

Support For Your Family

International Student Advising



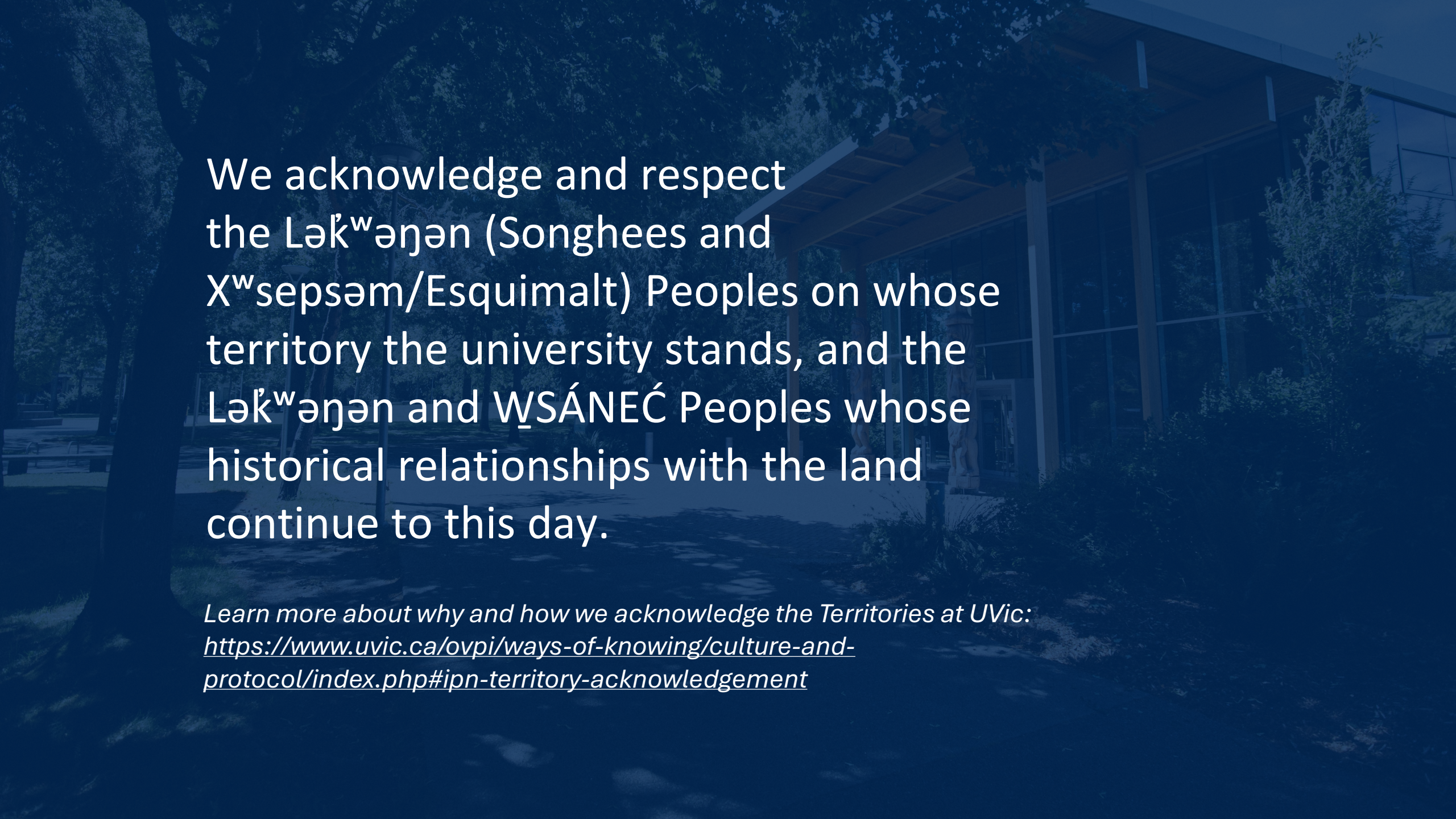
University
of Victoria

International Centre
for Students

Disclaimer

- This session is intended to provide general information.
- The information in this session is up to date as of November 14, 2025.
Information may change without notice.





We acknowledge and respect
the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and
Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose
territory the university stands, and the
Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose
historical relationships with the land
continue to this day.

*Learn more about why and how we acknowledge the Territories at UVic:
<https://www.uvic.ca/ovpi/ways-of-knowing/culture-and-protocol/index.php#ipn-territory-acknowledgement>*

Agenda

- Immigration
- Housing for your family
- Schools and daycares
- Staying safe
- Resources for your family



Immigration



Definition of family members

- As per IRCC's [Glossary](#), family members refer to an applicant's closest relatives, in the context of an application to IRCC. It is defined as a **spouse or common-law partner, dependent children, and their dependent children.**



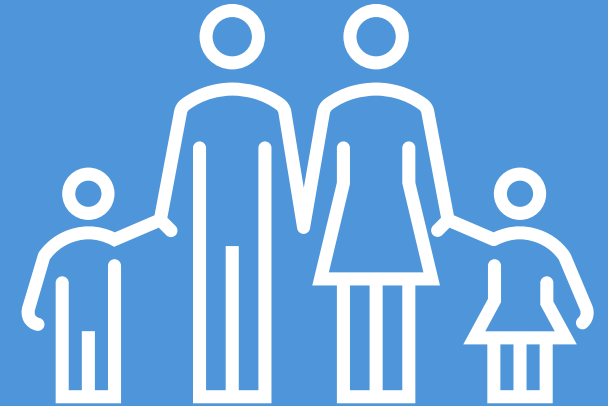
Immigration documents for accompanying family members

Spouse/common-law partner

- *eTA or TRV*
- *Spousal Open Work Permit (SOWP)* (if meeting the eligibility requirements)

Dependent children

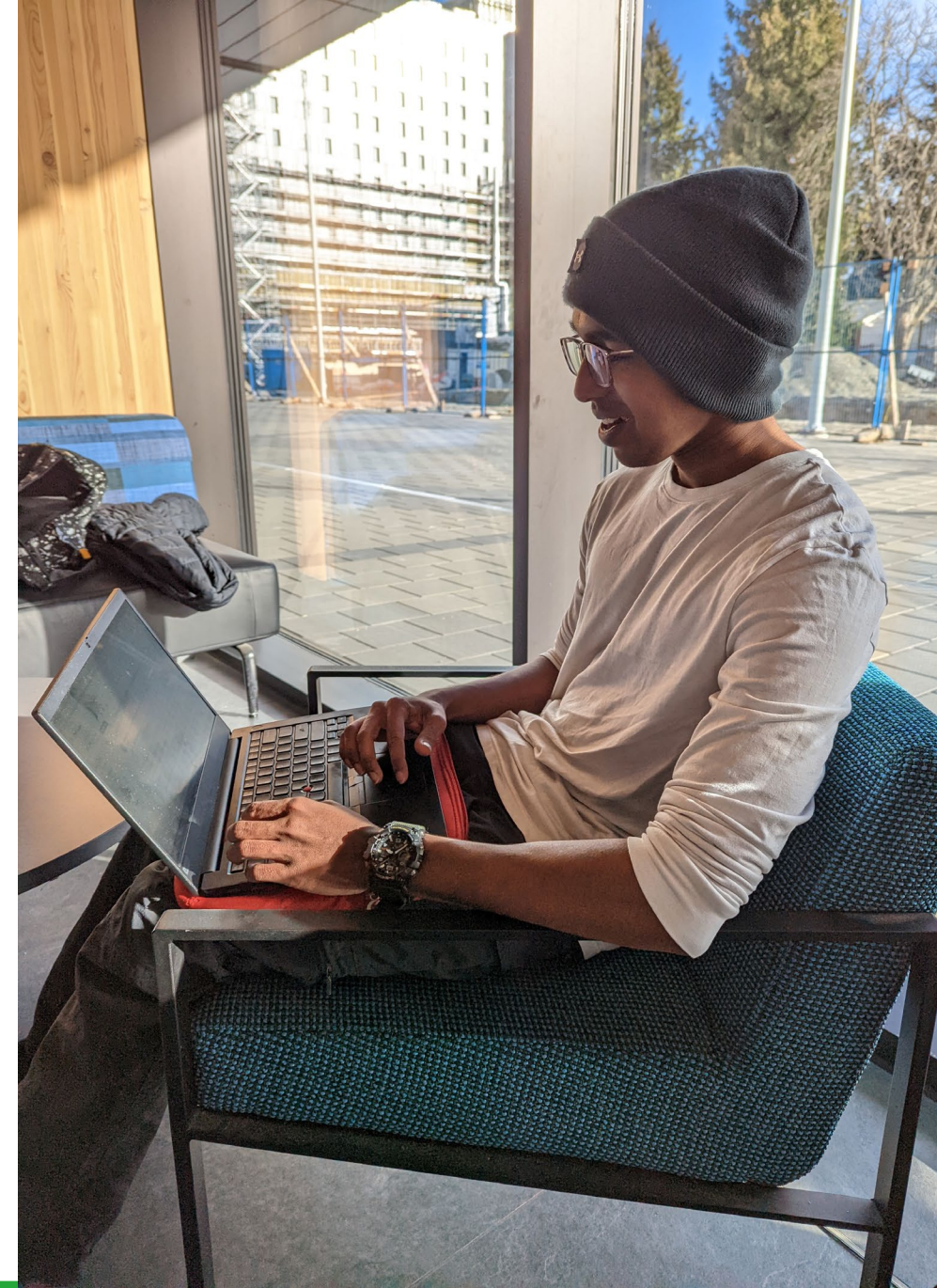
- *eTA or TRV*
- *Study permit*
 - *If your dependent children are at school age, you should apply for a study permit for them with your study permit*



Definition of accompanying family: [IRCC website](#)

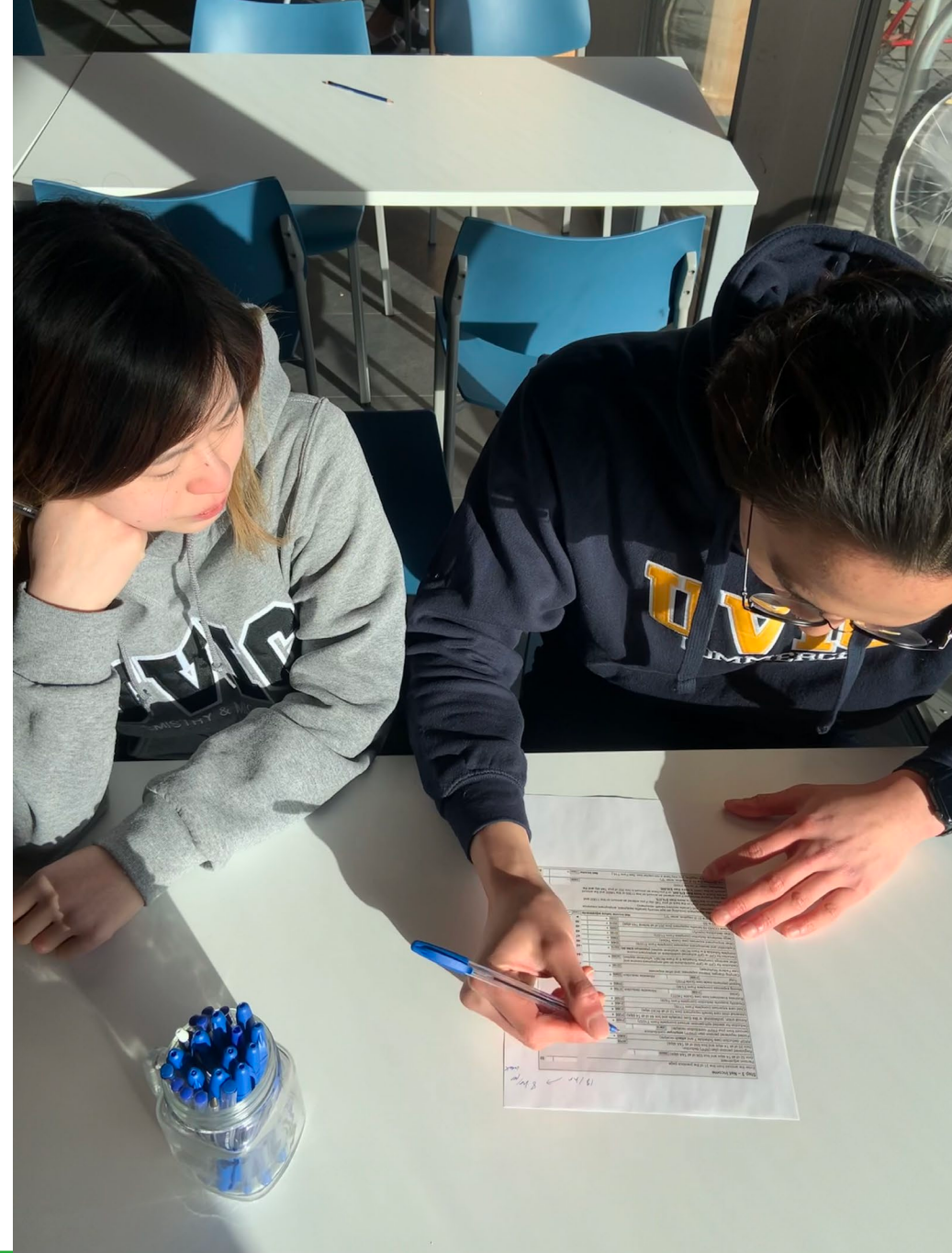
Spousal open work permit eligibility

- Starting January 21, 2025, your spouse or common-law partner may be eligible for an open work permit if you have a valid study permit for a PGWP eligible program **and** you're either
 - studying in a **master's degree** program of 16 months or longer
 - studying in a **doctoral degree** program
 - participating in an eligible program, **or**
 - studying in select professional and eligible programs as identified by IRCC



Maintaining your documents

- Permits can not be issued beyond your passport validity
- Always keep your and your accompanying family member's documents valid
- Extend your permits 6-8 months prior to their expiry
- If you apply to extend your permits before they expire, you will have maintained status while waiting for the new permits



A child's drawing on white paper, framed by a white border. The drawing depicts a family scene. On the left is a two-story house with a red roof, grey walls, and a red door. Two windows with blue curtains are visible. Smoke is drawn as wavy lines coming from a chimney on the left. To the right of the house is a large orange sun with radiating lines. Two blue clouds are in the sky. Further right are three green trees with red fruit. In the foreground, four children are holding hands in a line. From left to right: a girl with blonde pigtails in a purple dress, a small child in a green striped shirt, a girl with blonde pigtails in an orange dress, and a boy with orange hair in a grey shirt and blue pants. Two small green bushes are at the bottom left. Several colored pencils (yellow, red, green, blue, orange) are visible on the left side of the drawing.

Housing for Your Family

On-campus housing

What is UVic Family Housing?

- Family housing is available for families with or without children.
- Units are rented to eligible UVic students on a yearly basis, up to a maximum stay of six years
- Apartments and townhouses between 1- to 4-bedroom units

When to apply?

- Apply as soon as you have your NetLink ID
- Long waitlist, spaces are not guaranteed



Off-campus housing

Where do I find information on off-campus housing?

- ICS [Off-Campus Housing](#) resource page is a great place to start

Things to consider when searching:

- No ideal place, it all depends on your family needs:
 - e.g. building type, neighbours and neighbourhood, nearby amenities, etc
- Some landlords will limit the number of people living in the rental unit
- A landlord cannot refuse to rent to you because you have children
- Families are protected against discrimination – [Residential Tenancy Branch \(RTB\)](#)



Schools and Daycares



BC school system

Public schools:

Your minor children may be eligible for free public school if:

- Your study or work permit is valid for at least one year
- You are enrolled at UVic

Private and independent schools:

- Charge tuition fees
- Specialized program available, e.g. International Baccalaureate (IB)



Grades

- A child must be 5 years old by December 31 of the school year
- Grade placements are determined by the child's birth year
- To learn more about BC's educational system, visit [LearnLiveBC](#)



School districts

- Identify your school district before enrolling your child
- Determined by the **municipality** of your residential address in BC
- Most students living on or near campus will be in Greater Victoria School District SD 61
- Other districts:
 - Sooke School District SD 62
 - Saanich School District SD 63



Catchments

Catchment model:

Your children will be assigned a school based on your address at time of registration.

Check your catchment school:

- Greater Victoria School District SD 61
- Sooke School District SD 62
- Saanich School District SD 63



School registration

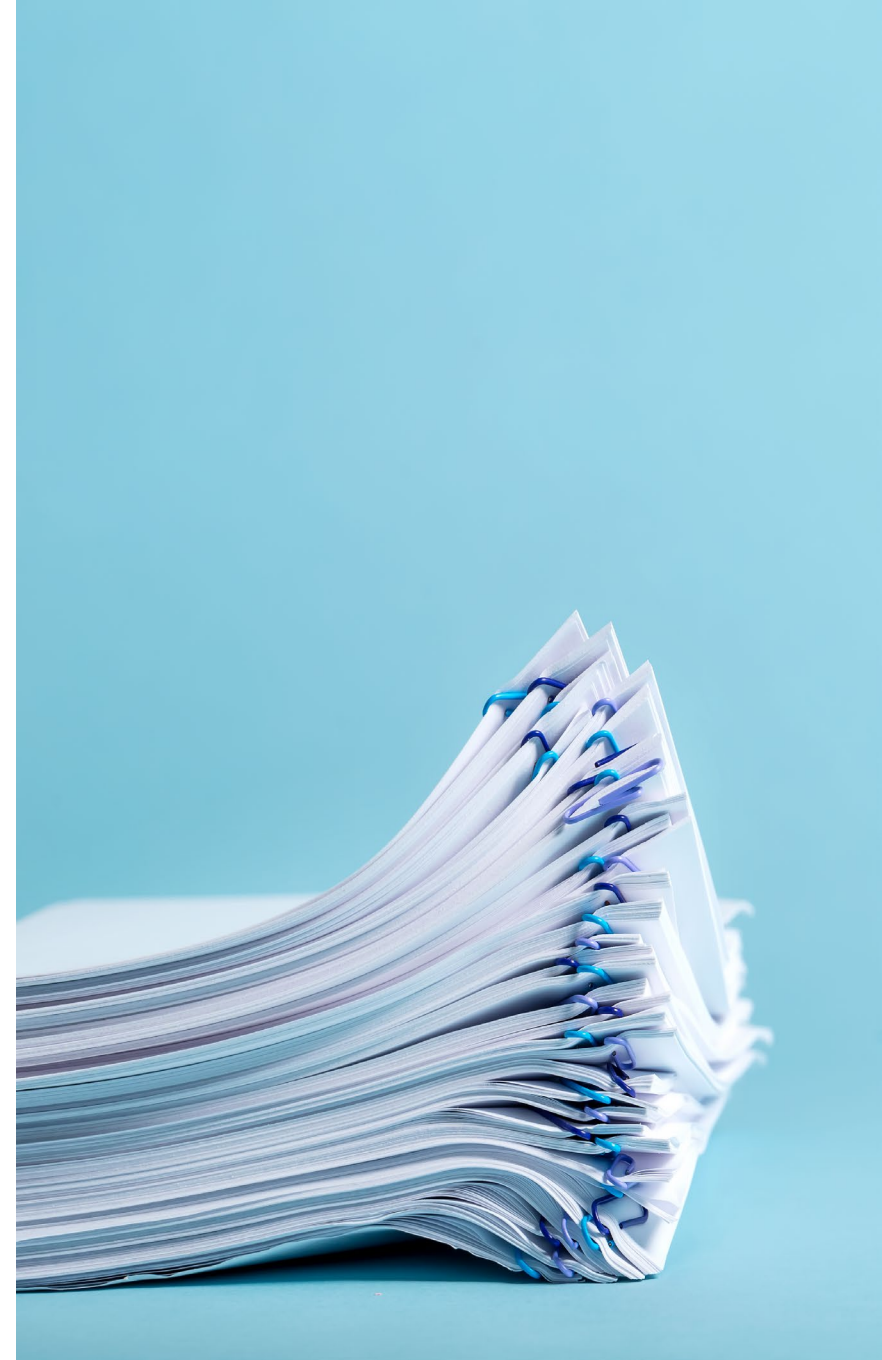
- To register: have a permanent address in Victoria and your child(ren) are in BC
- Reach out to your school district's international education office:
 - [SD 61 - Victoria International Education](#)
 - [SD 62 - Sooke Schools International Student Program](#)
 - [SD 63 - Saanich International Student Program](#)
- They will provide you with application information, review your documentation, and support you in registering your child for school



Preparing your documents

Get ready by making copies of:

- Your family's identification documents (passport, birth certificate)
- Proof of residence (tenancy agreement or utility bill)
- Your study or work permit
- Immunization records
- School report cards, grades, from the past two years



Before school age daycare

Child Care Services on Campus:

- For children of full-time students
- Infant to 5 YO
- Apply ASAP
- Expect a wait list for younger than 3 YO
- Fees: \$10/per day (subsidized by BC)

Finding daycare:

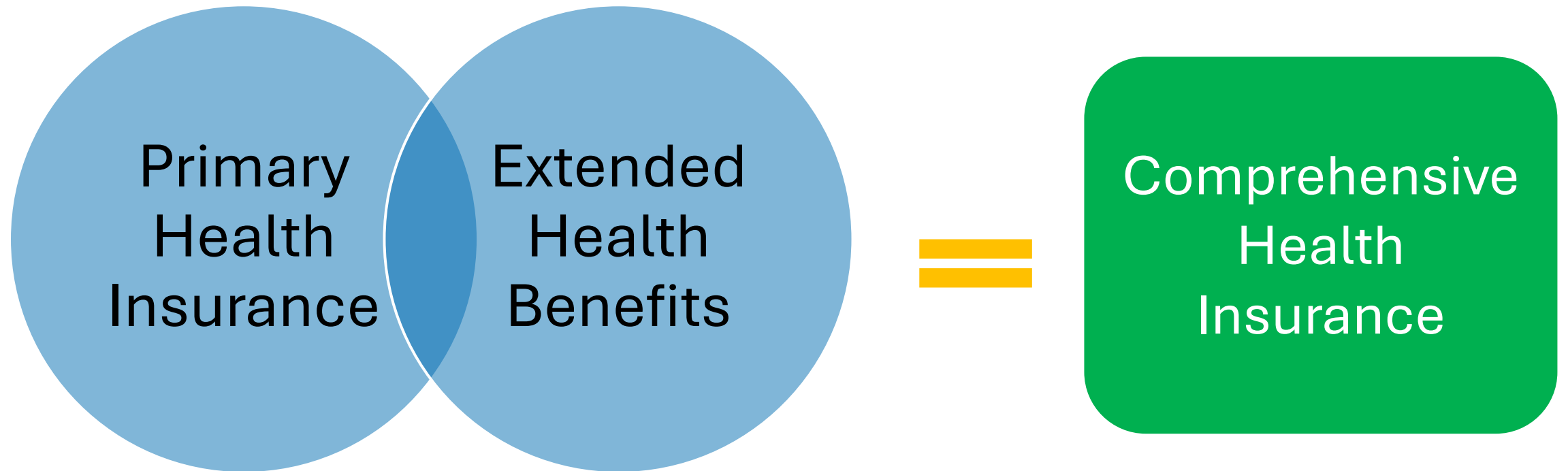
- [Child Care resource & referral \(CCRR\)](#)
- [BC Child Care Map](#)
- Note: fees will vary





Staying Safe

Comprehensive health insurance

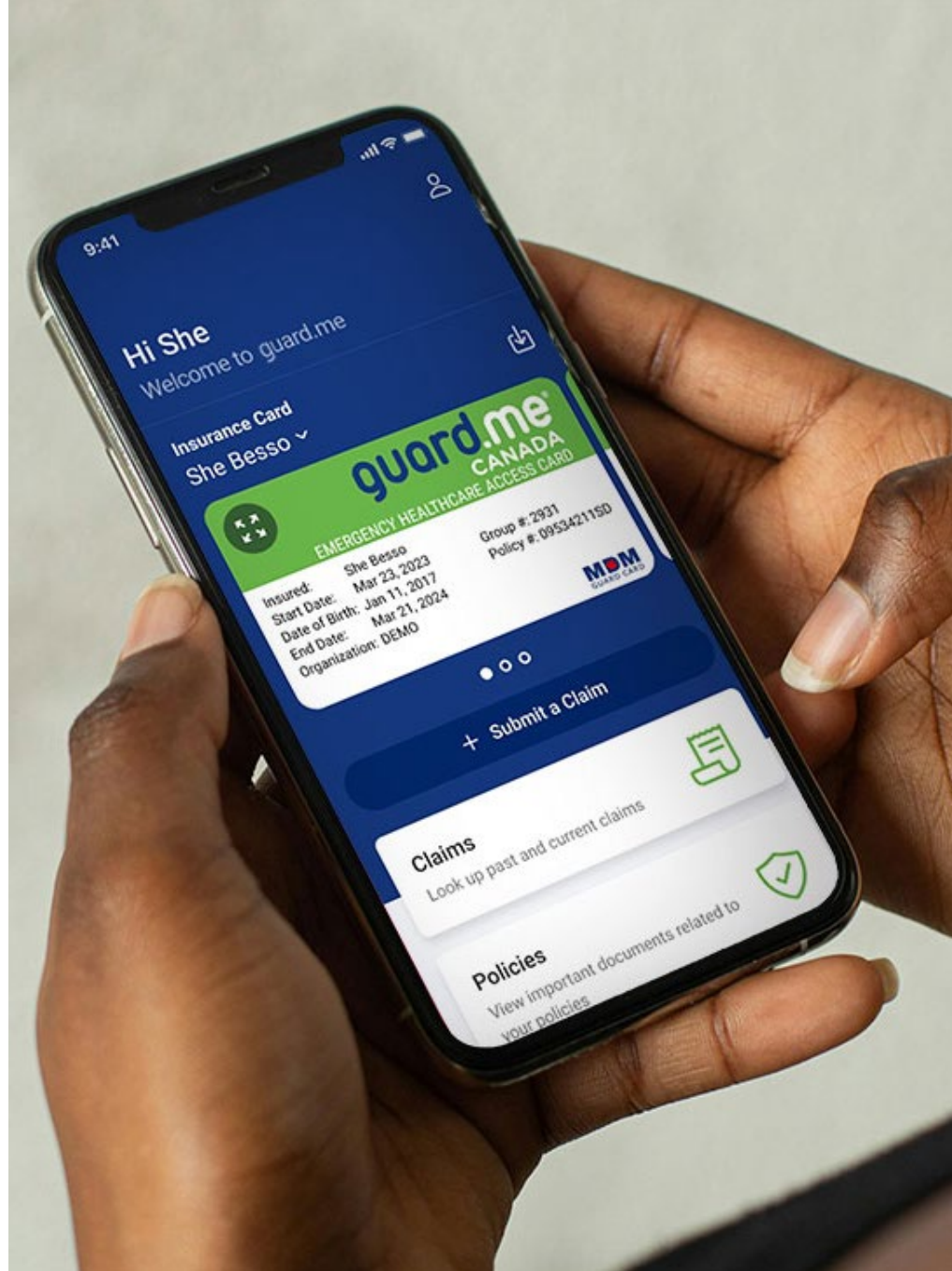


Health insurance overview for dependents

	Waiting for BC MSP	Rest of time in BC
Primary care (mandatory)	GuardMe@UVic /Mandatory Temporary Medical Insurance Basic medical and emergency coverage during <u>first term</u> at UVic	BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) Basic medical and emergency coverage for people living in BC for <u>more than 6 months</u> CAD\$ 75/month (intl students) Free for non students
Extended care	<u>UVSS</u> AND <u>GSS</u> EXTENDED HEALTH AND DENTAL BENEFIT PLANS Dental, vision, and additional coverage to members of UVic undergraduate and graduate student societies via Studentcare	

GuardMe

- Primary health insurance for dependents (children or spouse) until BC MSP coverage begins
- Medical care for emergencies and illnesses
- Can purchase whenever dependents will arrive
- Purchase online at guard.me/uvic
 - With GuardMe Coverage (Student still has GuardMe plan)
 - With BC MSP coverage (Student has active BC MSP)



BC Medical Services Plan (BC MSP)

- Mandatory for any person who will reside in BC for 6 months or more
- Apply for BC MSP at the same time or update your account when your family members arrive
- 3-month eligibility waiting period once family members arrive in BC
- Expiry of BC MSP is based on status documents expiration date.
- \$75 International Student Health Fee: only for family members who are Study Permit holders



Extended Health and Dental

- Provided via the GSS/UVSS
- Students may enroll dependents (spouse or children)
- Dependent opt-ins must be renewed annually
- Opt in online via Alumo
- Deadline:
 - Change-of-coverage period:
 - Fall term: August 22 to September 22
 - Spring Term: December 22 – Jan 22
 - Summer session: April 22 – May 22
 - Following “change of life situation”



Accessing healthcare

Visit ICS [Accessing Healthcare](#) page for information on how to receive healthcare for you and your family.





Resources for your family

Resources and Supports

International Centre for Students

- Immigration practitioners
- Settlement Advisers

Community Organizations

- Inter-Cultural Association of Victoria (ICA)
- Victoria Immigrant Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)

Employment

- WorkBC



English Language Resources

English learning resources are available in Victoria for UVic students and families. Program costs and availability vary:

- [UVic Continuing Studies](#)
- [Camosun College](#)
- [Private language schools](#)
- [The Inter-Cultural Association](#)
- [Community centres](#)
- [The Library Link for Newcomers](#)



Activities on campus

ICS + Global Community

- Fall & Spring Family Social events

Graduate Students' Society (GSS)

- Regular events for students and community

VIKES Recreation

- Various membership options
- Summer camps and year-round programs



Activities in Victoria

The City of Victoria offers many free or low-cost recreational resources for families.

- Recreation Centres: sports, art classes, summer camps, and other activities for all ages
- Community Centres: food resources, social events, child care, and more
- Parks: the city of Victoria and surrounding areas are full of beautiful natural spaces and family-friendly amenities
- Greater Victoria Public Library: local libraries host events, programs, and provide learning resources for all ages



Contact the ICS

Website: uvic.ca/ics

Email: icsinfo@uvic.ca

Phone: +1 250 721 6361

Office: Jamie Cassels Centre, B202d
Monday – Friday, 9am-4:30pm PT

Daily advising drop-ins:

Virtual (MS Teams), phone, and in-person
M-F, 1:30pm to 3:30pm (PT)



Stay Connected!

ICS Advising: icsinfo@uvic.ca

ICS Website: <https://www.uvic.ca/ics>

Follow us on Instagram
[@uvicinternational](https://www.instagram.com/uvicinternational)

Join the UVic Global Community
[Facebook group](#)

Subscribe to our [newsletter](#)

And join our [upcoming events](#)!

