



RESOURCE GUIDE

for Newcomers to Sarnia-Lambton

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Settlement Resources

Main Service Providers

Key service providers in the region include the **YMCA of Southwestern Ontario – Sarnia-Lambton** (<https://www.ymcaswo.ca/programs/education-enrichment/new-canada>), which serves as a central hub for newcomer settlement services. The YMCA offers comprehensive intake and needs assessments, orientation to Canadian society, housing and employment referrals, and community connections. Through partnerships with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the YMCA also delivers targeted programming such as Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and information sessions related to applying for citizenship, healthcare, and rights and responsibilities in Canada.

Similar services are delivered to French-speaking newcomers through the **Centre Communautaire Francophone Sarnia-Lambton**, a member of the French Canadian Association of Ontario (ACFO) network (<https://ccfsarnia.com/bienvenue-au-centre-communautairefrancophone-de-sarnia-lambton/>). Newcomers can access these services as well in either English or French through **Collège Boréal's** Sarnia site (<https://collegeboreal.ca/services/services-a-lacommunaute/services-en-immigration-et-integration/>).

Temporary residents, such as those who have arrived under the Temporary Foreign Worker and Seasonal Agricultural Worker programs, as well as refugee claimants, are eligible for some assistance through these settlement agencies. The provincially funded YMCA-operated newcomer settlement program (<https://www.ymcaswo.ca/newcomer-settlement>) and orientation for international students (<https://www.ymcaswo.ca/orientation-international-students>) that is operated in partnership with Lambton College are more limited than the programs available to permanent residents. For instance, they do not provide needs and assets assessments or assistance with the development of settlement plans. However, they can provide information about preparing for Immigration and Refugee Board hearings, assistance with navigating the transit system or finding housing.

Temporary residents can also access similar supports online through services such as the **FCJ Refugee Centre** (<https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/>), which provides online orientation sessions about hearings and appeals for refugees, as well as resources about Canada's refugee process, the country's safe third country agreement, changes to sponsorship, and how to prepare for a hearing and an appeal. The centre also provides information about how to apply for legal aid and the work permit applications process and assists temporary foreign workers in urgent need. The organization's website is offered in English, French, and Spanish (FCJ Refugee Centre 2025).

Other Programs

Specific supports for refugees and protected persons are available through targeted programming within the YMCA, including assistance with permanent residency applications, access to mental health services, and transitional housing referrals. Programs are offered in multiple languages where possible, and interpretation services are available to reduce language barriers.

Employment-related settlement services are also a core part of the sector. Organizations such as Lambton College and local employment agencies work with newcomers to provide job search training, credential recognition assistance, workplace communication training, and employer engagement activities. (See sections Employment and Entrepreneurship and Education and Workforce Preparation.)

Community engagement and social integration are facilitated through programs such as conversation circles, volunteer mentorship programs, cross-cultural events, and youth newcomer programs that aim to reduce isolation and foster social inclusion. Faith-based organizations and ethno-cultural associations also provide informal settlement support and community connections (County of Lambton n.d.).



Housing Resources

Housing Supports and Resources Tailored to Immigrants and Temporary Residents

Several supports exist in the region that are focused on helping residents obtain, build, and maintain housing. Some specifically support newcomers. Lambton County, for instance, provides a webpage that provides newcomers with information on community housing, rent supplements, and financial assistance for acquiring homes. On its website (liveinLambton.ca), the county's Department of Social Planning and Children's Services also lists different settlement services that support newcomers seeking or maintaining housing. The Newcomer Settlement Program, which the **YMCA Learning and Career Centre** operates, assists with finding housing.

Some housing supports are also available through the **Centre Communautaire Francophone Sarnia-Lambton** and **Collège Boréal**, such as guidance on affordable housing resources and English-to-French translation services.

International Student-Specific Housing Resources and Supports

On its website, **Lambton College** provides several resources for international students seeking accommodations, including links to short-term housing at local hotels, mobile apps for those seeking shared accommodation, information about its college residence, and several rental websites (Lambton College 2025). This listing also provides useful information about how to avoid rental scams.

Vision Nursing Home (<https://www.vision74.com/>), an integrated facility that provides a variety of supportive housing primarily to older adults, provides students with accommodation at affordable rates and part-time work. The facility includes a 146-bed not-for-profit long-term care operation, a rest home, and independent or semi-independent apartments. As of 2022, there was space for 11 students in the program. Most students work as personal support workers, in housekeeping, or in the facility's kitchen (Morden 2022).

The Canada Homestay Network (<https://canadahomestaynetwork.ca/>) is a not-for-profit organization that matches students with hosts. The organization charges students a fee for the service and pays hosts an allowance. The program ensures accommodations provide, at minimum, a furnished room complete with a bed, clean coverings, private storage, study space and window, as well as access to a shared bathroom. The program offers a variety of meal arrangements from full board (three meals a day) to kitchen access for students to cook their own meals.

Rental Housing

Rental Apps and Social Media

Two relatively new housing rental apps assist in the affordable housing search by matching people to potential roommates or hosts. Developed in Ontario and aimed at the student market,

SpacesShared (<https://www.spacesshared.ca/home>) matches students with older adult homeowners with a spare bedroom. Applicants must pass a criminal background check. Those searching for accommodation can use the service for free. Hosts share a small percentage of the rent with the app.

Happipad (<https://happipad.com/>), another Canadian-developed app, works on a similar principle to SpacesShared but targets a more general market. Rental agreements can range from a month to a year. The service also conducts background checks and requires identity verification.

More conventional rental apps include **Places4Students.com**, **4Rent.ca**, **Rentseeker**, **Rentboard**, **Skyline Living**, **View.ca**, **Execurooms.ca**, **Kijiji** and **AirBnB**. Rentals are also often advertised through social media sites. "For Rent Sarnia and Lambton County" is a private group on Facebook that includes rental listings for the region and other supportive services, such as moving and cleaning services. **Realtor.ca Multiple Listings Service** also provides some rental listings.

Affordable Housing

The County of Lambton Housing Services administers a variety of housing and financial support programs, of which most require income disclosures. It owns and operates 16 apartments and four family sites that provide rent-geared-to-income housing.

The county also offers a portable housing benefit that recipients apply to a list of privately owned buildings. The buildings where the benefit can be spent are located throughout the county, although most are in Sarnia. Many of those located outside of Sarnia are limited to seniors.

Another alternative is the county-administered Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit, which supports low-income households and vulnerable individuals. This benefit is portable and issued monthly to those who qualify, but its acceptance disqualifies recipients from other housing programs, such as the wait list for social housing and other rent-geared-to-income programs. Special needs housing is another program available. It requires a referral from a doctor or a support agency.

Other agencies provide housing services to migrants who qualify for a specific support. The **Lambton-Kent chapter of the Canadian Mental Health Association** (<https://lambtonkent.cmha.ca/programs-services/supportive-housing-services/>), for instance, provides a rent supplement for people who live with mental illness and are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness and are receiving clinical case management.

Some housing co-operatives provide subsidized housing to people on low incomes. **Co-operative housing** is not-for-profit and reinvests any surplus income into its housing. Those who live in these complexes become voting members of the co-operative that owns the facility. These services are all located in Sarnia and include the **Alexander Mackenzie Housing Co-operative** (<https://alexmaccoop.wixsite.com/home>), **Faethorne Place Co-op** (faethorneplacecoop@gmail.com) and **St Clair Meadows Co-op** (stclairmeadows@gmail.com).

Supportive Housing

The March of Dimes operates a 10-bedroom facility that offers round-the-clock supportive living to people with complex care needs. **Standing Oaks** (<https://www.marchofdimes.ca/enca/programs/acsh/nphl/Pages/Standing-Oaks.aspx>) is located in Sarnia and includes equipment such as ceiling lifts, automatic door openers, and a hydrobath for physiotherapy. The services in the facility are free, and rent is geared to income. Service is in English, and acceptance is based on an assessment.

Community Living Sarnia-Lambton (<https://www.communitylivingsarnia.org/>) provides people with developmental and/or physical disabilities with a range of supports to live independently in the community. These range from independent apartments to shared apartments or townhouses with regular daily and weekly supports. The service maintains three houses that can accommodate up to four people. Service is in English. It offers services for a fee.

Lambton County Developmental Services (<https://lcdspetrolia.ca/>) provides accommodation and support for people with developmental disabilities. The Petrolia-based service also offers a host family service that enables adults eligible for the program to live in a family home environment with non-family caregivers. Host families provide day-to-day care and work with the organization to ensure service users meet their goals. The organization also maintains direct care staff.

St. Francis Advocates (<https://eriestclairhealthline.ca/mobile/displayservice.aspx?id=41165>) in Arkona operates 13 supported group living homes for adults with developmental disabilities in the broader southwestern Ontario region, including Sarnia-Lambton. The program also provides supported independent living.

Emergency and Temporary Housing

The Inn of the Good Shepherd (<https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/programs/#lodge>) operates an emergency shelter with 25 beds and two private family rooms. The service provides two meals, computer access, laundry, showers, lockers, phone access, and assistance with finding housing.

The charity also offers five transitional housing spaces to help those designated "hard to house" acquire the skills to maintain permanent housing. Units are furnished and have access to a laundry facility. A transitional support worker also supports this housing by assisting those accepted into the program in setting goals and working toward them. Program participants must also attend programs that build budgeting, cooking, and stress management skills.

The Inn of the Good Shepherd additionally offers short-term co-ed shelter for young adults aged 16 to 21 through its Haven program (<https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/programs/#haven>). The Haven can house up to nine people—four females and five males—for 30 to 60 days. The program assists residents in securing a source of income and stable housing. Intake can take place day or night. Facilities come with access to laundry and a shared phone. Those who enter the program must follow certain conditions, such as being willing to apply for Ontario Works social assistance.

River City Vineyard (<https://rcv.org/>), a church and community centre in Sarnia, operates a 65-bed shelter service of which 15 beds are designated for women. The service comes with meals and access to showers and clothing.

Women's Interval Home of Sarnia Lambton (<https://www.womensintervalhome.com/>) operates a 17-bed emergency shelter for women — cisgender or transgender, and regardless of sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religious beliefs — and their dependents seeking refuge from unsafe situations. The shelter is available at all hours throughout the week. It does not accommodate pets but can work with others in the community to find a solution to their care. Services are in English or French; interpreters for other languages are available on request. The shelter is located in Sarnia, though it also offers supports to rural areas, including transitional and housing support and transportation, through partnerships with community health centres in Forest, Petrolia, and Watford.

Ohana Landing is a transitional housing facility for homeless or precariously housed youth aged 16 to 24. The Sarnia space offers affordable and furnished apartments for up to four years and support services from Rebound Sarnia-Lambton (Kula 2019). Youth eligible for the program obtain referrals through the county's social services (Morden 2024).

In winter, Lambton County, in partnership with the Inn of the Good Shepherd, operates an **Out of the Cold overflow program** that provides up to 35 shelter beds and basic needs such as food. The county's public health arm also operates warming and cooling centres during bouts of extreme weather at several locations throughout the region. Many of these centres are located in libraries. These centres operate during the locations' regular business hours and are intended to provide residents with some relief from the weather, but do not provide overnight assistance.

Home Ownership

House Sale Listings

Realtor.ca Multiple Listings Service carries the most comprehensive residential sales listings for the Sarnia-Lambton region. The Canadian Real Estate Association operates the service.

Homeowner Financial Support Programs

Under its homeownership down payment assistance program, Lambton County offers eligible households a 20-year interest-free, forgivable loan for a 10% down payment to a new or resale home. Permanent residents and refugee claimants can qualify as long as their gross household income is less than \$99,000 and their household assets are less than \$100,000. The program is intended to help households that rent transition to home ownership and comes with several conditions. For instance, the loan remains interest and payment free as long as the recipient remains in the home and the home remains the sole primary residence. The county awards applicants on a first-come, first-served basis, and applicants must qualify for a mortgage from a "recognized financial institution".

Permanent residents and refugee claimants who are homeowners are also among those eligible to be considered for the county's **Lambton Renovates program** that provides a 10-year forgivable, interest-free loan to a maximum of \$20,000 for home repairs. It also issues a grant of up to \$5,000 for accessibility improvements. Both are one-time loans. Applications are processed first-come, first-served, but there is some flexibility for some repairs as determined by the program administrator. The program requires applicants to meet certain conditions: the home must be owned (not rented), and the householder's sole and principal residence throughout the term of the loan. The home must be over five years old and have a maximum market value of \$325,000. There are limits on the maximum income that can qualify for support. Work has to meet the program's eligibility requirements and cannot start before the loan is approved. Eligible repairs include roof replacements, basement waterproofing, mould removal, electrical, plumbing, and furnace repairs.

Another county homeowner support program is the **Additional Dwelling Unit Incentive program**, which provides homeowners who qualify with an interest-free, payment-free loan forgiven at a rate of 6.6% of the lowest cost of up to \$25,000 or 75% of the project's total cost to add a dwelling unit in their home. The unit must be made available to a tenant with an income of less than \$99,000.

Habitat for Humanity also provides financial support to participants in its program and is recruiting families for builds in Sarnia, Petrolia, and Forest. Applicants must meet a variety of conditions to be eligible. These include living in "unsafe, unhealthy, unaffordable, unsuitable, or inaccessible" housing, having a stable income of at least \$22,000, and possessing a willingness to work on the construction project (Habitat for Humanity n.d.-a). Those accepted into the program can expect a 20-year mortgage with zero interest and zero down payment. In February, the charity planned on developing five units in 2025 — one single-family home and a four-plex — in Forest. A five-unit townhouse complex in Sarnia is planned for 2026 (Kula 2025).

Housing Resiliency Programs

The Inn of the Good Shepherd (<https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/programs/#rent>) administers several programs to help Lambton residents with housing-related expenses, such as rent or utility arrears. Individuals who receive social assistance, such as Ontario Works or ODSP, must first contact their case worker to apply for funding through the municipality residency benefit. An application for rent and utility assistance can be found on The Inn of the Good Shepherd's website: <https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/rent-utility-assistance-form/> (It is not clear whether this form provides funds additional to those available in the programs listed directly below or from these programs.)

The Low-income Energy Assistance Program, (<https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/programs/#rent>) administered through United Way Simcoe-Muskoka, provides up to \$500 to eligible applicants who have fallen behind on Enbridge Gas or Hydro One payments. Those interested in applying can call 1-855-487-4327 for assistance or to request an application form.

The Ontario Electricity Support Program: (<https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/programs/#rent>) provides eligible lower-income households with a reduction in their electricity bills. The credit is calculated based on the number of people who live in the home and the combined household income.

Ontario Works (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/applying-for-assistance.aspx>) provides financial assistance for housing and other necessities to Lambton residents who qualify for the support. Lambton County administers the program. People can apply online or by phone.

Ontario residents can also apply for emergency assistance from the province under certain conditions, such as when experiencing an eviction or safety concerns, or having emergency refugee status. Individual eligible participants can receive \$733 a month for food and shelter, and more if there are children. The support can last up to 48 days and be renewed depending on circumstances. Online applications are available to those who can satisfy identification and contact requirements, and, otherwise, from the local Ontario Works office.

NeighbourLink Sarnia-Lambton (<https://neighbourlinksarnia.org/>) is a non-denominational service staffed by volunteers and supported by 18 churches in the Sarnia-Lambton region. The call-in service can provide financial assistance with utility cut-offs, rent evictions, and other housing-related issues. The service may refer a caller to another agency better positioned to support or offer a direct connection with a member church. Those wishing to use the service can also find an online contact form. The service is free of charge but is not an emergency service and may sometimes need one to two weeks to provide a service.

The Salvation Army (<https://eriestclairhealthline.ca/displayService.aspx?id=174373>) in Sarnia provides some emergency financial assistance to people unable to pay their rent or utility bills. The support is open to individuals and families in need in the Sarnia-Lambton region. Service is offered in English.

St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank & Help Centre on Davis Street in Sarnia provides financial assistance to individuals and families behind in rent and utilities payments in an effort to prevent homelessness. The centre assists those living in Sarnia and the surrounding area. The office is open Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Service is delivered in English. (<https://eriestclairhealthline.ca/displayService.aspx?id=185433>)

Community Navigators

The Housing and Homelessness Resource Centre

(<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/residentservices/housing-homelessness-resource-centre.aspx>) provides culturally appropriate supports and can connect individuals to housing supports such as Community Legal Assistance and programs that assist with housing for special needs, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association. The centre operates during regular daytime hours and shares space with the Out of the Cold shelter overflow program.

Community support workers can be accessed through the **County of Lambton's housing services** (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/community-support-workers.aspx>). These workers advocate for tenants and can assist with maintaining housing, preventing eviction, establishing a financial budget, mediating tenant issues and complaints, and addressing issues of hoarding and other concerns. They can also provide home visits to ensure the health and safety of clients. These services serve a general population with many different needs and are, therefore, not explicitly focused on migrants, though they are available to them.

Ontario Works (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/emergency-assistance.aspx>) also provides a crisis worker for those experiencing homelessness at its Sarnia office at 162 Lochiel St., from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during weekdays, and through its telephone line, 519344-2062 ext. 2329.

The North Lambton Community Health Centre, which maintains offices in Forest, Sarnia, Kettle Point, and Watford, offers a community navigator service that provides housing supports, such as assisting with applications and paperwork to connect clients with financial assistance. The program does not specifically target immigrants, but through its migrant worker program, the centre does offer translation services. (<https://www.nlchc.com/services/community-navigators-housing-supports/> and <https://www.nlchc.com/services/migrant-worker-project/>)

The Inn of the Good Shepherd (<https://www.theinnsarnia.ca/programs/>) also provides a rent and utility community outreach worker who can assist residents by connecting them with local resources.

The Women's Interval Home of Sarnia Lambton (<https://www.womensintervalhome.com/whowe-are>) offers a transitional and housing support program to help women entering or leaving shelter and to those in the community needing support. The program involves risk assessment, safety planning, and assistance in obtaining housing and legal supports and in filling out Ontario Works applications. Services are in English or French, and interpreters for other languages are available on request. The service is based in Sarnia, but it provides transitional and housing support to rural residents through partnerships with Forest, Petrolia, and Watford community health centers.

Sarnia Lambton Rebound (<https://www.reboundonline.com/programs/housing-support-worker>) provides a housing support worker to help youth obtain permanent housing, connect with community services and resources, and build independent living skills. The support worker develops transition planning and coordinates the resources to support youth aged 16 to 24.

The Family Counselling Centre offers community navigation services to connect older adults with programs, supports, and services available in Lambton County. The service operates seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 519-336-3000 or 1-888-347-8737, or online through the Age Friendly Sarnia Lambton website (<https://agefriendlysarnialambton.ca/Connect>).

The John Howard Society of Sarnia Lambton (<https://johnhoward.on.ca/sarnialambton/services/housingsupport/>) provides intensive case management and assistance in locating housing for those who are chronically homeless or precariously housed. The program helps people develop the skills to achieve housing stability.

Legal Supports

Community Legal Assistance Sarnia (<https://www.claslegalclinic.ca/>) is a non-profit legal clinic that provides free services to residents in Sarnia-Lambton on low incomes. Those on programs such as Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program, or those with active Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claims, immediately qualify for the service. While the charge is free, users may be asked to contribute towards fees related to obtaining documents to support a legal action, such as court filings or doctor's fees. The service provides tenants and coop partners with support for legal issues involving evictions, harassment, rent subsidy cut-offs, and repairs.

The Steps to Justice website (<https://stepstojustice.ca/legal-topic/housing-law/>) provides in-depth information to Ontario residents about housing legalities including a tenant's rights in a shared housing arrangement, explanations about rent-geared to income housing, paying rent, obligations concerning repairs and maintenance, human rights in terms of housing, legal protocols for moving out, eviction, tenant applications to the Landlord and Tenant Board, and how to obtain help in housing law. This resource also provides free online interviews to help people fill out Landlord and Tenant Board forms needed for a legal action concerning housing. The objective of these forms includes asking for money from a landlord that is owed to the renter, compelling landlords to make repairs, and compiling the information needed to object to an eviction. **Community Legal Education Ontario/Education juridique communautaire Ontario** operates the website. Its services are available in English and French.



Employment Resources

Employment Resources

Support for the search for jobs and for employment are available through the **Lambton County Orientation and Referral Settlement Services** program (<https://liveinlambton.ca/settlementservices/>). This program is operated through the YMCA Learning and Career Centre and the French Canadian Association of Ontario London-Sarnia Regional Council. To be eligible for the program, people must be permanent residents, convention refugees, or be in Canada and have approval in principle to become a permanent resident.

The Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board (<https://www.slwdb.org/wisl/>) maintains a number of job-search resources for those looking for employment. These include information about working in the region, an online job board, an online library that provides information about the different industry groups and an interactive map showing where these are located in the region and information about different careers. It also maintains a monthly newsletter. The Board's website also offers a tip sheet for employers about equity, diversity and inclusion. The Board also maintains a number of employer resources including a monthly newsletter, current statistics on the local labour force, industry reports and links to provincial training programs.

Several employment service providers exist in the region including YMCA Learning and Career Centre, **Lambton College Community Employment Services**, **Goodwill Career Centre** and **The WorkPlace Group**.

The YMCA Learning and Career Centre (<https://www.ymcaswo.ca/employment-programs>) operates a job search workshop program that provides pre-employment training to migrants from across the province. For this program, participants must complete an employment assessment and have a high intermediate (5/6) Canadian Level Benchmark for English. Participants must also be a permanent resident, convention refugee or a live-in-caregiver. The YMCA Career Centre offers programs designed to served groups with different needs, including a program for newcomer youth.

Many of the employment service organizations also provide services to employers. **The Workplace Group** (<https://theworkplacegroup.ca/>), for instance, provides recruitment assistance services for a fee such as developing job descriptions and assistance with implementing job fairs. Similarly **Express Professionals** (<https://www.expresspros.ca/ca-ontario-sarnia>) and **Agilus Work Solutions** (<https://www.agilus.ca/>) help candidates and employers connect. Express specializes in sectors such as light industrial, skilled trades and office services; Agilus focuses on connecting workers with specialized and management skills with employers.

The Sarnia **Goodwill Career Centre** (<https://www.goodwillindustries.ca/sarnia-career-centre/>) offers free services and programs to help participants explore options and build job-search strategies, build resumes, prepare for job interviews or explore training to upgrade skills. The service features the options of virtual and remote services or in-person appointments and a drop-in resource centre. Among the centre's resources is a list of job postings as well as job search directories and guides.

Similarly, the Lambton College **Community Employment Services** offers a range of services depending on the job seeker's situation. These include skills and experience assessment; information about occupations, careers, the local labour market, employment and training; access to hiring incentives and training; advice about community services; access to job boards, and computers to search for jobs and free printing and faxing. (<https://www.lambtoncollege.ca/training-career-advancement/employees-job-seekers/servicesfor-employees-job-seekers>)

The Lambton Works Centre (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/our-resourcecentre.aspx>), located in Sarnia, provides free of charge employment and community resource advisors who can provide support for accessing computers or other related technology, job search supports, including interview preparation, employment workshops and connections to employment opportunities, local labour market information and referrals to community supports. One-on-one services are available. The centre also provides free of charge services to employers, such as developing employee training, assistance with locating government programs for employers and a job fair.

LEADS Employment Services (<https://leadsservices.com/>) specializes in delivering support to people with disabilities and/or experience other barriers to employment in the region. The not-for-profit serves the Southwestern Ontario region but maintains an office in Sarnia. For those searching for work, LEADS provides employment planning, job placement, and job coaching and follow-up support. The agency also offer a job posting service for potential employers, will pre-screen candidates and provide follow-up support.

The Magnet platform (<https://poweredbymagnet.ca/>) that can be accessed through the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce links jobseekers and recruiters with specific communities and provides resources for jobseekers to obtain some skills training. Communities can be larger communities seeking workers or those of potential workers with some sort of shared experience, such as being newcomers.

The Ontario government provides a list of job search resources that include job profiles, a search tool to find in-demand jobs in a certain location. It also provides several other resources for both job seekers and employers on its **Employment Ontario** page. (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/employment-ontario>)

Ontario Employment Assistance Services is a referral service to a number of employment programs to support people with disabilities in the preparation of the job search and to find a job (<https://eopg.labour.gov.on.ca/en/programs/ontario-employment-assistance-services/>). In 2023-2024, the program served 356 people. Of these 12% were newcomers, 8% were racialized and 13% were categorized as “other” (Sarnia-Lambton Workforce Development Board).

Community Living Sarnia-Lambton's employment programs assist people with disabilities in finding work, including building interview skills, resumes, connecting to employers and counselling (<https://www.communitylivingsarnia.org/services/employment-support>). The programs also provide job coaching for onsite support. The organization offers three streams of programs: two employment transition programs, one for permanent placements and another for summer placements, and a workshop series that includes field trips to help people with disabilities formulate their approach to the job hunt.

Lambton County Developmental Services (<https://lcdspetrolia.ca/>) also connects people with disabilities to employment agencies, provides on-site job coaching and ongoing communication support for workers who are disabled and their employers.

The Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership (<https://www.sarnialambton.on.ca/work-here>) offers a wide range of resources for both those seeking employment and those seeking employees. Explore Talent Sarnia-Lambton (<https://exploretalentsl.com/>), for instance, offers several links to local job boards, information about the different employment sectors and the region's top employers, an opportunity for job seekers to create profiles and add video resumes. The Partnership also offers an online apprenticeship job match and information about the Regional Economic Development Through Immigration Pilot.

One of the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership's newest offerings, The Sarnia-Lambton Newcomer Hub (<https://www.sarnialambton.on.ca/newcomerhub>), provides a variety of supports to newcomers. The recently launched initiative that is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada includes tools, connections and activities to assist newcomers in finding jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities and build their career networks. The program offers resume building and skills development, small group events geared to help participants to connect with local employers, assistance with developing a business proposal, mentorship, and peer learning.

The Société Économique de l'Ontario (SÉO): Workforce Development helps French-speaking and bilingual newcomers in their job search, supports employer recruitment, and supports newcomers establishing new businesses (<https://www.seo-ont.ca/aide-emploi-nouveauxarrivants>). In terms of employment assistance, the organization helps newcomers by assessing their skills, helping to develop an action plan, assisting with developing a resume and contact letter, preparing newcomers for job interviews, and supplying advice and training about the provincial labour market.

The SÉO holds networking sessions with employers, maintains job listings from its partners such as Collège Boréal (thus outside of the region) and an online job search platform. As well, it organizes virtual job fairs and helps French-speaking and bilingual racialized female newcomers to find work that matches their professional interest and skills.

The SÉO also provides training, networking and entrepreneurial resources as well as funding support. Initiatives include access to the organization's entrepreneurship team that can provide templates for business planning, financial forecasting and market research, help search for new business opportunities, funding, and financing.

For those interested in starting a business, the SÉO operates a virtual business incubator that offers training in French. The program also has specialized groups, including Entrepreneurship for newcomers, new-agriculture, and Black women entrepreneurs.

The Service Canada Centre (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-socialdevelopment/corporate/portfolio/service-canada.html>) in Sarnia provides career planning assistance and counselling, student and youth employment services, and access to the service's online Job Bank, a listings services of employment opportunities that are both local and national. The centre and the national online website provide information about federal benefits and pensions as well as application forms for a social insurance number. The service also provides information about employees and safety such as labour standards and occupational health and safety standards as well as records of employment, information about the labour market, and wage subsidies.

Entrepreneurial Resources

The Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce (<https://www.slchamber.ca/>) provides a wide range of services and supports for area businesses including a directory of its member businesses, access to private health and dental benefits plans, networking opportunities and representing local business interests and issues to different levels of government.

The Lambton Business Collaborative is developing a website directory of local businesses and is currently asking businesses to register. It has also developed a video series to feature local business and communities such as the Kinetoscope Theatre in Forest, Growling Gater in Grand Bend and Roeland Plant Farms, a greenhouse in Forest. Familiarization tours of local businesses are also offered. The Lambton Business Collaborative through the municipality also offers workshop and networking sessions and job fairs. An economic development newsletter that provides local business with information about workshops, tariffs, local resources and businesses rounds out its offerings.

InvestSarnia (<https://www.investsarnia.ca/>) is an online tool that provides those interested in business opportunities in the region with a wealth of background information including funding resources, information on sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing, land available for development, and more. Programs on which it has information include the Ontario Life Sciences Scale-Up Fund that grants for-profit entities that have been in operation for two or more years and employ between five and 500 full-time equivalent employees up to \$2.5 million to cover 33% of a project's costs. The service also lists local events, such as Sarnia-Lambton B2B Resource Nights and information about how to navigate tariffs, and other helpful information.

The Sarnia Community Improvement Plan (<https://www.sarnia.ca/community-improvementplan/>) offers a number of financial incentive programs intended to be used on building and property improvements. These include building facade, landscape and property improvement grants as well as a renovation grant for the city's downtown and Mitton Village areas. A planning and building fee reduction program is also offered that offers up to 50% reduction on the costs of planning applications and building permits for qualifying properties. The city also offers an affordable rental housing community improvement plan that offers qualifying projects a host of incentives such as tax increment equivalent grants of up to 10 years for eligible costs and a planning and a building permit fee grant.

Community Futures Lambton (<https://cflambton.com/community-futures-grants/>) offers an annual grant program to support projects within the community. Grants range from \$500 to \$5,000 and are made available to qualifying charitable organizations, registered charities, nonprofit corporations, service clubs, social service organizations and educational institutions.

Farmlink.net is an online tool that links those interested in agricultural business with opportunities to lease or acquire land from retiring farmers. The resource is nation-wide and currently has three such opportunities in the Sarnia-Lambton region listed on its interactive map. It also provides listings of individuals who are seeking farms. The website also lists a number of resources for those planning a farm business. Service is in English.

Farmsatwork.ca is a similar online tool that is specific to Ontario properties. It too provides links to resources.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture offers a guide in English and French in how to start a farm in Ontario (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/publication-61-starting-farm-ontario>). More generally, the province also offers a website with information in French and English for how to start a business in Ontario (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/business/start>).

The National Farmers Union—Ontario Branch (<https://nfuontario.ca/projects-and-research/landaccess/>) maintains an email list for those wanting to access land opportunities and attend related workshops. On its website, it also provides a guide to support new and landless farmers to access land.

Employment Resources for Migrant Workers

The Sarnia- Lambton Local Immigration Partnership and the **Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers** have developed an orientation booklet for temporary workers. The book is in English and describes workers' rights, employment contracts and employment benefits and several other points of community information, such as how to open a bank account, send a letter, and community maps (Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership & Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers 2015).

Worker Support Services at the Neighbourhood Organization (<https://tno-toronto.org/>) provides people in the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program with a number of programs free of charge to prepare them for their stay in Canada, including skills training and coaching as well as employment-related services. The province-wide program is offered in different languages, including English, Spanish and Patois, and the services are confidential. The organization also provides a number of online videos, guides and brochures, many in English and Spanish, including provincial information about employment standards and workers' rights, and how to access a social insurance number.

The organization also provides support services for businesses that employ temporary foreign workers, including workshops on health and safety, workplace mental health support and assistance with immigration programs and services. The program can be contacted by phone at 647-296-0161 and email at jrajasekar@tno-toronto.org. The program contains satellite offices in Oshawa and Simcoe.



Education Resources

Sarnia-Lambton offers a range of services to support immigrant and temporary resident integration into educational and community settings. **The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)** program, administered by the YMCA, provides federally funded English language instruction to adult immigrants. This program is designed to support language development for everyday communication, employment, and community engagement.

The Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) is a standardized English proficiency test used for immigration and professional certification purposes. The closest CELPIP test centre for residents of Sarnia-Lambton is located at the YMCA in Windsor, which may pose logistical challenges for individuals without reliable transportation.

The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program is available in the region and provides support to immigrant students and families as they transition into the Canadian education system. SWIS workers offer orientation, translation support, and facilitate connections between families and schools.

Lambton College and two of the four local school boards also offer international student programs. **Lambton College's international student program** provides a variety of programs including a post-graduation work permit program in disciplines such as advanced project management in information technology and agri-business management. The college does require students to supply proof of meeting its English-language requirements. The college also offers community orientation classes for students as well as other supports through its website.
(<https://www.lambtoncollege.ca/international/sarnia/study-in-sarnia>)

The Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) (<https://www.lkdsb.net/>) accepts international students for one semester, multiple semesters, or a full academic year. Students are placed with local families through the Canada Homestay Network, and promotional materials indicate participation from students originating in Europe, South America, and East Asia. Publicly available details on eligibility, grade levels, and program content are limited.

The St. Clair District School Board (<https://www.st-clair.net/>) operates one high school in Sarnia and several elementary schools throughout the Sarnia-Lambton region.

French-Language Schools

French-language schools in Ontario have adopted strategies intended to facilitate the academic success and well-being of newcomer students by supporting those learning French as a second language and helping them to make the transition into French-language community and society. **The Programme d'appui aux nouveaux arrivants (PANA)** helps to smooth the transition for those who may have experienced interruptions in their education, have little formal education experience or are adjusting to very different experiences of classroom education. The program not only builds culturally responsive elements into the curriculum but also ensures that educators are trained to support these students.

Similar to the LKDSB, **Conseil scolaire Viamonde** (<https://csviamonde.ca/>), the French-language public school board, offers a similar international program for students in Grades 9–12. Students may enroll for one semester or a full year but are required to secure accommodation through family members or an independent homestay organization. The school board operates two schools in Sarnia: **Les Rapides Elementary School** up to Grade 6 (including **La Ribambelle** French-speaking pre-school centre); and **Franco-Jeunesse Secondary School** from Grades 7 to 12. The high school offers Specialist High Skills Major programs in nutrition, healing and well-being, the environment, information and communications technology and sports.

The province's French-language Catholic school board, **Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence** (<https://www.cscprovidence.ca/>), operates two schools in Sarnia. **École élémentaire catholique Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin** is an elementary school up to Grade 6; the secondary school is **École secondaire catholique Saint Francis Xavier**. It runs from Grades 9 through 12. The location also contains a middle school for Grades 7 and 8.

Online Information on Navigating Public Education

Settlement.org provides guides in Arabic, French and English that discuss the structure of both elementary and secondary education in Ontario and provide tips on how to help children adjust to the new school environment, and how parents can become engaged in the educational experience. (<https://settlement.org/ontario/education/>)



Health Resources

Primary and Preventive Health Services

Sarnia-Lambton offers a range of primary and preventive health services designed to support the well-being of its residents, including immigrants and temporary residents. **The North Lambton Community Health Centre** (<https://www.nlchc.com/>) has offices in Forest, Sarnia, Watford and Kettle & Stony Point First Nation and offers a range of health promotion and wellness programs.

The Central Lambton Family Health Team (<https://centrallambtonfamilyhealthteam.com/>) provides primary care that includes the prevention of disease and its management and health promotion. Among the programs and services it offers are smoking cessation, memory assessment, foot care, nutrition counselling, social work counselling, immunizations and the management or monitoring of conditions such as diabetes and blood clotting or blood pressure issues. The team maintains offices in Petrolia, Wyoming and Alvinston. The team also operates a Rural Access to Care Centre in Wyoming, an urgent care centre provided by a nurse practitioner. People do not have to be an existing patient of the team in order to obtain care, but they must call one day ahead or on the same day to book an appointment.

With operations based in two main locations in Sarnia, the **Rapids Family Health Team** (<https://www.rapidsfhteam.ca/>) provides primary care and other services to local residents. Along with delivering primary services, the centre offers occupational therapy, cognitive screening, respiratory assessment and a congestive heart failure support program. It also offers diabetes education and management and counselling with a registered dietician, social workers, psychologists and a pharmacist. The team provides medical language translation services at all of its locations. The team also operates an after-hours clinic and an access to care centre for acute and episodic conditions such as urinary tract infections, ear aches or rashes. The Access to Care centre requires patients to call ahead to book an appointment. The Well Woman Clinic at the Rapids Family Health Team offers women's health services such as cervical screening and clinical breast exams.

Twin Bridges (www.twinbridgesnplc.com) is a nurse practitioner-led clinic in Sarnia that provides primary care services and other programs, such as women's wellness classes, including a post natal exercise program, fitness and nutrition classes (including for children) and grief support programs.

Grand Bend Area Community Health Centre (<https://gbachc.ca/>), located in Grand Bend, Lambton Shores, and with a branch in Hensall in Huron County, provides primary health care to patients in the Lambton County communities of Grand Bend and Port Franks. The centre also provides walk-in services to local and seasonal residents on Saturday mornings. The service offers a number of free programs, including fitness and exercise programs, community education programs delivered either in-person at its centre or online regarding issues such as dementia, smoking cessation, addiction and childhood anxiety. It also provides social work services, diabetes education, rehabilitation therapy and dietician services. Some programs and services are delivered through home visits in a number of communities including Grand Bend, Port Franks, Thedford and Petrolia.

There are walk-in medical clinics in the region that offer in-person or virtual care. These include **Good Doctors Sarnia** (<https://gooddoctors.ca/site/good-doctors-sarnia/>), which maintains a virtual care clinic with a nurse on site; **Wiltshire Pharmacy walk-in clinic** (<https://wiltshirepharmacy.com/walk-in-clinic/>) in Sarnia for issues such as infections, prescription renewals and minor burns; and the **MD Connected Walk-in Clinic** (<https://www.mdconnected.ca/>), in Sarnia, that also offers virtual care ranging from general consultations and men's and women's health to (for a fee) sick notes and forms.

The MobileCare Sarnia-Lambton (<https://sl.mobilecareclinic.ca/>) initiative operates a mobile clinic that travels to various municipalities, enhancing access to primary care, mental health, and addiction services, particularly for individuals facing transportation barriers. This service is instrumental in reaching underserved populations, including migrants residing in remote areas.

The County of Lambton's Emergency Medical Services Department operates a community paramedic program (<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/health-care-professionals/partnerships/>) that assists individuals who frequently use emergency services in living independently. Under the program, paramedics conduct home visits to do activities such as physical assessments, home safety scans and medication reviews. They can also perform some diagnostics and treatments. Referrals to the program are done by primary care practitioners, Ontario Health at Home, and EMS. Paramedics also operate community wellness clinics throughout the region.

For seniors, the **Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program** (<https://seniors.accerta.ca/>) provides free routine dental services to eligible individuals aged 65 and over who are low-income. This program is accessible through Lambton Public Health and affiliated dental providers.

Immunization and Child Health Programs

Lambton Public Health administers several immunization programs, including school-based clinics for students in Grades 7 and 8, as well as catch-up clinics for students from junior kindergarten to Grade 12. These services are crucial for maintaining public health standards and are available to all students, regardless of immigration status (<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/events/clinics/immunization/>)

Additionally, Lambton Public Health provides various child health programs, such as the **Healthy Smiles Ontario** program (<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/events/clinics/dental/>), which offers preventive dental services to children under 17 from low-income families. Visual care for individuals under 19 is covered through the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). **The Ontario Student Nutrition Program**, in collaboration with the Victoria Order of Nurses (<https://osnp.ca/>), ensures that students receive healthy meals and snacks, supporting overall child health and development.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Sexual health services are available through **Lambton Public Health**, offering counseling, birth control options, pregnancy testing, and sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment. Free condoms and safer sex supplies are also provided. Clinic hours are primarily during standard working hours, which may limit accessibility for some individuals.

Infant and Pregnancy Care

Lambton Public Health also provides several programs to support new mothers and their babies (<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/events/clinics/family-health-line/>). These range from prenatal classes and home visits under its **Healthy Babies Healthy Children program**, post-partum supports in conjunction with St. Clair Child and Youth, and the Family Counselling Centre and drop-in sessions.

Midwifery Services of Lambton Kent (<https://sarniamidwives.com/>) provides care in labour, delivery and up to six weeks in the post partum which is covered by OHIP. The service also offers a post-partum and newborn care program to those who may not have a doctor or pediatrician or do not have OHIP. People can access the program through a health care provider or self-referral.

Lambton Public Health offers prenatal classes

(<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/classes/prenatal/>) and several other individuals, groups and community organizations in the region offer classes as well (<https://sarniamidwives.com/prenatal-classes>).

Bluewater Health's Maternal Infant Child Program (<https://www.bluewaterhealth.ca/types-ofcare/maternal-infant-child-program>) offers a variety of services including an orientation clinic to help expecting mothers plan their visit to the hospital for delivery and what to expect. The program's website provides links to other resources, such as **Omama** (<https://www.omama.com/en/index.asp>), a mobile app that provides evidence-based information about pregnancy, birth and early parenting, and the NLCHC's **First Five Program** (<https://www.nlchc.com/first-five-program/>) for families that do not have a primary care provider.

The Pregnancy Options & Support Centre (<https://www.pregnancycentre.org>) offers counselling for women who are experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. The non-profit organization maintains a pro-life perspective, so it is advisable for those considering abortion to look elsewhere for support (Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada). The centre maintains an extensive list of resources on its website for the newly expecting and provides services such as assistance with urine-based pregnancy tests and guidance with adoption and parenting.

Worker Health

Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (<https://www.ohcow.on.ca/workerperspective/>) maintains a clinic in Point Edward that services southwestern Ontario west of London and St. Thomas from Lake Erie to Lake Huron. The clinic provides a number of free services to workers in general. In-person visits are by appointment.

The clinic is not-for-profit and funded by the Prevention Office of the Ontario Ministry of Labour. Services include a program that provides guidance and direction on dealing with workplace situations for specific worker groups, including migrant farm workers. This educational outreach also provides basic information on the operations of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), health and safety committees, the Internal Responsibility System, and Anti-Reprisal Protection. Information about these topics can also be found on the organization's website.

The service also fields inquiries about health and safety issues in the workplace, examines workplaces to identify any health and safety problems, and makes recommendations for groups of workers. The organization will also provide health and safety education to groups.

Mental Health and Addiction Services

Mental health services in Sarnia-Lambton are delivered through various organizations (<https://eriestclairhealthline.ca/listCategories.aspx?id=10027>). **Bluewater Health** offers both inpatient and outpatient mental health and addiction services, including programs for withdrawal management and community addictions support (<https://www.bluewaterhealth.ca/programsservices/mental-health-addiction-services>)

The Canadian Mental Health Association Lambton-Kent (<https://lambtonkent.cmha.ca/>) provides community-based mental health services, including crisis intervention, counseling, and outreach programs across multiple locations in the region.

For children and youth, **St. Clair Child & Youth Services** (<https://www.stclairchild.ca/>) offers a continuum of mental health services, including prevention, assessment, treatment, and crisis intervention. Services are available in both English and French, enhancing accessibility for Francophone immigrants and temporary residents.

The Community Health Integrated Care (CHIC) Team (<https://www.omssa.com/lambton-countyintegrated-team/>), a collaborative initiative involving Lambton EMS and other partners, delivers mobile crisis response services to individuals experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. This team plays a vital role in reaching vulnerable populations who may face barriers to accessing traditional healthcare services.

Navigation

Ontario Health at Home (<https://ontariohealthathome.ca>) coordinates home-based and community care, including managing long-term care placement and supportive housing. Among the services the provincial agency offers are home supports to assist recovery after a hospital stay, finding a primary care practitioner, locating community services to maintain independence, and coordinating end-of-life care. People can self-refer themselves to the service, which is delivered in French and English. The agency also maintains the Healthline.ca that lists local resources. On its main website, Ontario Health at Home offers a link to Google Translate for those who do not speak English or French (instructions, however, are in English).

The Family Counselling Centre (<https://agefriendlysarnialambton.ca/Connect>) supplies system navigation services via email and telephone for healthcare, mental health and addictions, family and caregiver supports and many other sectors. According to the Sarnia-Lambton Ontario Health Team's annual report, these navigators respond to roughly 27 to 35 calls per month (S-L OHT 2024). The service is available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week. Residents can also obtain information about a variety of health-related services through both the **Erie St. Clair healthline.ca** (<https://eriestclairhealthline.ca/>) and the Sarnia-Lambton Ontario Health Team operated **Age-Friendly Sarnia-Lambton** (<https://agefriendlysarnialambton.ca/>). While presented in English, Age-Friendly Sarnia-Lambton does offer a search for accessing services in other languages in its equity, diversity and inclusion services section.

Staff at the **Sarnia library** can show residents how to navigate resources such as the Age-Friendly website and the Connect My Health portal. The library also provides a soundproof meeting space with a phone, internet connection and a device for those who need access to a private space for a meeting or a virtual appointment (S-L OHT 2024).

Health811 is a free and confidential telephone service that people can call 24 hours a day to get health advice, find health services or obtain localized information about healthcare services (S-L OHT 2024).

Let's Go Home is a program that helps people who have been discharged from hospital to access home and community services for up to six weeks after leaving the hospital (S-L OHT 2024).

Language and Cultural Accessibility

Efforts to enhance language accessibility include the **Accès Franco-Santé** program (<https://ccfsarnia.com/acces-franco-sante/>), a multi-agency hub providing health and social services in French. This initiative aims to improve service navigation and coordination for Francophone residents.

For migrant workers speaking languages other than English, the **Migrant Worker Project** by NLCHC (<https://www.nlchc.com/services/migrant-worker-project/>) offers translation services and transportation assistance to facilitate access to healthcare and settlement services.

The **Sarnia-Lambton Ontario Health Team** also provides equity, diversity and inclusion training to its partners.



Childcare Resources

Regulated Childcare

The OneList Lambton hosted on the County of Lambton website provides a centralized window for applying for childcare in the Sarnia-Lambton region (https://onehsn.com/lambton/ux_2_0). The website subscribes to Google Translate, allowing applicants to review the application in the language of their choice.

The application process involves three sections — gathering information about the parent or guardian, gathering information about the children who will receive the service, and referral to childcare programs that match the family's needs and the generation of applications to these programs.

Applicants can expect to fill out a variety of details about their child including primary language (English, French, Other) and school board (of which there are four: Lambton Kent District School Board, Conseil scolaire Viamonde, Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence, and St. Clair Catholic District School Board). Parents can identify if their child has Indigenous or Francophone ancestry or has special health or development needs.

The system also provides links to information about children's services and the local childcare sector. (The links in the system, however, appear to be out of date or broken.) The County provides information about daycares on its website, including an interactive map to help parents narrow their search for appropriate services.

Unregulated Childcare

Families can arrange unregulated care for a maximum of five children who are 13 years old and under. According to the **Finding Quality Child Care** website (see the section regarding this website below), provincial legislation requires unregulated caregivers to "include their own children in the number of children under four years. No more than two children under two years (including the caregiver's children) may be cared for" (Childcare Resource and Research Unit).

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

EarlyON Child and Family Centres (<https://earlyonlambton.ca/>) are situated throughout the region and offer a place where parents or caregivers and children under their care aged 0 to 6 can play and learn together. These centres offer a range of availability. Centres in rural communities such as Alvinston and Corunna are open for partial days one to three days a week; in larger communities such as Forest, Sarnia, and Petrolia, they are available throughout the week and on Saturdays. Mobile programs serve smaller communities such as Bright's Grove, Brigden, Grand Bend, and Thedford with one-day-a-week service. These centres encourage learning through play and parents' or caregivers' involvement in children's development. The centres also offer a chance for families and children to socialize with others and to access other professionals, such as public health.

Pathways Health Centre for Children

Through its **SmartStart Hub** Services, Pathways Health Centre for Children (<https://www.pathwayscentre.org/>) connects families with local developmental services and supports for children and youth. The hub acts as a centralized point of entry for families to access these services. It defines developmental services and supports as those needed to address concerns about a child's mobility, ability to perform routine daily activities, communicate their needs, or participate in activities. The service offers intake and coordination of services and explores the family's concerns. Its website offers play and learn activities, a tool to help parents identify concerns about their child's development, links to information about autism and speech language milestones, and other programs.

Pathways also hosts a complimentary service, **No Wrong Door**, that equips its partner agencies and childcare professionals with information and methods to direct families to organizations that can help address their needs (<https://www.pathwayscentre.org/no-wrong-door/>). The program supplies its partners with an intake form that it completes with the parents and provides protocols on how to explain the services available in the County. Parents or guardians must express consent for the referral service by signing the form in person or by providing oral consent over the phone. Participating agencies can refer directly to a resource, such as EarlyON Child and Family Centres or a library, or they can send the form to Pathways, which can determine the next steps.

Financial Resources

Childcare Subsidy, Lambton County

The County offers a **childcare subsidy** based on family income and the family's need for childcare. Reasons for needing childcare include working, attending school or a training program, or having a child with special needs (https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/residentservices/child-care-subsidy.aspx?_mid_=117264).

The share of the cost is based on the family's net income as reported on line 236 from the current income tax notice of assessment. Along with providing an explanation of the subsidy online, the County provides a calculator (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/child-care-subsidy-calculator.aspx>) that helps parents determine how much funding they will be eligible for.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs who attend regulated childcare can be eligible for a subsidy administered by the County (See "Childcare Subsidy, Lambton County" above).

Youth Recreation and Sports Program Support

Families that receive social assistance from the County, such as Ontario Works, subsidized childcare, or rent-geared-to-income housing, are eligible to receive support for enrolling their children in recreation and sport activities. The County administers the program. (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/subsidies-and-supports.aspx>)

Navigation Services

Settlement agencies such as the **YMCA of Southwestern Ontario—Sarnia-Lambton YMCA Jerry McCaw Family Centre** or the **French Canadian Association of Ontario London-Sarnia Regional Council (ACFO)** and **Collège Boréal** offer some support in helping newcomers connect with the childcare system.

Online Resources

Social Media

Several social media sites support parents looking for childcare resources. The "**Sarnia Mom Group**," for instance, is a private group on Facebook with 2,500 members. "Mommy Market Sarnia," also on Facebook, is a place where members can search for goods and services.

Finding Quality Child Care Website

This website (www.findingqualitychildcare.ca), developed by the **Childcare Resource and Research Unit**, a non-profit policy institute in Toronto, provides general information for parents on how to find appropriate childcare for their children. The website contains a helpful discussion of what quality means in terms of service delivery and how children and parents perceive it. It advises when to begin looking for childcare and describes how the system is designed. The website also defines the difference between regulated and unregulated childcare.



Transportation Resources

Public Transit

Sarnia

Best served with public transportation is Sarnia, which maintains a full roster of public transit services that include both express and regular bus service and a single loop community bus that allows users to avoid transfers and supports those with mobility issues. The city also operates **Care-A-Van**, a door-to-door public transportation service for people who require vehicles with lifts. (<https://www.sarnia.ca/living-here/getting-around/sarnia-transit/>)

A regular fare costs \$3 but the city offers a wide range of seasonal passes for high school and college students, including those enrolled in adult education programs, seniors, families and members of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. The city also offers a special, yearlong relief pass for refugees who have relocated to the city which are available by application. People with low incomes may also qualify for discounted passes and tickets that are available through the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Tickets and passes are available online, at city hall and three other commercial outlets.

Northern Lambton

Two regional, inter-community bus services connect Sarnia with the northern portion of the region and to London. **The Huron Shores Area Transit** (<https://huronshoresareatransit.ca/>) provides service between Sarnia and Grand Bend and stops at several shoreline communities. Three trips a day in each direction make up the daily service, which charges \$10 or less per trip, depending on the distance. Smart cards are available for monthly passes and can be obtained online and at some local stores. Users can also borrow passes for up to five days from libraries to try the service out. Buses are accessible, and children under 12 ride for free when accompanied by an adult.

The Inter-Community Bus Service (<https://www.strathroy-caradoc.ca/living-in-strathroycaradoc/transit/>) connects Sarnia to Strathroy Caradoc and London. The service provides three round trips a day Monday to Friday and two on Saturday and Sunday. Seven regular stops make up the service. Two of these are in Sarnia, three in Middlesex County and two in London. The service also operates a third “flex stop” at the VIA train station in Sarnia. Fares for a one-way trip range from \$5 to \$20, depending on the distance travelled. The service requires users to book ahead, and its operators are looking at adding more stops, monthly passes, and online purchasing. Currently, seats must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance.

Southern Lambton

The Huron Shores Area Transit (<https://huronshoresareatransit.ca/>) recently introduced service to the community of Plympton-Wyoming as part of its regular inter-community route through the region. Otherwise, public service is non-existent in the rural and small urban areas south of Hwy 402.

Private Transportation

Rail

VIA Rail (<https://www.viarail.ca/en>) provides service between Sarnia, Wyoming, and London, with one trip a day in each direction. A one-way regular fare from Sarnia to London costs \$26 and a roundtrip fare starts at \$52.

Bus

FlixBus (<https://www.flixbus.ca/>) offers regular service between Sarnia, London and, Toronto and, in partnership with Greyhound, between Sarnia and Ann Arbor, Michigan at a frequency of one trip a day, six days a week.

Taxis and Shuttles

Several taxi services operate within Sarnia and the adjacent communities of Point Edward and Brights Grove. Selections can be found in online directories such as Yelp.ca and Yellowpages.ca. Many of these services operate only within the urban area but some do offer services to a broader geographic area.

Grace Taxi (<https://www.gracetaxis.ca/>) and airport shuttle, for instance, serves the northern end of the region, and, along with providing shuttle services to bus and train stations in Sarnia and London, it provides transportation for people on Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program, as well as employee transportation.

Walker's Shuttle Service (<https://www.facebook.com/people/Walkers-shuttleservice/61575096307219/>), launched in 2025, offers service throughout the Sarnia-Lambton region for set rates. These rates range from \$3 to travel from Sarnia to Point Edward and \$41 between Sarnia and Alvinston to \$70 to London or Windsor.

Petrolia Taxi (<https://canada.chamberofcommerce.com/business-directory/ontario/petrolia/taxiservice/841626-petrolia-taxi>) offers local transportation and individual inter-community transportation for set fees.

Wyoming-based **Prestige Specialty Car Service** (<https://www.prestigelimousine.ca/>), another airport shuttle service, also provides transportation to medical appointments and other destinations for special occasions. It offers rate packages for seniors and corporations.

Uber, (<https://www.uber.com/ca/en/ride/>) an online-booking ride service, also offers service throughout the Sarnia-Lambton region.

Employer Travel Support Commitments Under Temporary Foreign Workers Programs

The federal Seasonal Agricultural Worker program requires employers to pay for the round-trip transportation for the worker between their place of work and their home country. The program allows the employer to recoup some of these costs up to a maximum amount specified in the contract through payroll deductions. For instance, the 2025 contract for seasonal workers from the Caribbean allows employers to deduct up to \$494.00 from workers' pay to cover airport costs from Kingston, Jamaica to Toronto. The contract also stipulates that the employer must provide the worker with round-trip transportation once a week to do shopping and provide transportation to and from medical appointments (Employment and Social Development Canada). The program covers workers from Mexico and the Caribbean.

Similar conditions apply for temporary foreign workers hired through the agricultural stream (similar to the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program but not limited to specific seasons). No such requirements exist under the more general low-wage temporary worker stream, although employers are required to pay for the round-trip between workers' home countries and their place of work. In this case, employers cannot recoup these costs from their employees. No travel requirements exist under the high-wage temporary worker stream, which can include higher level agricultural positions (Employment and Social Development Canada)

Community Services

The Sarnia-Lambton Branch of the **Canadian Red Cross** provides transportation within Sarnia for the frail, elderly and disabled for a set fee. It is available to people who cannot use public or private services and will transport clients to medical appointments, grocery stores, social outings including day programs. The service operates within Sarnia, Point Edward and Bright's Grove. It can also provide service to clients who need to obtain service from locations in the London-Windsor corridor. Those wishing to use the service must be able to get in and out of a van on their own and be over the age of 17 years. Requirements for bookings range from two days in advance for within the Sarnia area and five days in advance for out of the region (<https://eriestclairhealthline.ca/displayService.aspx?id=40261>)

The North Lambton Community Health Centre (<https://www.nlchc.com/services/migrantworker-project/>) offers temporary residents working in agriculture rides to its programs free of charge. It also provides information and instruction about bicycle and road safety.

Lambton Elderly Outreach (<https://www.lambtonelderlyoutreach.org/>), based in Wyoming, provides transportation within a 160 km radius from its office at Reeces Corners on Oil Heritage Road south of Hwy 402. Available to adults 60 years or older or adults with disabilities, the service provides non-emergency transportation to local and long-distance medical appointments and for activities such as grocery shopping and banking. The service features volunteer drivers and a paid staff driver and has accessible vans. The service also provides non-urgent stretcher van transportation between home and hospital. Fees vary and users apply via an intake form.

The Four Counties Health Services Community Support Services offers transportation to locations centred around Rodney, in Elgin County, to residents in southeastern Lambton County. This service provides non-emergency transportation to local appointments and activities and costs \$8 one way or \$16 return, although it will also consider special arrangements. It serves older adults, people with disabilities and anyone requiring transportation to a medical appointment. Service is wheelchair accessible. Users must call ahead to book service. (<https://www.southwesthealthline.ca/displayService.aspx?id=11127>)

Micro Loans for Vehicle Purchases

Since the mid-2010s, the county has offered micro loans for vehicle purchases through its Circles program (<https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/circles/circles.aspx>) to qualifying sole-support parents, including migrants, who are enrolled in post-secondary studies or employed. The loans range from about \$3,000 to \$4,000. Applicants do not have to be on social support programs to qualify. Circles is a community initiative intended to help people identify the barriers they must overcome to break out of poverty and provide supports and a community network to help them develop strategies to overcome these hurdles.

Rideshares

A number of social media sites and apps offer opportunities for people to find rides to other locations. Some of these are specific, such as **Lambton-Sarnia Rideshare**. This private members' group on Facebook connects students throughout the county to share transportation. Other notices may appear on more generalized pages, such as Lambton Buy, Sell, Trade, Free on Facebook.

Poparide (<https://www.poparide.com/>) is an online Canadian carpooling service. The service matches drivers with passengers for carpooling. Passengers pay a fee for carpooling. A ride to London from Sarnia, for instance, may cost \$16 or more. The service requires all users to provide identifying information, including cell phone numbers and pictures of themselves. It also allows passengers to review drivers.