begin your driver's licence application process from the beginning

Driver's Licence

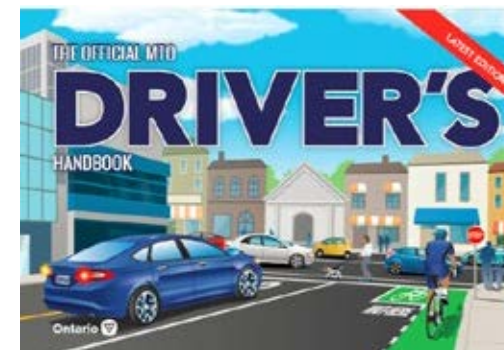
To legally drive a car in Canada, you will need a driver's licence issued by your provincial or territorial government. You must have it with you whenever you drive. To get an Ontario driver's licence you need to apply in-person at a [DriveTest centre](#). Visit the [Ontario Ministry of Transportation](#) page for information about what you need to apply for a licence.



For the first 60 days of your stay in Ontario, you can use a valid driver's licence from your home province, state or country. You need to be at least 16 years of age and have proper insurance coverage for the vehicle you drive. You must also obey all traffic laws and rules of the road.

Visitors staying in Ontario for longer than three months should get an [International Driving Permit](#) (IDP) in their home country.

In Ontario, regular licence renewals are required every 2 years after a licenced adult driver turns 80 years old. If a person does not go through the renewal process, their license will no longer be valid.



Vehicle Insurance

In Canada, it is illegal to drive without car insurance. If you regularly drive a car belonging to someone else like a relative or friend, you should make sure that you are listed on their car insurance plan.

The cost of insurance depends on your vehicle, age, driving record, where you live and your driving experience. In Ontario, insurance can be purchased through an independent insurance provider like a bank or insurance company.



4. Living in York Region

York Region is a welcoming community with readily available newcomer resources and services. This section will introduce you to important information about living in York Region, including following laws and finding a home.

Rules and Laws

As a newcomer to Canada, take time to learn and understand your [rights and freedoms](#), the duties you have and the laws you have to obey. To learn more about the Canadian justice system, visit the [Department of Justice](#) website.

Municipal bylaws are local laws that keep communities orderly, safe and clean. Bylaws may relate to things like smoking, parking, garbage disposal, messy yards or zoning. For a list of your local bylaws visit your city or town's website. For a list of bylaws passed by York Regional Council, visit york.ca

The [Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General](#) can help Ontario citizens and residents with most questions you may have about Ontario's legal system.

If you qualify financially and have a legal issue that is covered by Legal Aid Ontario, you may [qualify for financial assistance](#) to help pay for a lawyer. Call 1-800-668-8258.

If you require legal advice, York Region's [Community Legal Clinic \(CLCYR\)](#) offers free legal help to those who meet their financial eligibility criteria. The clinic is staffed by lawyers, paralegals and support staff and can help with questions related to:

- Housing and tenants' rights
- Social assistance
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Board claims
- Advice on employment or immigration law

Banking

A bank account and a good credit score are important for many purchases, including getting a cell phone, leasing a car, paying rent and buying a home.

Visit the [Financial Consumer Agency of Canada](#) for information about banking in Canada. When you are ready to open an account, visit different financial institutions in your area to learn about the products and services they provide to decide which is best for you.

Good to know



- You can order your credit files and view your current credit score any time from [TransUnion](#) or [Equifax](#)



Buying a Home

Buying a home is an exciting and complex process. If you are planning to buy a home in York Region, you may find it useful to speak to a [real estate agent](#) and a personal financial advisor at your bank about your plans.

Real estate agents are licensed professionals who have knowledge of the communities they serve. They can help you search for a home, arrange for a professional home inspection, support you in real estate negotiations, connect you to financial advisors, real estate lawyers or property inspectors and help you choose a property in York Region.

Personal financial advisors will help you understand your financial options. They may refer you to a mortgage specialist, who will provide you with information about financing options. The location where you do your day-to-day banking can also assist.

The [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation](#) (CMHC) offers useful tools and information when buying a home. The CMHC website includes the following guides:

- Buying your first home in Canada
- Homebuyers Checklist – A newcomer’s guide and workbook
- What to look for when buying a home
- Making an offer and closing the deal
- Location, Location, Location – How to find a home of your own
- Choosing the right mortgage for you
- What to do if you are having trouble making your mortgage payments

You can also visit [REALTOR.ca](#) to look for properties, find a real estate agent, use a mortgage calculator or find some helpful tip sheets. [Homes & Land of York, Simcoe, Muskoka and Parry Sound Regions](#) magazine is another resource that you can use during your search for a home.

Renting

Your first home in York Region may be a rented house or apartment. Renting gives you the option of looking for a home to live long term without feeling the pressure of making a more permanent decision.

If you are interested in renting a home in York Region, begin by speaking with a settlement worker at a Welcome Centre or a real estate agent, searching on the Internet or looking through the classified ads in a local newspaper.

CMHC offers useful tools and information when renting a home. The CMHC website includes the following guides:

- [Renting in Canada](#): What newcomers need to know
- Signing a lease
- Keeping your home in good condition
- Checking out a home or apartment
- How to find and rent a home if you have a large family

If you and your landlord have a disagreement or you have questions about your rights and responsibilities as a renter, contact the [Landlord and Tenant Board](#), an organization that helps to settle conflicts between landlords and tenants.



Common Types of Homes

Whether you rent or buy, you can choose from many different types of housing in York Region. Here is a description of some of the common types of homes in York Region.



Apartment

A building of units or suites of rooms that may be owned or rented. Apartment buildings usually have many floors and the units are joined together by a common hallway. Most apartment buildings will have a lobby and might share other common amenities, like a swimming pool, gym or barbecue area. The building, amenities and common areas are usually maintained by a property management company. An apartment building is also known as a “multi-family residential dwelling.”



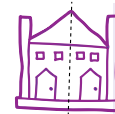
Condominium (Condo)

A building or community of buildings, such as an apartment building or town house complex, in which units are owned by individuals rather than a landlord. Condo owners elect a board of directors to manage the building and the land. Each owner pays their own mortgage, taxes and utilities and a monthly fee to cover ongoing maintenance costs.



Town House

A single-family home that is attached to one or more similar houses by shared walls. The land on which a town house sits is limited to the front and back yard. Town homes are usually two or three stories tall.



Semi-Detached Home

A single-family dwelling house that shares one common wall with the next house.



Detached Home

A stand-alone house that is usually one or two stories tall and set on its own lot of land. A detached home is often called a single-family home.



Property Taxes

When you own a property you will need to pay property taxes. Municipal governments use property taxes to pay for services and infrastructure. Taxes help to keep our communities clean and safe by paying for services like:

- Police and fire protection
- Paramedic services
- Water and waste management
- Road maintenance and snow removal
- Parks and recreation facilities
- Public transportation
- Neighbourhood infrastructure

The [Municipal Property Assessment Corporation](#) (MPAC) assesses the value of all properties in Ontario. Municipal governments set their own tax rates. York Region and your local municipal government will calculate how much property tax you will owe based on MPAC's assessed value of your home and the municipal tax rate. For more information please visit [York Region's website](#).

Housing Options

As the cost of living increases, households living with low or moderate incomes may have trouble making ends meet. Some people in our community need extra support. York Region works with various partners to develop the right housing options for those in need of extra support, despite their income levels. To find out more about community support related to housing visit [york.ca](#)

If you are fleeing an abusive situation or if you become homeless, an emergency housing facility can provide you with temporary housing and support services. Some facilities offer exclusive emergency and transitional housing for women and children, families, youth or men.

For more information please call York Region:

Toll-free: 1-877-464-9675
(Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

TTY: 1-866-512-6228
(for the deaf or hard of hearing)

For emergency and transitional housing information and support on weekends and evenings, please call 211.



It
starts
with
kids.

Child Care

Children need to be cared for while parents are at work or studying. Children should also be active and eat healthy food.

There are different types of child care available in Ontario, in English and French:

- Licensed home child care
- Licensed child care centre
- Before-school and after-school care
- Unlicensed care

To search for licensed child care, please visit the [Ontario Ministry of Education](#) website.

In most cases, child care in York Region is not free, but families living with low income may qualify for a [subsidy](#) to help pay for their child care costs. For more information about children's services in York Region, including [programs and subsidies](#), visit [york.ca](#).

Review the [Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services](#) website to understand our responsibilities when it comes to the welfare of Ontario children.

Recreation Programs

Businesses and non-profit organizations in York Region offer activities for children. Municipalities also offer recreational programs for all ages. Visit your city or town's website or stop by your local library, community centre or municipal hall to speak to someone about programs or to pick up the local recreation guide.

York Region offers [subsidies for recreation programs](#), day camps and overnight youth camps to provide children and youth from families with

low income the ability to take part in programs offered by the municipal recreation departments.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres (EarlyON centres) offer free support services and programs to parents, caregivers, and their children from birth to six years old in Ontario. Visit York Region's new [online registration platform](#) for EarlyON Child and Family Programs.



Services for People with Disabilities

A disability may make it more difficult for a person to participate in the community. Not all disabilities are visible or permanent; a person can be born with a disability (congenital), or they may acquire a disability through age, illness or accident. There are many government services available to assist people living with a disability and their families:

- The [Government of Canada](#) offers financial benefits for adults and children
- The [Government of Ontario](#) provides financial and medical support for people with disabilities
- York Region provides [Early Intervention Services](#) to support families who have children with special needs

Local community centres and non-profit organizations may also provide daytime and outreach services for people and families seeking support in their daily life. A representative at your local [Welcome Centre](#) or [Access York](#) can help you find services that are available near you.



Cultural Groups and Places of Worship

York Region is a growing and vibrant community that is home to people from more than 230 distinct ethnic origins. When people move to a new area or country, they can find it helpful to connect with others who share their language, culture and customs.

In York Region, there are approximately 270 religious institutions where people take comfort in practicing their faith and spirituality. Places of worship are also a place of community and cultural activity. Positive contact with people from these institutions enhances successful community partnerships. Use the [interactive maps](#) on the York Region website to find places of worship in your neighbourhood or elsewhere in the community.

Pets

Many York Region residents have pets in their homes. Each local city and town has its own bylaws for pet registration and off-leash areas. Please visit your city or town's website for more information

Food

Food is essential in every culture. With a large multicultural community in York Region, there are many places that sell ingredients, food and drinks from all over the world.



This list may not capture all of the community resources available. [York Region Food Network](#) can act as a resource for finding and accessing additional resources.

Groceries: Most supermarkets across York Region have an ethnic food section. You can also find familiar foods at convenience stores, specialty stores, ethnic food stores, food banks and low cost food cooperatives.

Community Gardens: York Region offers community gardens for those who want to grow their own food but need space to do it. If you are interested in gardening in your community or attending a gardening workshop, please contact a representative from one of York Region's local [community gardens](#). This list may not capture all of the community gardens currently available.

Farmers' Markets: Farmers' markets offer small agricultural producers the opportunity to sell fresh, local meat and produce. Visit the [Experience York Region](#) website for a list of current farmers' markets in York Region and their operating hours.

Services for Seniors

The term "senior" typically refers to someone 65 years of age or older in Canada. York Region has many [centres](#) that offer educational, recreational and social programs, unique to seniors' needs. Activities can include crafts, day trips, fitness programs and guest speakers. A representative at your local Welcome Centre or Access York can help you find services that are available near you.

You can also search for a [Seniors Active Living Centre \(SALC\)](#) near you. SALCs offer social, cultural, learning and recreational programs for seniors that promote health, well-being and social connections.

Good to know



- Municipalities issue program calendars every quarter. Visit your city or town's website or pick up a program guide at the library, community centre, or municipal hall to learn more about municipally run programs for adults and youth of all abilities



5. Staying Healthy

Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)

[OHIP](#) is Ontario's health care plan offering many health services paid by the province. When you use public health care services, you must show your health insurance card to the hospital or medical clinic. Find out if you qualify for OHIP by visiting the [Service Ontario](#) website.

You have to be a resident of Ontario for three months before you can get OHIP coverage. In some cases, the [Interim Federal Health Program](#) (IFHP) can provide temporary health insurance to refugees, protected persons and refugee claimants.

The Interim Federal Health Program

The Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) provides limited, temporary healthcare benefits for specific groups of people in Canada who don't have provincial, territorial, or private healthcare coverage. Protected persons, resettled refugees, and refugee claimants can [apply](#).

If you do not yet qualify for OHIP and are not covered by the IFHP, you can use private health insurance or receive medical attention from a walk-in clinic at a cost.

Low Cost Health Services

Free (or low cost) health care is available at the [Vaughan Community Health Centre](#), a not-for-profit, community-governed organization that provides clinical and social services to York Region residents who are facing barriers accessing health care. Services are provided at two locations in different languages within a safe, accessible and comfortable environment.

Vaughan Community Health Centre

9401 Jane Street, Suite 206
Vaughan, Ontario, L6A 4H7
905-303-8490

Keswick Site

716 The Queensway South
Keswick, Ontario, L4P 4C9
905-476-5621

You can also receive free and confidential health information and education over the phone by contacting [Health Connection](#) at 1-800-361-5653.



Good to know



- OHIP does not cover prescription medication in non-hospital settings, dental services in a dentist's office, eyeglasses and contact lenses, laser eye surgery or cosmetic surgery
- You can get fast, free and confidential medical advice by calling Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 to get service in over 300 languages. A Registered Nurse will ask you to answer questions so they can assess your health problem and give you advice

Public Health

York Region helps residents stay healthy at all ages and stages. With evidence-based public [health programs and services](#), York Region prevents diseases, supports child development, protects resident safety and promotes healthy lifestyles

Finding a Family Doctor

It can be difficult to [find a family doctor](#) accepting new patients. You can call [Health Care Connect](#) for help finding a doctor and to learn about how nurse practitioners can help you. Once you have a family doctor, you can make appointments for routine checkups, non-urgent diagnoses or treatments.

You can also visit a walk-in clinic near you if you are unable to find a family doctor and need non-urgent diagnosis or treatment, referral to a health care specialist, support in managing a chronic condition or to receive a prescription.

If you need urgent care, go to the emergency department of your local hospital or call 911.

Aging

Aging in a healthy way contributes to a higher quality of life. [York Region](#) offers services to promote the health, well-being, safety and the independence of individuals requiring care. Aging in a healthy way contributes to quality of life. For many older adults, a fall will lead to chronic pain and reduced mobility, resulting in a loss of independence and enjoyment of life. Take a look at York Region's [services](#) that can support you.

Adult day programs, client intervention and support services, convalescent care, long-term

care homes and short stay respite programs are available to all residents.

Dental Care

The Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) does not cover most dental services, though some dental surgeries may be covered if done at a hospital.

Many employers offer dental plans as part of their employee benefits package.

The Ontario Ministry of Health offers dental coverage to eligible children, 17 years of age or younger, through their [Healthy Smiles Ontario](#) program or to eligible seniors, 65 years of age or older through their [Seniors Dental Care](#) program and [York Region's Seniors Dental Program](#).

Mental Wellness

Mental wellness is as important as physical health at every stage of life — from childhood and adolescence through to adulthood.

Mental wellness affects how we think, feel, and act. It can also help determine the choices we make, how we handle stress or relate to others.

If you have concerns about your or your family's mental wellness, visit the [Canadian Mental Health Association York Region and South Simcoe \(CMHA-YRSS\)](#) website or contact 1-866-345-0183 to find out what resources and supports may be available to you.

[York Support Services Network](#) offers the Community Crisis Response Service for persons living in York Region or South Simcoe who are experiencing a mental health crisis, and their family or friends. Call 1-855-310-COPE (2673) for more information.



6. Learning

York Region has some of the best schools in Ontario. Students are welcomed from around the world and across Canada with supports to help them adapt to their new setting quickly. In York Region, you will be able to improve your English or French, take a university or college course to help you advance your career, and make sure your children can learn in a safe, happy and nurturing environment.

Learning an Official Language

Your ability to communicate with other people in Canada is important. Good communication will make it easier for you to find work, do your banking and shopping, get medical attention, speak to your children's teachers, make new friends and more.

Canada has two official languages: English and French. English is the most commonly spoken language in most provinces and territories. You can access [free tools online](#) to improve your knowledge in English or French.

Visit [Achève](#) or call 855-330-8655 to assess your proficiency in English or French. Achève staff will help you find language classes near you after your assessment.

Permanent residents who are new to Canada may have their English tested to receive their

Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level. CLBs are used in Canada to describe the language ability of people learning English. CLB levels are important if you plan to take an English language class, enroll in a bridge training program, look for work or study at a college or university.

Schools

In Canada, children aged six to 16 are legally required to attend school. You can enroll your children in a pre-school or kindergarten program as early as four years of age. Students are enrolled in the elementary school system by birth date. Secondary school students (children aged 14 to 18) are placed in courses appropriate to their learning level.

York Region schools provide positive environments where children can learn, grow, play and develop the skills they need to succeed socially and academically. Schools follow an official curriculum (course work developed by the provincial [Ministry of Education](#)). Please refer to the [Elementary School Guide for Newcomers in Ontario](#) and [Secondary School Guide for Newcomers in Ontario](#) for detailed information about what to expect when your children start school and tips for getting ready.



School Boards

In York Region there are four public school boards. You may choose to enroll your child in any school board, including:

- [York Region District School Board](#) (YRDSB)
- [York Catholic District School Board](#) (YCDSB)
- [Conseil Scolaire Viamonde](#) (CSV)
- [Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir](#) (CSC)

School boards offer publicly funded education for elementary and secondary school students. School boards accept students based on postal code (where you live) and offer the opportunity for children to learn the Ontario curriculum in both official languages.

In Ontario, you register your child in a school that services your residential area. To find schools servicing the area where you live, visit the school board's website. When you have found the school that services your residential area and meets your needs, visit your school board's Newcomer Reception Centre website for information about enrolment:

- [YRDSB Newcomer Reception Centre](#)
- [YCDSB Newcomer Reception Centre](#)

French Education

YRDSB and YCDSB offer parents of children entering first grade in September a choice of two 'French as a Second Language' programs: Core French and French Immersion.

- **Core French:** Students receive 40 minutes of French instruction per day in a classroom environment. Students are automatically enrolled in Core French until Grade 9. After Grade 9, French language classes are optional for students
- **French Immersion:** Students receive full-day French instruction in all subjects starting in the first grade at a designated school. You must register your child for French Immersion

CSV and CSC are French-language school boards. They offer publicly funded education for elementary and high school students in Ontario. CSV and CSC schools offer more than a French-immersion environment; students speak French before, during and after class and English is taught as a separate subject at the same skill level as in English-language schools. Information for newcomers may be found at [Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir](#) or [Conseil Scolaire Viamonde](#).

Youth Mentorship

When you're young, your friends have a big influence on you. By harnessing the power of friendship and support, youth-to-youth peer mentoring encourages healthy lifestyles and increases resiliency for kids who need guidance and a helping hand. You can get in touch with [Youth Assisting Youth](#) to connect your child to a youth mentor.



Good to know



- York Region is home to [York University](#) and [Seneca College](#) campuses and is just a commute away from 18 world-class postsecondary institution
- If you apply to Bridge Training Programs, funded by the Ontario Government, you may be able to access the [Ontario bridge training bursary](#) or community loan programs for immigrants and refugees, to help with the costs.
- [Career Loans](#) provides free virtual career counselling and micro loans of up to \$15,000 to internationally trained individuals who are looking to return to their chosen profession.
- [The Ontario Bridging Participant Assistance Program \(OBPAP\)](#) provides bursary assistance of up to \$5,000 to internationally trained professional immigrants with financial need.

Private Schools

Private schools, for which families pay tuition, are also available in Ontario. All private schools operating in the province are businesses or non-profit organizations. The Ontario Ministry of Education does not financially support, regulate, license, accredit or oversee the operation of private schools in the province. For more information about private education in Ontario, visit the [Ontario Ministry of Education](#) website.

Universities and Colleges

In Canada, [universities](#) and [colleges](#) are known as post-secondary schools. In Ontario, universities and colleges receive some funding from the [Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities](#), but students must pay for their tuition and the use of school resources.

Financial Aid

The federal and provincial governments in Canada offer funding for post-secondary students who show financial need. [Ontario Student Assistance Program](#) (OSAP) is the main source of financial aid for post-secondary education in Ontario. Students who require financial assistance can also contact the Financial Aid office at their university or college. Many institutions also offer grants, bursaries and scholarships.



Applying for Post-secondary Education

Students typically need a high school diploma to go to college or university in Canada, but each school has its own admission requirements and selects which students to accept.

To apply to an Ontario university, you must submit your application to the [Ontario Universities' Application Centre](#) (OUAC). To apply to an Ontario college, you must submit your application to the [Ontario College Application Service](#) (OCAS).

You will need to apply directly through a post-secondary school only if you are:

- Planning to study part time
- A mature student (generally 21 years of age and away from formal education for some time)
- An international student
- Applying for graduate studies, such as a Masters or Doctoral degree
- Planning to attend adult education classes
- Planning to attend a private career college



Good to know



- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada recognizes the [International English Language Testing System \(IELTS\)](#) and the [Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program \(CELP\)](#) as approved English language tests

If you are not a resident of Canada and want to go to school in York Region, you may need a study permit or a visa. You can find how to apply for a study permit on the [Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) website.

Continuing Education

If you've been trained in another country, Ontario has many [programs](#) to help you continue working in your profession or trade.

Continuing education courses can help you develop knowledge and skills in a specific subject area. Courses are offered to adults in the community by local school boards, colleges and universities. To learn about university or college programs available to newcomer adults, visit a [Welcome Centre](#) near you.

The Government of Ontario has two programs, [Global Experience Ontario \(GEO\)](#) and the [Ontario Bridge Training Program](#), to help newcomers add the qualifications they need to practise their profession or trade in Ontario. The Federal Government of Canada also funds Bridge Training programs for a number of professional areas, as well as enhanced, occupation-specific language training. Refer to their websites for more information about each program.

International Students

As one of Canada's fastest growing communities, York Region attracts many international students from around the globe. International students may come to York Region to attend a post-secondary institution, a secondary school or even an elementary school. Some stay for a short time, while others stay for years to complete a diploma, certificate or degree program.

International students interested in attending a college or university in Ontario should visit the [international student](#) information page of the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities website. International students who already attend a post-secondary institution in Ontario should visit their campus' International Students office to learn more about supports and services that may be available to them. Some support services may include:

- Academic and career support
- Visas and permits
- Health services
- Housing
- Financial aid
- Referrals to other programs and services



7. Working

Finding a job in a new community may be exciting but challenging. York Region is one of the largest business hubs in Greater Toronto and Canada. It is home to two of Greater Toronto's four major business hubs, over 54,000 business establishments, 654,000 jobs and over 500 foreign subsidiaries. York Region is an ideal place to build your life and career. For industry specific information, or information and resources to help you start your own business, visit [York Link](#).

Social Insurance Number

If you want to work in Canada, open a bank account or access government services and benefits, you will need a [Social Insurance Number](#) (SIN). You can apply for a SIN at your nearest [Service Canada](#) office. Bring all the necessary [documents](#) with you.

Foreign Credentials

Internationally trained and educated workers are in high demand. There are services available to help you get your skills and education recognized in Canada. You may need to upgrade some specific skills or get a licence before you can get a job in your intended profession. The [World Education Services](#) (WES) is designated by [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) (IRCC) to provide [Educational Credential Assessments](#) (ECAs) for degrees and diplomas earned outside of Canada.

A report from WES helps institutions like schools, employers, licensing boards or immigration authorities better understand your educational accomplishments, and can:

- Identify and describe your credentials
- Verify the authenticity of your credentials
- Provide a grade point average (GPA) equivalency
- Evaluate the authenticity of your documents

ECAs can also be used by people who, because of adverse circumstances in their country of education, do not have proof of their academic achievement.

Understanding your Career Pathways

You may be interested in learning about your intended profession or trade in Canada by visiting the [Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials](#) (CICIC) website. In Ontario, the government sets rules and laws for more than 100 professions and trades. Some professions are regulated and some are not. Regulated professions require Canadian licensing or certification even if you have been licensed or certified abroad.

To understand more about the scope of your profession in Canada, review the [Newcomer's Guide to the Canadian Job Market](#) or the [Skilled Immigrant Career Success Guide](#).



To learn about the university and college programs that can help you work in your intended profession or trade in Ontario, visit a [Welcome Centre](#) near you.

A Welcome Centre representative can help you understand the pathways available to you, including timelines, financial options, credential evaluation, bridge training, internships, mentoring, licensing and alternate career paths. For an appointment call 1-877-761-1155 or email info@welcomecentre.ca

Employment Standards

The [Ontario Ministry of Labour](#) enforces and promotes awareness of [employment standards](#), such as minimum wage, hours of work and public holidays. Please visit the Ministry's website to view the most current employment standards, learn more about employee rights and employer obligations. In addition, the Ministry holds information sessions on the [Employment Standards Act](#) and the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#). Check the [calendar](#) on the Ministry's website for times and locations near you.

To speak to a representative about employment standards, contact the Employment Standards Information Centre:

Greater Toronto Area: 416-326-7160
Canada: 1-800-531-5551
TTY: 1-866-567-8893

To report a workplace incident, such as a fatality, critical injury or an unsafe work practice, you may contact the Ontario Ministry of Labour Health and Safety Contact Centre:

Toll-free: 1-877-202-0008
TTY: 1-855-653-9260
Fax: 905-577-1316

Finding a Job

Employers in Canada may recruit employees through professional associations, recruitment agencies, online job search engines, postings in newspapers, trade magazines or websites, at job fairs, conferences or networking events.

To apply for a job in Canada, you need a:

- Social Insurance Number
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Cover letter

Search jobs from employers who want to recruit newcomers to Canada or find everything you need to know to start your job search journey through the [Job Bank](#).



Good to know



- The [Government of Canada](#) offers a guide to the Canadian tax system and the benefits that are available to help individuals and families with payments. The [Government of Ontario](#) also offers benefits and tax credit programs

Newcomers can also visit a [Welcome Centre](#) for help with their job search, résumé writing and interview skills. In addition to offering employment assistance workshops, Welcome Centre staff can answer specific questions. For an appointment, call 1-877-761-1155, visit the Welcome Centre's web page or email info@welcomecentre.ca

The Regional Municipality of York has been recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for its commitment to inclusion and celebration of diversity. If you are interested in a job at York Region, please visit the [Careers](#) section of our website.

Filing Income Taxes

In Canada, residents pay taxes to the federal and provincial governments on the income they earn. Many important public programs and services like hospitals, schools, social services and infrastructure are supported through tax dollars. The amount of tax you pay in Canada will depend on how much you earn. Newcomers to Canada may benefit from the guidance of a tax professional to ensure they understand the process and do not miss out on eligible credits (some individuals and families may be eligible for free services).



Canada Revenue Agency

Income tax is paid to the Government of Canada's [Canada Revenue Agency](#) (CRA). Whether or not taxes are automatically deducted from your paycheck, most taxpayers will need to [file an income tax return](#) with the CRA by April 30 every year (some exceptions apply).

Taxes can be filed electronically or on paper. If it is your first time filing a tax return in Canada, you must file a paper tax return. You can print the income tax and benefit package from the CRA website or contact CRA to receive a copy by mail.

For a list of certified software that can be used to file your taxes electronically, please visit Revenue Canada's [NETFILE](#) website. Some products are free and most will guide you with step-by-step instructions.

For more information about filing an income tax return or checking the status of your tax return, please visit the [Income Tax](#) section of the Government of Canada website.



Employment Resources

Depending on what stage your career is in, different resources may be helpful to you in finding employment. To find out which skills you may need to update to help you find a job, contact [Employment Ontario](#) toll-free at 1-800-387-5656, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The [Workforce Planning Board of York Region](#) conducts local labour market research and provides career planning resources. Explore their interactive toolkit – [Work in York](#) – to better understand York Region’s labour market, as well as to access a job board and a job map.

Making Professional Connections

Professional Immigrant Network (PIN) associations can support you in your job search. They are run by skilled immigrants and often have events that are open to non-members. The [Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council \(TRIEC\)](#) offers a list of professional associations, including PINs, that can connect you to resources and supports to help you in your career.

A specialized mentor in your field can help to ease the transition into your profession by offering hands-on advice and job search support. Visit [TRIEC Mentoring Partnership](#) to find a mentor who can help you further your career in Canada.

Internships

An internship can help you gain Canadian work experience. Some companies post internships on their job career pages, while other opportunities can be found searching online. Most internships are short-term and not all employers offer paid placements. Visit [Career Edge](#) to find out about paid internships along with some helpful tips on starting your career in Canada.

The [Federal Internship for Newcomers \(FIN\)](#) Program offers eligible newcomers a chance to gain valuable temporary work experience and training opportunities with Canadian federal, provincial and municipal organizations. There are different opportunities every year. Employers offer internships in fields like administration, project support and management, policy and research, as well as computer science. Through the FIN, candidates are hired as temporary employees and gain experience in understanding job application and hiring processes, Canadian workplace culture, networking with professionals, and attending training sessions. In addition, each participant is matched with a professional mentor.



Volunteering

[Volunteering](#) is a great way to meet other people, learn about the community, practice your language skills and gain some Canadian work experience.

Licensed Professions and Skilled Trades

The [Ontario Network for Internationally-trained Professionals \(ONIP\)](#) provides information about licensing and employment options in professional fields like accounting, engineering, health care and teaching.

The [Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade](#) website has information about apprenticeships for skilled trades. In addition, [Employment Ontario](#) provides information to help you make an informed decision when preparing for an [apprenticeship](#).

Many local trade unions offer skills training. Visit the [Toronto Community Benefits Network](#) website to find local trade unions in your industry of choice.

Entrepreneurial Resources

[Employment and Social Development Canada](#) issues and renews work permits and reviews labour market options for businesses that hire immigrants and/or foreign workers. Visit its website for more information on workplace standards, the [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#) and work permits.

If you are starting a small business in York Region visit the [York Small Business Enterprise Centre \(YSBEC\)](#). You can participate in a one-on-one or group consultation to learn about things like building a business plan, business ownership and registration, licensing, permits and taxation.

Arts and Culture Professionals

Artists should take advantage of the programs available through the [York Region Arts Council](#) which offers professional development programs, resources, and community building. As a hub for artists, the York Region Arts Council supports artists who are developing their creative practices as well as working towards building and maintaining a sustainable career in the arts, culture and tourism fields.



B. Staying Safe

Emergencies

Dial 911 any time there is a threat to life or property. This will connect you with police, fire and ambulance dispatch operators. Operators have instant access to an interpreter through Language Line Services, so they can assist with calls in more than 150 languages, 24 hours a day.

Examples of emergencies include:

- Medical emergencies that pose immediate threat to life or bodily injury
- Crimes in progress
- Major property damage or loss
- Fires

When in doubt, call 911 for emergency help.



Fraud and scams

You should be very cautious before giving personal information of any kind to anyone. Scammers will pretend to be from your bank, utility company, insurance company, or even the government to steal your identity or get money from you. You can [report a scam or fraud](#) to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre toll-free at 1-888-495-8501.

Police

In Canada, police keep people safe and enforce the law. There are different types of police, including federal, provincial, territorial and municipal. [York Regional Police](#) employs more than 1,500 officers and 600 civilians, and is recognized as a national leader in law enforcement and crime prevention programs.

If the police stop, question or arrest you:

- Be calm
- Do not resist
- Look directly at the officer
- Speak as clearly as possible
- Be ready to show some kind of identification
- Make sure you know why you have been arrested
- Ask to have a lawyer
- Do not offer money, gifts or services in exchange for special treatment



If you need to speak with York Regional Police about a non-emergency situation or to report a concern, you may contact the non-emergency line at 1-866-876-5423.



Paramedics



When you dial 911 in a medical emergency, paramedics will be dispatched to help you. [York Region's paramedics](#) are dedicated to providing the highest quality of care to patients. They respond to

emergency and non-emergency calls. To find out if there is a cost associated with your call, please visit the [Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care](#) website.

Fire Department

Fire services are provided by each municipality. When you dial 911 in your city or town, the fire department closest to you will be dispatched to respond to your emergency. To find out more about your local fire station or fire and emergency services, visit your city or town's website.

Emergency Social Services

Emergency Social Services (ESS) plans for and coordinates the delivery of services to address immediate and short-term needs of residents who have been impacted by an emergency or disaster within York Region. Generally, these

short-term services are needed to preserve the well-being of residents and to help them get back on their feet. ESS services are most commonly provided in a reception centre — a safe place where people can go to receive food, clothing, emergency and transitional housing and information about the emergency. To learn more, visit the [Emergency Social Services](#) page and the [Emergency Preparedness Guide](#).

The Canadian Red Cross offers an extensive network of programs and services to serve local communities in times of need. Discover which programs and services are provided in your area by visiting the [Red Cross](#) website.

Hospitals

There are world-class hospitals in York Region:

- [Southlake Regional Health Centre](#)
- [Oak Valley Health](#)
- [Mackenzie Health Hospital \(Richmond Hill and Cortelluci Vaughan sites\)](#)





9. Having Fun

York Region is a wonderful place to live, work and play. The area is home to a wide range of recreational and cultural venues and activities, historic sites and many other attractions waiting to be explored. Visit [Experience York Region](#), the official website for tourism in York Region, for more information.

Outdoor Activities

York Region is rich in natural heritage areas that offer opportunities for walking, hiking, cycling, and other outdoor activities that are a part of a healthy and active lifestyle. York Region's conservation areas, [cycling trails](#) and [forests](#) offer many different ways to enjoy the outdoors and connect with our natural surroundings.

Dining

York Region has a variety of delicious restaurants. There are also many wineries and breweries to quench your thirst.

York Region is responsible for inspecting establishments that provide food for public consumption. Persons who regularly handle food can take advantage of the [YorkSafe Food Handler Certificate Program](#). Residents can also learn about food safety at home. Visit York Region's [Food Safety](#) page for more information.

Arts and Culture

York Region is home to renowned art galleries and museums. Whether it's the [McMichael Canadian Art Collection](#), the [Varley Art Gallery](#) or the [Georgina Arts Centre and Gallery](#) – there is plenty for arts and culture lovers to experience.



For exciting festivals and events, the York Region Festival Trail runs throughout most of the year and features live music, food and lots of family fun.

To see a live theatre performance, you can visit one of York Region's quality theatres.

Family Fun

See a list of upcoming events and festivals in York Region at [Experience York Region](#).

York Region has many places for family fun, such as the [Richmond Hill Wave Pool](#), [Canada's Wonderland](#) and the [Recreational Outdoor Campus](#) (ROC).

Your local municipality may also have playgrounds, sports fields, water parks, and natural parks that you can visit free of charge. Visit your [local municipality](#) website for more information.



Public Libraries

If you haven't already, check out your local public library. There are nine different library systems in York Region, one for each municipality:

- Aurora Public Library
- East Gwillimbury Public Library
- Georgina Public Library
- King Township Public Library
- Markham Public Library
- Newmarket Public Library
- Richmond Hill Public Library
- Vaughan Public Library
- Whitchurch Stouffville Public Library

Visit a library closest to you, where you can access materials in print, digital and audio-visual formats, computers and Wi-Fi, free programs, community services, and more. Library cards are available at no cost to anyone living, working, or studying in York Region. Many libraries offer collections in different languages, English language learning, technology assistance, and a variety of things you can borrow. Libraries are a free resource. The books, IT services, Internet access and services are available to everyone at no charge.

York Region libraries are welcoming to all. Visit your local public library today to learn more about how they can help you and your family.





10. Municipal Government

There are three levels of government in Canada: federal, provincial and municipal.

Municipal governments are based in a city, town, township or district (a municipality). Local or lower tier municipal governments are responsible for areas such as libraries, parks, community water systems, roadways and parking.

York Region

York Region is a two-tier municipality. The Regional Municipality of York delivers specific [services](#) for the lower-tier municipalities: [Aurora](#), [East Gwillimbury](#), [Georgina](#), [King](#), [Markham](#), [Newmarket](#), [Richmond Hill](#), [Vaughan](#) and [Whitchurch-Stouffville](#).

Each of the Region's nine local cities and towns provides local services for residents. To learn more, please visit their [websites](#) of City Halls for helpful information about each local community.

York Regional Council has a Regional Chair and CEO, as well as Regional Councillors from each local municipality. Visit the [Regional Committees and Council](#) page for more information.

Elections

Voting is a process that allows individuals to have their say in how our system works. Canadians vote in federal, provincial and municipal elections.

Federal and provincial elections are held every four years. Eligible voters have a few options for how and where to vote. For information on federal elections, please visit the [Elections Canada](#) website. For information on provincial elections, please visit the [Elections Ontario](#) website.

Contact your [local municipality](#) for information related to municipal elections, including voter lists, voting locations and local election accessibility plans.



Questions?

For general inquiries, please contact York Region's [Access York](#) contact centre.

Access York is the Region's corporate contact centre, providing information, referral, intake, and reception and counter services.

Translation Services

After dialing the Access York phone number, press '0', say the language you speak, and an interpreter will join the call.

Access York

Hours of operation:

Monday to Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 1-877-464-9675

TTY: 1-866-512-6228
(for deaf and hard of hearing)

accessyork@york.ca

In-Person Service

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, York Region facilities are currently closed to the public.

Mail Inquiries

York Region Administrative Centre
Attention: (Please indicate department, service or contact name)
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1



211 Central

Findhelp Information Services operates 211, which helps residents connect to the complete range of government and community-based health and social services available in their communities.

If you want to talk to someone for information or referrals, dial 211. It is free, confidential and available in up to 170 languages. Calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

211central.ca

Search online

You can use the Internet to look for work, find housing, find new or used items, translate simple sentences, find 'how-to' information and meet new people. Most of the links in this guide help you connect to governments or organizations funded by the government.

Many coffee shops also have Wi-fi for customers. If you don't have a computer, tablet, smartphone, or internet connection you can use a public computer at your local library or a Welcome Centre for free.

