



Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

BUILDING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

SPONSORING RELATIVES

Private Sponsorship of Refugees

Capacity Training

* modified version for online distribution

Funded by:

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Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

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et Citoyenneté Canada

Territory Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Coast Salish Peoples on whose territories we do our work to support immigrants and refugees. We are grateful to work and live here, and we honour the Nations who have always cared for these lands, waters and air and continue to do so today.



Target Audience

This training is for community members who are interested in sponsoring their relatives via the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

Note:

This presentation was originally created for in-person delivery by a trained facilitator. The original slides have been modified into this version to simplify the message and avoid confusion. Some of the topics discussed in these slides may require further context and/ or explanation for some readers. For clarification or more information about the information presented, please contact the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program or the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria at psr@icavictoria.org.



Goals

- ✓ Overview of PSR Program
- ✓ Understand Program Requirements
- ✓ Rights and Responsibilities
- ✓ How to Sponsor



Training Overview

Pre- Arrival

- Overview of Canada's Resettlement Programs
- PSR Program
- Requirements
- Eligibility
- Application Process
- SAH + CG/Co-Sponsor
- Groups of Five/
Community Sponsor

Post Arrival

- Settlement Requirements
- Financial Requirements
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Reporting and Monitoring
- FAQs

Canada's Resettlement Programs

Government Sponsorship

Government Assisted

Refugees

GAR

Private Sponsorship

Privately Sponsored

Refugees

PSR

Government & Private

Sponsorship Collaboration

Blended Visa Office-Referred, Joint Assistance Sponsorship and Rainbow

Refugee Assistance

BVOR, JAS and RRAP

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

Unique program that has existed since 1978

- ✓ Funding provided by community
- ✓ Majority of private sponsorships are sponsor-referred
- ✓ “Family Linked” Connections (>90%)
- ✓ “Sponsor a Stranger” (e.g., UNHCR referrals) (<10%)



Reminders!

- If you are sponsoring a relative via the PSR program, this does not mean it is a “family sponsorship” under Canada’s Family Sponsorship Program
- There is no difference in law or policy between sponsoring a relative or a stranger via the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

Who Can Be a Sponsor?

Individuals cannot sponsor alone and must form a sponsorship group or partner with a SAH

Sponsoring members must be:

- ✓ 18 years or older
- ✓ Be a Canadian citizen, Registered Indian or a permanent resident of Canada
- ✓ Live in the community where the refugee is expected to resettle
- ✓ Meet all other requirements under the law



Types of Sponsorship Groups



Groups of
Five



Community
Sponsors



Sponsorship
Agreement
Holders

+ their CGs
& Co-Sponsors

Groups of Five (G5)

- ✓ Five or more Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents that live in the community where the refugee is expected to settle
- ✓ Group must prove to IRCC they have necessary financial resources, expertise, and commitment
- ✓ Refugees need to have a Refugee Status Determination document

Preparing a Group of 5 Application

Step 1. Form a Group

Step 2. Make sure you are eligible to sponsor

Step 3. Make sure the Principal Applicant abroad is eligible to be sponsored

Step 4. Gather documents

Step 5. Fill in the forms

Step 6. Submit the application


















Community Sponsorship

- ✓ An organization, an association, or a corporation
- ✓ Organization must have the financial capacity to fulfill the sponsorship undertaking, as well as settlement capabilities
- ✓ Community sponsorship group must be based in the community where the refugee(s) are expected to live.
- ✓ Refugee must have a Refugee Status Determination document

Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH)

- ✓ Established organizations (incorporated) that have signed an agreement with IRCC to regularly sponsor refugees
- ✓ The organization accepts the legal responsibility for all sponsorships it signs, including those for which it authorizes Constituent Groups or Co-sponsors
- ✓ SAHs vary in size, composition, and geographical mandate. Some operate only in one centre or one region, whereas others have a national mandate
- ✓ a SAH is permitted to submit an application for those who do not yet have proof of refugee status (Refugee Status Determination document)
- ✓ SAH can only sponsor as many refugees as they have the capacity for, and for whom they have received allocations from IRCC, in a given calendar year



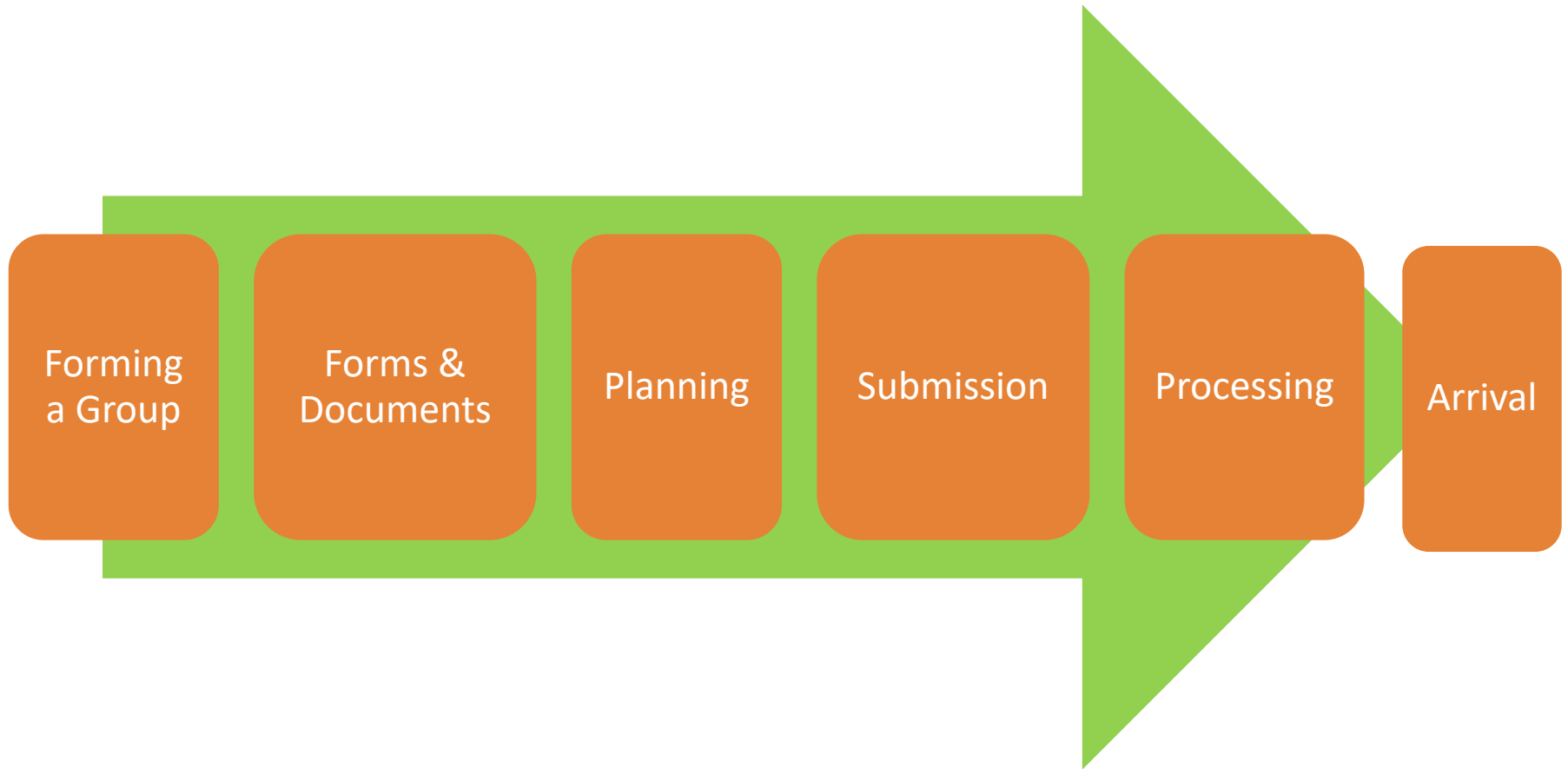
	 Groups of Five	 SAHs + their CGs	 Community Sponsors
Proof of Financial and Settlement Capabilities			
RSD Requirement for Refugees			
Limit on Number of Applications that can be Submitted			
Sponsors Must Live in Community of Settlement			



The Refugee Application Process...first things first! Who is eligible?

Eligibility	Admissibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet at least one of Canada's refugee definitions• Cannot return home safely• Cannot reside and integrate in current location• Does not have an opportunity for resettlement in another country	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical• Criminality• Security

The Refugee Application Process





Forming a Sponsorship Group

- Not just on paper!
- Diversity of skills and abilities is very important
- Managing expectations
- Understand legal responsibilities
- Group size

Forms & Documents

Refugee	Sponsors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refugee Application Package<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generic Application Form• Schedule A• Schedule 2• Supporting documentation (civil status documents)	SAH + CGs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsorship Undertaking• Sponsor Assessment• Settlement Plan• Other<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Origin of Funds• Criminal Record Checks• Confidentiality Agreement• Other SAH-specific forms	G5 + Community Sponsor <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsorship Undertaking• Sponsor Assessment• Settlement Plan• Criminal Record Checks• Financial Profile

Creating a Budget

During the 12 months of the sponsorship period, the group is responsible for the basic needs of the sponsored refugee plus initial start-up costs

- Calculate the cost using RSTP Minimum Financial Support Calculator
- At a minimum, budget should be equal to current RAP rates in community of settlement
- Sponsoring groups may not accept money for sponsorship from sponsored refugees pre- or post-arrival
- Budget is a “work in progress”



Submission



CGs submit to their SAH

- SAH reviews & submits to Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa (ROC-O)



ROC-O



Visa (Migration)
Office

G5 & C.S. submit directly to ROC-O

- May request their local RSTP trainer to review application

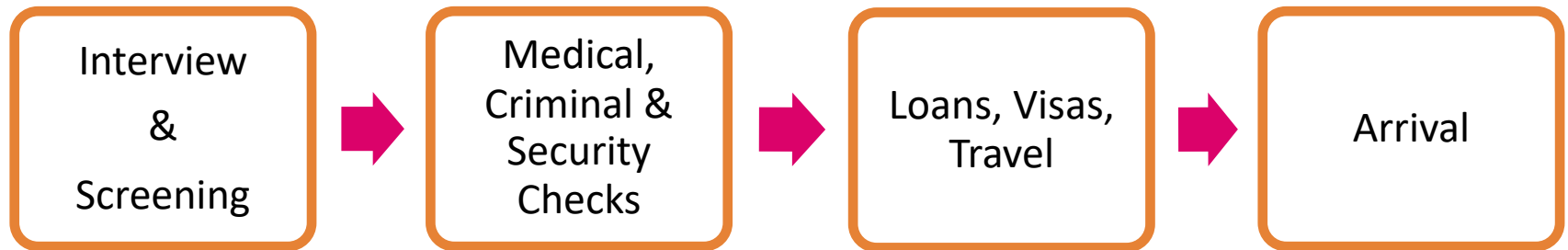


Sponsor Approval

Refugee Approval

Processing

Processing times and background checks
can be lengthy ~ 3 years



While you wait, it is important to:

- Keep the sponsorship group updated
- Maintain settlement plan
- Inform IRCC/SAH of changes
- Consider the possible consequences of disengaging

The Settlement Plan

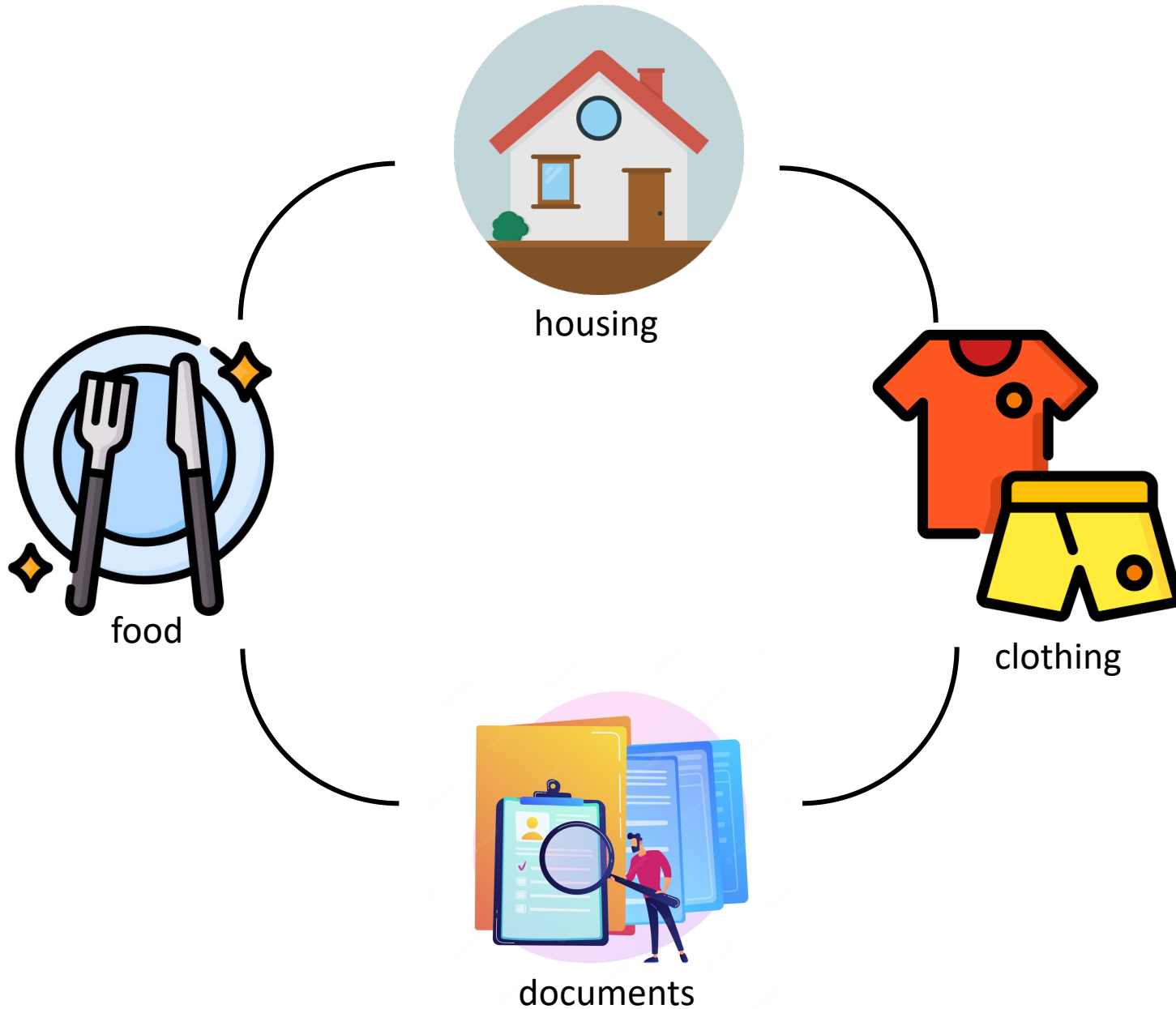
- ✓ The settlement plan records the commitment by all parties involved in fulfilling the settlement responsibilities
- ✓ Helps IRCC assess the capacity of these sponsoring groups
- ✓ Helps prospective sponsoring groups become aware of how much time and financial commitment will be required to support the newcomer refugee(s)

Things to keep in mind:

- Refugee Specific Needs
- Human Resources
- Financial requirements and resources
- Contingency Plans



Assessing Settlement Needs





Housing

- ✓ Temporary housing upon arrival
- ✓ Quarantine Plan
- ✓ Arrange permanent housing post arrival
- ✓ **Attention:** housing plans made upon application may not work out at time of arrival!
- ✓ Managing expectations
- ✓ Minimum RAP rate may not be sufficient



Start-up: Food, Clothing, Furniture etc.



- ✓ Clothing to be purchased by newcomers except for emergency winter items
- ✓ Introduce newcomers to shopping options
- ✓ Start up staple foods
- ✓ Documentation of in-kind items



Documents

- ✓ Confirmation of Permanent Residence (given at border – check)
- ✓ Interim Federal Health Program
- ✓ Social Insurance Number, Medical Services Plan, Permanent Resident Cards, Canada Child Benefit.....
- ✓ Bank Account
 - ❖ Fluent English speakers group members important



Additional

Health Care

- Inquire about possible urgent medical needs
- Make necessary arrangements to provide newcomer access to medical services
- Prescription Medication

Interim Federal Health Program

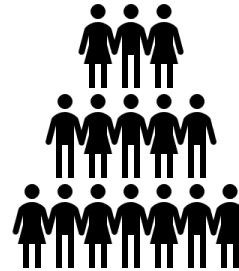
- Provides basic medical coverage until the sponsored refugee is eligible for provincial coverage
- 12 months of extended health benefits



SAH vs Settlement Agency Responsibilities

Role of sponsors is primary for settlement supports. IRCC-funded settlement agencies provide complementary services

1



sponsors

2



settlement organizations



GAR



PSR



JAS



BVOR



Financial Responsibilities

Every sponsoring group must have sufficient resources to support the privately sponsored refugee(s) for twelve (12) months or until the refugee(s) become self-sufficient, whichever comes first.

Budget

- Financial support must be at a minimum, equal to the current Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) rates in the community where the refugee will settle
- Work in progress

Proof of Funds

- **G5 & Co-Sponsors**
 - ✓ Financial Profile
 - ✓ IRCC assessment of individual's income to evaluate if sponsorship is viable
- **SAH**
 - ✓ Individualized process
 - ✓ Some SAHs may require all funds before agreeing to a sponsorship



In-Kind Deductions

Applying in-kind deductions of donated items can assist sponsors in lowering the cost of supporting the newcomer, but this may not necessarily provide enough money for the newcomer to live on.

- ✓ To be approached with caution
- ✓ Must maintain proof - documentation and receipts



- Gently used furniture
- Clothing
- Household Items
- Some services



- Mattresses
- Opened food products
- Personal clothing items such as undergarments or footwear



- Housing!



Dependents

Sponsors should be aware that they might be required to provide settlement support for eligible non-accompanying members under the One Year Window of Opportunity.

- ✓ All of the refugee's family members must be included in the application, whether they will accompany the refugee to Canada or not.
- ✓ Family members:
 - ✓ Spouse or common-law partner
 - ✓ Unmarried dependent children 22 and above (rare!)
 - ✓ Dependent children under age 22

One-Year Window: permits resettled refugees in Canada to identify for resettlement, within one year of their arrival, family members abroad who were previously unable to travel with them.



Reporting/Monitoring

The sponsoring group has a set of responsibilities related to meeting the basic settlement needs of sponsored refugees upon their arrival in Canada. These include monitoring

- Monitoring and ensuring that settlement needs are met are key responsibilities of sponsoring groups who work with co-sponsors and constituent groups.
- IRCC can monitor sponsorships any time
- SAHs individual process for monitoring

Monitoring



Ensuring that newcomers receive appropriate financial and settlement supports is a main responsibility within the PSR Program.





Secondary Migration

when a sponsored refugee decides to move out of the host community during the sponsorship period

When the resettled person moves away from the community of sponsorship, the sponsoring group is unable to carry out their sponsorship responsibilities (both financial and non-financial obligations)

- The newcomer may not receive the same services they have received in their initial community of settlement
- The sponsoring group may not be able to find another sponsoring group in the new community of settlement
- The newcomer may no longer receive financial support from the sponsoring group

NOTE: Some SAHs will not accept cases with anchor relatives outside the SAH's area of work.





Sponsorship Breakdown

an official declaration that an irreparable failure to meet the sponsorship arrangement has occurred

- If the sponsor is found responsible, they will be found in default of their obligations and may be barred from sponsoring
- Most common examples:
 - At-fault secondary migration
 - Failure to comply with regulations such as refugee having to access provincial social income support

Previously Asked Questions





Difficulties completing G5 applications

Some groups have encountered difficulties navigating G5 applications on their own given that process may be long and confusing

- Contact local RSTP Trainer
- Refugee Sponsorship Support Program (RSSP)- contact through RSTP
- Utilize RSTP Website Resources
- Pay for legal counsel
- Research program requirements and commitment before undertaking sponsorship



Realism- managing expectations

Expectations set by refugees and sponsors are often unmet

Managing expectations of both the refugee (s) and sponsors is one of the most important aspects of refugee sponsorship.

For sponsors:

- Be realistic about time commitment and lengths of sponsorship
- Be well informed of financial responsibilities

For refugees:

- Realism about life in Canada and community of settlement
- Cost of living/ housing crisis



G5 disclosure of financial profile

Sharing proof of income with other members of a G5 sponsorship group can become a barrier for some to sponsor via this route

- Mail application- caution, longer processing times
- Appoint group leader and only disclose to one person



Thank You

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