

A Newcomer's Guide

to Halifax Regional Municipality

www.halifax.ca/newcomers

GreaterHalifax
PARTNERSHIP

HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY



Front Cover Photo: Dan Brophy
Back Cover Photo: Jason Landry

**For information about municipal services, call 490-4000 or
visit www.halifax.ca**

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We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the staff of Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services (ISIS) who helped to review and shape the content of the Newcomers' Guide.

July 2011

Welcome to Halifax Regional Municipality,

Welcome Home

This guide is an introduction to life in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) for you and your family as new permanent residents. This guide may also be helpful to you if you are considering moving to HRM from another part of the country or world.

Nothing will make you feel more at home than getting to know the day-to-day rhythm of our municipality – and your municipality. Inside you will discover everything from the average cost for food, transportation, and housing, to tips on finding a job. You will also explore neighbourhoods and learn how communities are kept safe and welcoming for residents and visitors alike. You will find information on where to bank, how to expand your network of friends and colleagues, and how to start a business. You will also learn about the many and varied activities that bring the community to life.

We hope the information in this guide will paint a fuller picture of the Halifax Regional Municipality and all it has to offer you and your family.

We have taken great care to ensure that information in this guide is accurate and up-to-date at the time of printing (July 2011).

For the most up-to-date information and to download a copy of this guide, please visit www.halifax.ca/newcomers

If you would like to suggest any additional resources or are aware of any errors, please contact us at newcomers@halifax.ca

Photo: Emily Heinecke



Each Saturday morning residents gather at the Farmers' Market at the Brewery Market in downtown Halifax.

Welcome from Mayor Peter Kelly

On behalf of the Halifax Regional Municipality I extend a warm welcome to you and your family.

Few places in the world can offer the range of opportunities you will find here in terms of natural beauty, community, employment, business potential, culture, education, housing, health care – in short, quality of life and a bright future for you and your children. Be it the excitement of the city or the quiet of a rural village, this place is yours to explore and make your own.

Halifax is a great and welcoming place but we need you and your contributions – as a neighbour, a parent, an employee, a business partner, a volunteer, a citizen – to continue to grow and thrive.

It is our genuine hope that this Welcome Guide and resources listed here will answer some of the most essential questions about life in the Halifax Regional Municipality and help you make it your home.

Respectfully I remain,



Peter Kelly
Mayor



Welcome from Paul Kent

The Halifax Regional Municipality is a thriving and vibrant place to live, work, and explore. In the heart of this community lies significant opportunity, opportunity that is driven and supported by smart, educated people with an entrepreneurial spirit. People who have a genuine interest in this city's potential. People like those of us at the Greater Halifax Partnership. People like you.

At the Greater Halifax Partnership, we are dedicated to the city's economic growth and, by extension, supporting all the services that fuel that growth. Like everyone who calls HRM home, we have a vested interest in making our community the envy of the world today – and tomorrow.

We are passionate about ensuring that our economic health is second to none and that we have the services in place to make a strong community even stronger: great education, exemplary health care, effective government, and visionary leaders. We know that a pillar of our success, on all fronts, is our ability to continue attracting bright minds and open hearts to our community. We want to interest people like you in learning more about who we are and why we are so proud to call HRM home. It is with you in mind that we have developed this guide.

We are here to support your decision to move to Halifax Regional Municipality, and once you arrive, we will continue to support you and your family as you begin to work, explore, and settle in.

Welcome home.



Paul Kent
President and CEO
Greater Halifax Partnership



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Tip

In this guide, websites and references to the telephone book are given as sources for more information.

If you do not have access to a computer with Internet, information on public computer and Internet access is on page 25.

The telephone book is organized in the following way:

White pages: Residential and business listings

Blue pages: Federal, Provincial and Municipal Government listings

Yellow pages: Business and commercial listings



Important Things to Do When You Arrive

Here you will find a checklist of things to do in your first weeks. Some tasks you should do right away, such as apply for your health card and your Social Insurance Number (SIN).

If you have friends or family in the municipality where you want to live, they can be a great help to you. They can show you around and help you find a place to stay. The staff at the Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services (see page 5) can also assist you to settle into your new community.



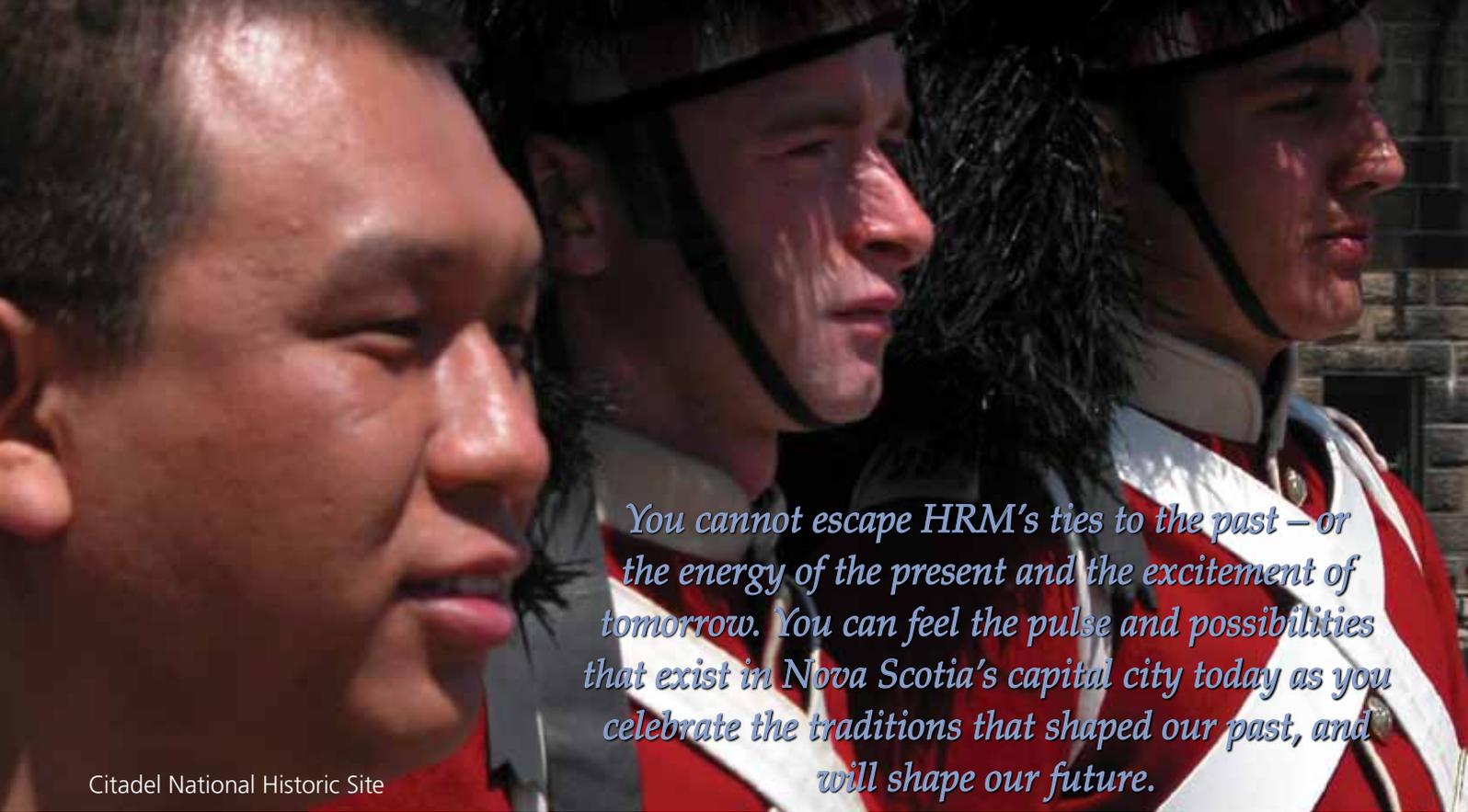
- Find a place to live. More information is on page 14.
- Apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN) with Service Canada, 7001 Mumford Road, Mumford Towers, Tower 2. You will need a SIN card for employment and many government services. More information can be found on page 13.
- Register for a Nova Scotia Health Card. With this card, you receive insured health care services free. More information on page 19.
- Apply for Canada Child Tax Credit. See page 30.
- Open a bank account at a bank or credit union. More information can be found on page 13.
- Visit Access Nova Scotia (Registry of Motor Vehicles) to apply for your driver's license. More information is on page 18.
- Find a family doctor who is taking new patients or a community health centre close to your home by calling the Physician Information Line at 902-424-3047 or use the online directory at www.gov.ns.ca/health/physicians/physicians.asp. See page 19.
- Find a school for your children. See www.endnet.ca or see page 22.
- Visit the Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services West End Mall, 6960 Mumford Rd, Suite 2120 for helpful information, services and settlement advice and English classes for you and your family.
- If you need advice about applying for a job, see the information on page 28.
- Find an employment resource centre close to your home.
- Find a library close to your home. More information is on page 25.
- Get maps of streets and bus routes at your closest HRM Customer Service Centre. More information is on page 12.
- Find a place to shop. More information is on page 15.
- Get involved in your community. See www.myhrm.ca for more information.
- Arrange for childcare. See www.ccnns.org or see page 23.
- Look for information at www.halifax.ca/newcomers

Find Help – Immigration and Community Resources

If You Need:	Contact:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor visas • Permanent resident visas • Sponsoring members of the family class • Work permits • Becoming a Canadian citizen • Proof of Canadian citizenship 	<p>Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is a federal agency that provides citizenship, settlement, refugee and immigration services and programs</p> <p>Phone: 1-888-242-2100 www.cic.gc.ca</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and support through the Provincial Nominee program • A letter of identification before you apply for the “Community Identified” stream of the Provincial Nominee Program • Information about settling in Nova Scotia 	<p>Nova Scotia Office of Immigration works with the government of Canada to bring immigrants to Nova Scotia. It wants newcomers from around the world to make Nova Scotia their home.</p> <p>Phone: 424-5230 www.novascotiainmigration.com</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlement information • Translation services • Language assessment • English classes • Writing and pronunciation classes • Classes and programs to support professionals • Work in Nova Scotia (WINS) • Business start-up services and support • Network opportunities • ESL tutors • Crisis services • Counseling for family problems 	<p>Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services (ISIS) is a community-based organization that has many services for newcomers. Newcomers often come here soon after they arrive.</p> <p>Phone: 423-3607 www.isisns.ca</p> <p>West End Mall 6960 Mumford Road, Suite 2120, Halifax</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Support Program • Youth Outreach Program • Rural Connections • Saturday Morning Study Skills • Active Living Program • Young Adult Navigator 	<p>YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs is a community based organization that helps newcomers with new language, culture, community and recreation.</p> <p>Phone: 457-9622 www.ymcahrm.ns.ca 65 Main Avenue, Halifax, NS B3M 1A4</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on French schools • Health services • Accommodation • Family matching program 	<p>Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE) provides settlement and integration services to French-speaking immigrants to Nova Scotia.</p> <p>6960 chemin Mumford, Halifax, suite 2085 au deuxième étage du West End Mall Tel. 902-433-0065 fane@federationacadienne.ca www.vienouvelle-ecosse.ca/</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are in need of an interpreter to help you communicate with any government service provider eg. Hospital, Court, Police, Community Services etc. • Interpreting in person or on the phone • Trained interpreters will provide confidential, professional service 24 hours a day / 7 days a week • Confidential interpreting 	<p>Nova Scotia Interpreting Services (NSIS) is a non-profit organization based in Halifax providing interpreting services in more than 40 Languages.</p> <p>If you like to work as an interpreter please contact our office at 902-425-6604 to fill out an application form.</p> <p>Phone: 425-5532 (24-hour dispatch) www.interpretingservices.ca/ contact@interpretingservices.ca</p>

continued on page 6

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English classes Canadian Connections Program can help you with your career goals and training courses 	<p>Halifax Regional School Board Adult ESL offers full-time and part-time language instruction at two locations:</p> <p>Quinpool Education Centre 3rd Floor, 6067 Quinpool Road, Halifax</p> <p>St. Agnes Catholic Church – 6903 Mumford Road, Halifax Tel. 421-7779 www.hrsb.ns.ca/content/id/869.html</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English classes English assessment At-home English instruction for those who cannot attend classes Free computer labs Canadian Connections to help with career goals and training courses Children’s Learning centre for pre-schoolers 	<p>Metro Region Immigrant Language Services (MILS) provides Canadian Language Benchmark assessments, English as a Second Language instruction and pre-employment skills for newcomers across the province of Nova Scotia.</p> <p>Forsyth Adult Learning Center 136 Pinecrest Drive, Dartmouth (next to Burnside Industrial Park) Tel. (902) 464-2868 / (902) 464-2033 contact@milsns.info www.milsns.info/contact.php</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English for academic purposes 	<p>Nova Scotia Community College offers English classes to prepare you for post-secondary education. Application deadlines are in fall, winter and spring.</p> <p>Nova Scotia Community College – 5685 Leeds Street in Halifax Tel: (902) 471-4650 www.nsc.ca</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to practice your English with volunteer tutors 	<p>ISIS ESL Volunteer Tutor Program Telephone: (902) 423-3607</p> <p>Halifax Public Libraries ESL for Adults Telephone: (902) 490-5990 www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on various multi-cultural communities in Halifax Information on multi-cultural events and the annual Multicultural Festival 	<p>Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS) teaches Nova Scotians about multiculturalism and represents the interests of multicultural organizations and communities in Nova Scotia.</p> <p>Phone: 423-6534 www.mans.ns.ca</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To apply under the “Community Identified” stream of the Nova Scotia Nominee program Would like to connect with other business owners and operators, managers, civil servants and community leaders 	<p>Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) works to promote and attract economic growth in Greater Halifax. Provides networking for newcomers. It also screens applicants under the “Community Identified” stream of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program</p> <p>Phone: 1-800-565-1191 www.greaterhalifax.com Email: info@greaterhalifax.com</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small business education Professional Development and Training Small Business Financing and Resources How to develop social (non-profit) enterprise 	<p>The Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development Incorporated (CEED) is devoted to helping people discover and use entrepreneurship as a way to become self-reliant. Their programs are for everyone, including newly landed immigrants.</p> <p>Halifax Shopping Centre 7001 Mumford Road, Suite 107, Tower 1, Box 196, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 2H8 Phone: 902.421.2333, Toll free: 1.800.590.8481, Fax: 902.482.0291, Email: info@ceed.ca</p>



Citadel National Historic Site

You cannot escape HRM's ties to the past – or the energy of the present and the excitement of tomorrow. You can feel the pulse and possibilities that exist in Nova Scotia's capital city today as you celebrate the traditions that shaped our past, and will shape our future.

History

HRM officially came into existence in 1996 as a result of the joining together of the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth, the town of Bedford, and the County of Halifax. That coming together has given HRM a significant suburban and rural mix in addition to a large urban population. With approximately 200 communities within its boundaries and a population of roughly 373,000, HRM is Nova Scotia's largest and most diverse municipality. Indeed, we are the largest community in Atlantic Canada.

Events of historical importance have influenced our development. From 1928 until 1971, over a million immigrants arrived in Canada through Pier 21 in the Port of Halifax. Many settled in the area, enriching our social and cultural environment. Now a trip to Pier 21 National Historic Site is a trip back in time as visitors hear stories of hope and excitement as told by those arriving to the place they would soon call home. (See www.pier21.ca)

Today, Halifax Regional Municipality is a multicultural society that is home to people from around the world. Arabic is the most commonly spoken language after French and English, and we have one of the largest groups of Shambhala Buddhists in the world living here. We're proud of the global infusion of cultures, languages, histories, and hope that has converged to make HRM a truly international city.

About HRM

Relocating is challenging no matter where you decide to call home. Here is some information about Halifax Regional Municipality we hope you will find helpful.

Our name

The Halifax Regional Municipality, or HRM, is also known as Halifax or Greater Halifax; the municipal government is also called HRM or Halifax Regional Municipality.

Our location

HRM is the capital city of the province of Nova Scotia and is located on the East Coast of Canada. HRM is two hours closer by air to Europe than any other North American destination, and closer to New York and Boston than any other major Canadian city.

Tip

This region of Canada is also referred to as The Maritimes. **The Maritimes** include the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. The East Coast of Canada is also called **Atlantic Canada**, which includes four provinces: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our population

372,858 (2006)

Halifax Regional Municipality is home to 55 per cent of Atlantic Canada's immigrants and 80 per cent of Nova Scotia's immigrants. We warmly welcome newcomers, and immigration is supported and encouraged.

Our official languages

Both of Canada's official languages, English and French, are spoken throughout Nova Scotia.

Time zone

Halifax Regional Municipality is on Atlantic Daylight Time (ADT), which is four hours before Greenwich Mean Time and one hour later than North America's Eastern Time Zone. That means if it is 7 p.m. in HRM it is 6 p.m. in New York, midnight in Paris, and 7 a.m. – the following day – in Tokyo.

Seasonal Time Changes

Daylight Saving Time (DST) is in effect each year from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November. DST (also called "summer time" in Britain) is in place so that afternoons have more daylight. Usually clocks are turned ahead one hour in spring and turned back an hour in fall.

Currency

The Canadian dollar is our national currency. Banknotes come in \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 denominations, which all have their own distinct colour. Coins include the one cent (also called a penny); five cent (a nickel); 10 cent (a dime); 25 cent (a quarter); one dollar (a loonie); and two dollar (a toonie).

Our climate

In Halifax, average temperatures look like this:

- Spring: 10 to 16 °C (50 to 61°F)
- Summer: 20 to 25°C (68 to 77°F)
- Fall: 12 to 15°C (54 to 59°F)
- Winter: -2 to 1°C (28 to 34°F)

Annual rainfall averages 1180 millimeters (about 46 inches).



Current weather forecasts: (902) 426-9090 (English) or (902) 426-9095 (French); www.ns.ec.gc.ca

Tip

Fahrenheit to Celsius:
Subtract 30 and divide by 2

Celsius to Fahrenheit:
Multiply by 2 and add 30

Seasons

Residents generally experience four very different types of weather during the winter, spring, summer and fall. Compared to the rest of Canada, HRM has milder weather year-round because we are close to the coast.

- During spring, from April to June, temperatures start to rise, along with the number of rainy days.
- Summer months are from June to August; the end of July to mid-August tend to be the warmest.
- Fall sets in from September to November, and usually by mid-October the temperatures are much cooler.
- Winter months span November to March, and the first snowfall is usually in November. The coldest months are from January to February, and there are often high winds and heavy snowfall then.

Tips for winter living

Winter weather in HRM can include high winds, heavy snowfall, freezing rain, blizzards, and very cold temperatures. Be prepared by dressing to suit the weather. Thin layers of loose-fitting clothing will trap body heat while aiding air circulation. Outer clothing should be hooded, tightly woven, and repel water. It is important to wear a hat because most body heat is lost through the head. If it is very cold, cover your mouth to protect your lungs from the frigid air. Before heading out each day, check the weather forecast, and dress accordingly.

For information on current weather conditions, please call Environment Canada at 426-9090 or 1-800-668-6767 (toll free) or visit www.weatheroffice.gc.ca.

Please note: If you will be driving during the winter, make sure to get winter tires on your car. During severe conditions, roads can be slippery and visibility may be poor. It is important to exercise caution while driving in the winter. Be sure your car has an emergency kit that includes a flashlight, shovel, blanket, and booster cables.

Area code

The area code 902 must be dialed for long distance calls into Halifax or when making long distance calls from Halifax to other parts of Nova Scotia. You have to first dial "1" before placing a long distance call and "011" when making an international call.

Are Family & Friends Coming to Visit?

How to Get Here

Getting to HRM is easy, whether you are traveling by air, sea, or land.

By land

Car – Nova Scotia's province-wide network of highways connects to the TransCanada Highway system and all points across Canada and the United States.

www.transcanadahighway.com

Bus – Acadian Lines provides bus service connections in neighbouring New Brunswick, which has connections with Greyhound buses in Toronto, New York, and Montreal.

Acadian Lines www.smtbus.com Greyhound www.greyhound.ca

Train – VIA Rail Canada provides first-class transcontinental train service from HRM. www.viarail.ca

By sea

Nova Scotia is accessible by ferry services from Bar Harbour and Portland, Maine, as well as Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador. All ferry ports are within a maximum four-hour drive of the Halifax Regional Municipality and run daily in the summer months.

By air

The Halifax Robert L. Stanfield International Airport is the Atlantic Canadian hub for all domestic, regional, and international flights. The airport offers over 600 scheduled direct weekly flights to Canadian, American, European, and Caribbean cities. Add to that hundreds more connecting flights, and you will find it is easy to get to HRM from just about anywhere in the world. Scheduled charter services are also available linking the province with a host of Canadian, U.S., and European cities. The airport welcomes almost 3.4 million passengers a year, and it is the only airport in Atlantic Canada to have pre-clearance on direct flights to the United States.

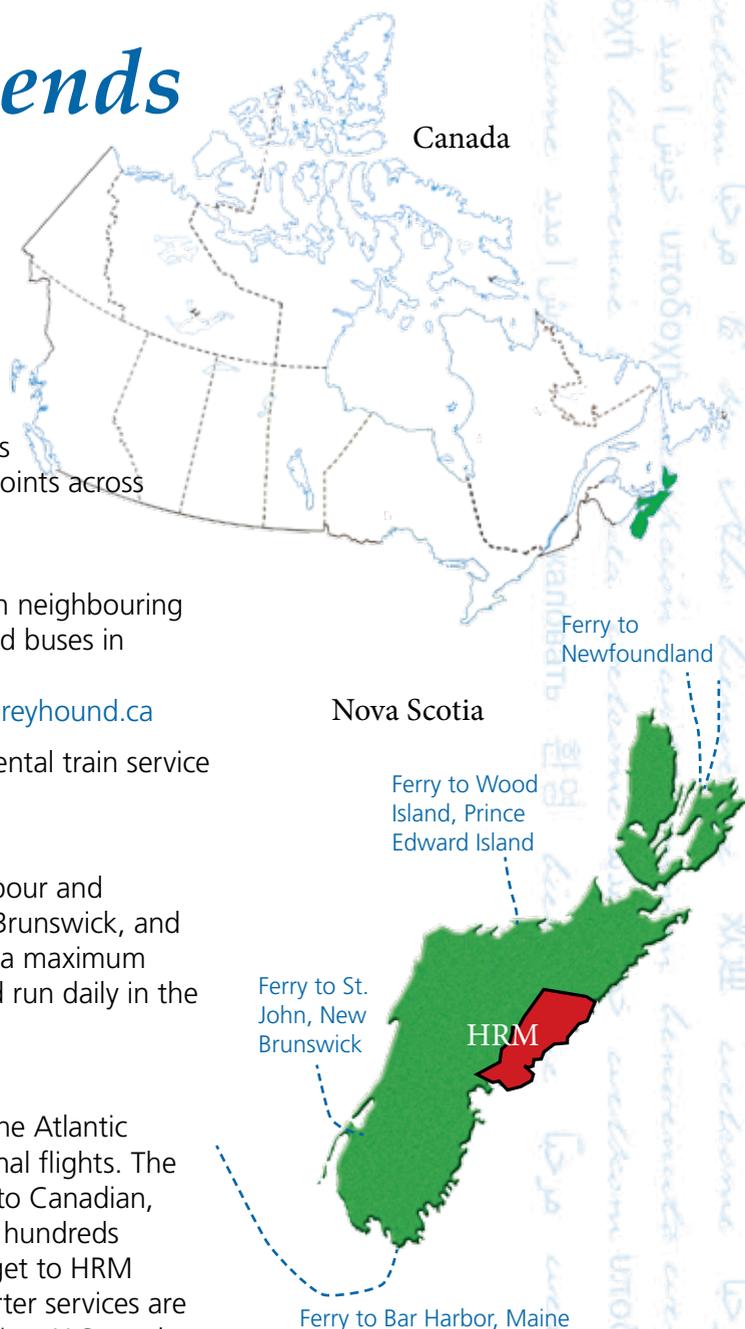
Halifax Robert L. Stanfield International Airport – www.hiaa.ca

Limousine service and car rentals are available at all provincial airports – HRM, Yarmouth, and Sydney – and a shuttle bus travels to and from Halifax-area hotels.

Airporter Inc. provides shuttle service between Halifax Stanfield International Airport and various hotels in the Halifax-Dartmouth area. Core hours of operation are 6 a.m. to midnight daily.

Regular rates for the Airporter service are \$18 (Canadian) one way. Children under 10 years of age accompanied by an adult ride for free.

For more information on schedules and hotels that the Airporter makes stops at, please call 902-873-2091.





government. In Canada, there are 303 members of parliament including the Prime Minister.

Municipal governments are responsible for services to residents such as roads, garbage collection, snow removal and parks and recreation. Municipalities also have a major role in regulating land development, business regulations, and civic and cultural activities.

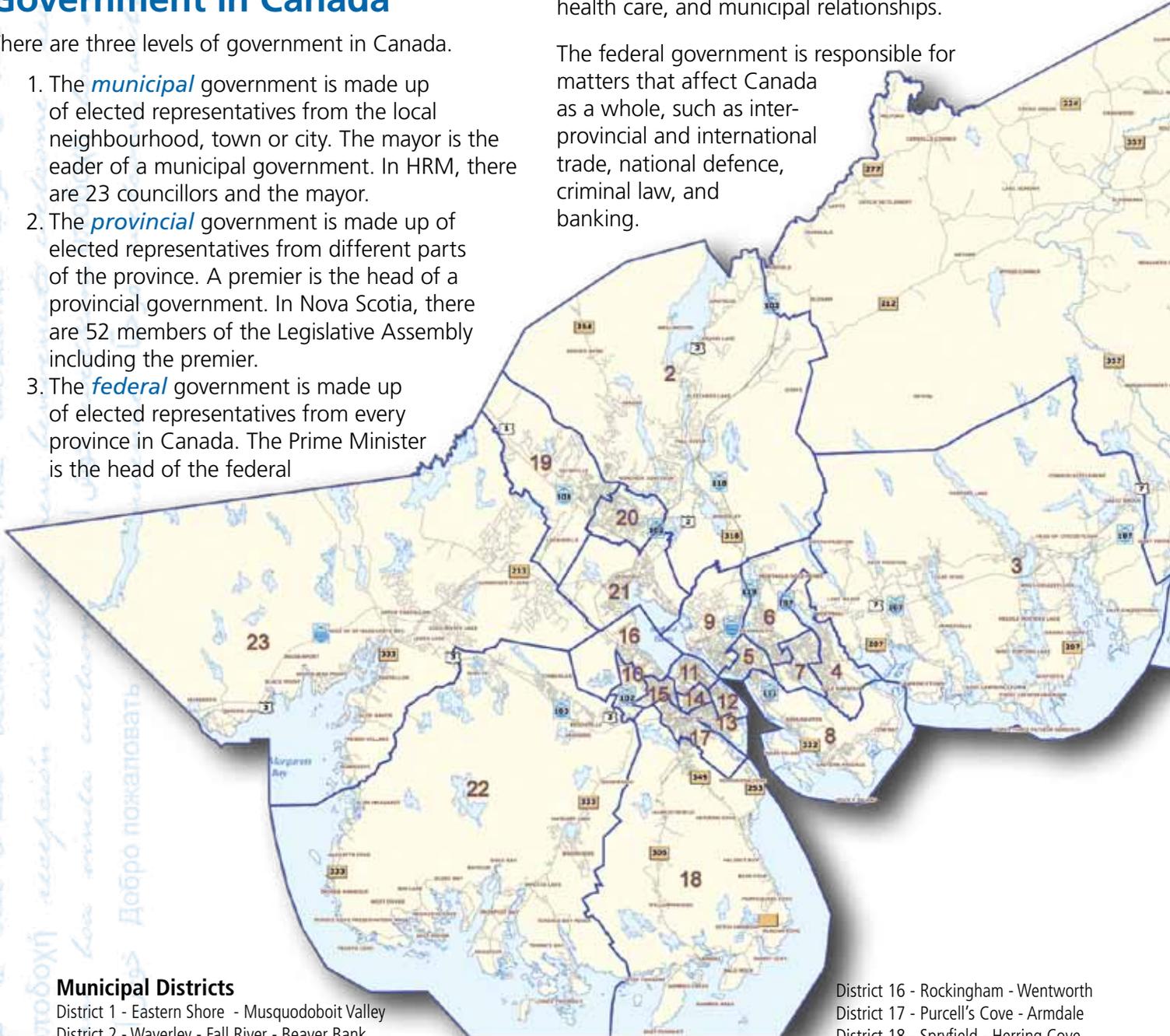
Provincial governments are responsible for civil rights, natural resources within their borders, social security, health care, and municipal relationships.

The federal government is responsible for matters that affect Canada as a whole, such as inter-provincial and international trade, national defence, criminal law, and banking.

Government in Canada

There are three levels of government in Canada.

1. The **municipal** government is made up of elected representatives from the local neighbourhood, town or city. The mayor is the leader of a municipal government. In HRM, there are 23 councillors and the mayor.
2. The **provincial** government is made up of elected representatives from different parts of the province. A premier is the head of a provincial government. In Nova Scotia, there are 52 members of the Legislative Assembly including the premier.
3. The **federal** government is made up of elected representatives from every province in Canada. The Prime Minister is the head of the federal



Municipal Districts

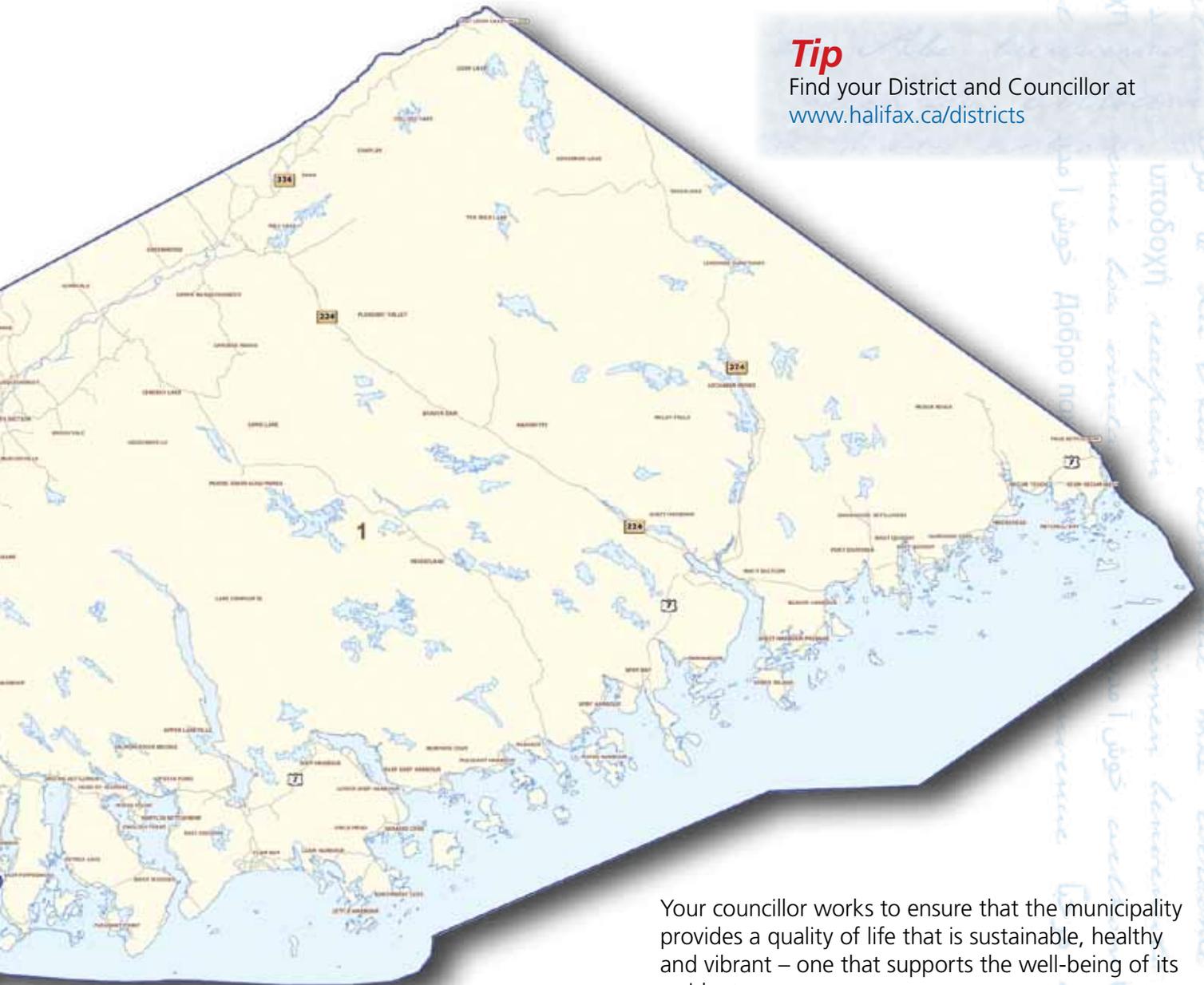
- District 1 - Eastern Shore - Musquodoboit Valley
- District 2 - Waverley - Fall River - Beaver Bank
- District 3 - Preston - Lawrencetown - Chezzetcook
- District 4 - Cole Harbour
- District 5 - Dartmouth Centre
- District 6 - East Dartmouth - The Lakes
- District 7 - Portland - East Woodlawn
- District 8 - Woodside - Eastern Passage
- District 9 - Albro Lake - Harbourview

- District 10 - Clayton Park West
- District 11 - Halifax North End
- District 12 - Halifax Downtown
- District 13 - Northwest Arm - South End
- District 14 - Connaught - Quinpool
- District 15 - Fairview - Clayton Park

- District 16 - Rockingham - Wentworth
- District 17 - Purcell's Cove - Armdale
- District 18 - Spryfield - Herring Cove
- District 19 - Middle & Upper Sackville - Lucasville
- District 20 - Lower Sackville
- District 21 - Bedford
- District 22 - Timberlea - Prospect
- District 23 - Hammonds Plains - St. Margarets

Tip

Find your District and Councillor at www.halifax.ca/districts



Your councillor works to ensure that the municipality provides a quality of life that is sustainable, healthy and vibrant – one that supports the well-being of its residents.

Council agendas and schedules and municipal by-laws are posted online at www.halifax.ca.

Our Municipal Government

HRM is governed by an elected council, which includes one councillor for each of the 23 districts and a mayor elected at large. It is the responsibility of the chief administrative officer to provide advice to council and carry out its policies and programs as well as oversee the day-to-day running of the government and its 3,600 full and part-time employees. HRM appreciates and encourages citizen participation in local government, including various municipal boards, committees and commissions. Volunteers are typically recruited in September of each year. To find out more, see www.halifax.ca/boardscom or www.myhrm.ca. Also contact the Municipal Clerk's office.

Halifax Regional Council meets on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. at Halifax City Hall, Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Council sessions are aired live on Eastlink Cable channel 10.



Council chambers at City Hall



Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

The Municipal Government Act directs most of the activities and operations of municipal governments in Nova Scotia. It also contains provisions relating to freedom of information and protection of privacy. The intent of the legislation is to balance two principles:

- Freedom of information: Whenever possible, information held by a municipality should be made available to the public.
- Protection of privacy: A municipality should not improperly collect or disclose personal information.

HRM Customer Service Centres

Customer Service Centres of the Halifax Regional Municipality provide “one-stop shopping” and ease of access (listed below) to municipal services for the residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality.

The hours of operation are **8:30 - 4:30, Monday through Friday**, with 24-hour drop off payment boxes at all locations. Services provided include:

Information on:

Council agendas and minutes
 HRM By-Laws
 Employment opportunities
 Recreation programs
 Metro transit schedules and maps
 Waste collection and recycling information

Miscellaneous Payments/Services:

Tax payments
 Residential property taxes
 Commercial property taxes
 Business occupancy taxes
 Parking tickets
 Water bill payments
 Metro Transit bus tickets

Applications for:

Marriage licenses
 Dog licenses
 Property tax exemptions/deferrals
 Grant programs
 Residential parking permits

Locations:

Acadia Centre

636 Sackville Drive Lower, Sackville, NS

Alderney Gate

Mezzanine Level
 40 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth, NS

The Village at Bayers Road

7071 Bayers Road, 2nd Floor CGI Building
 Halifax, NS

Scotia Square Mall

5201 Duke Street, Halifax, NS

Musquodoboit Harbour

Hwy 107 & East Petpeswick Road,
 Musquodoboit Harbour, NS

Cole Harbour Library*

1st Floor Cole Harbour Place
 *Drop off box only

**You can also call HRM Call Centre 490-4000
 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. every day of the week.**

Live

Green. Affordable. Vibrant

Getting Settled

Apply for a permanent residence card

If you do not already have a Canadian permanent residence (PR) card, it is important that you apply for one. The PR card provides cardholders with secure, convenient proof of their permanent resident status when re-entering Canada.

Once you have the IMM1000 Record of Landing, you can apply for the PR card. To apply, call 1-888-242-2100 or visit www.cic.gc.ca.

Apply for a social insurance number

A social insurance number, or SIN, allows you to apply for a job in Canada and receive government benefits. To apply for a card, you have to go to one of the two Service Canada offices listed below.

Service Canada Centres are full service centres offering a mix of information and services. They are open Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. For information on what documents you will need to take with you, go to www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sin/apply/how.shtml or call toll-free at 1-800-206-7218.

Halifax Service Canada Centre
Mumford Towers, Tower 2, Floor Mall
7001 Mumford Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dartmouth Service Canada Centre
Royal Bank Building, Floor 5
46 Portland Street, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Open a Bank Account

In HRM, there are six main banks: RBC Royal Bank, Scotiabank, HSBC Bank Canada, TD Bank, Bank of Montreal, and CIBC. As a customer, you can write cheques, earn interest, apply for credit, and pay your bills. You can also access these services through credit unions and trust companies.

There are different types of bank accounts depending on your needs. To open an account you may need to have two types of identification, a picture ID and/or a social insurance number (for income tax purposes).

Credit cards and building credit

Even if you had many years of credit history with worldwide credit card companies such as VISA and MasterCard, you may not be able to get such a credit card in Canada. If possible, do not cancel your credit cards before you come to Canada. You might need them because you might not be able to get a credit card here right away.

To build your credit history in Canada, talk to the staff at your local bank. Your bank may be willing to give you a credit card with a smaller spending limit or a secured credit card.

Many stores offer their own credit cards for use in their stores. These cards often have very high interest rates so if you do not pay the entire balance each month, you will have to pay a lot of interest.

Housing

Find a place to live

If you can, before you arrive, arrange a place to stay for your first few nights in Nova Scotia. You can contact a travel agent anywhere in the world to find and reserve a place to stay. When you are in Canada or the U.S., you can call Tourism Nova Scotia at 1-800-565-0000 or visit www.novascotia.com. This service is free. You also can temporarily stay in travel hostels or student residences in a university or college for days, weeks, or months for less money than a hotel. A bed-and-breakfast is a room in a house where the owner gives you breakfast every day as part of your stay.

HRM is relatively affordable, but many homes are expensive. Your first home may not be the one you live in forever. You need time to learn about the rental and real estate markets, and different neighbourhoods. A good source of information are local newspapers, Yellow Pages (www.yellowpages.ca) and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/corp).

Most newcomers do not find a job for the first few months. Keep this in mind when you decide how much you will spend on housing. Most experts say you should not spend more than one-third (33.3%) of your total income before taxes on a place to live.

Housing Options

Renting

The average monthly rent for a bachelor studio apartment is \$598, a one-bedroom apartment is \$653, a two-bedroom apartment is \$793, and a three-bedroom apartment is \$1,015. These figures are averages as of 2007, and actual rents can be higher or lower depending on location and what utilities are included. Usually, rent costs are higher near the centre of the city, but this must be balanced with other costs such as transportation.

Some apartments include heat and hot water as part of the rent. Usually apartments come with two appliances (stove and fridge); however, in some cases, other appliances are included such as a dishwasher, washer, and dryer. In looking for an apartment, it is helpful to look around to see what best suits your needs. Remember, you can save money if you share an apartment or house with other people.

When applying to rent an apartment, landlords usually perform background checks on prospective

Tip

Questions to ask before you rent:

- Is it close to a bus route or ferry terminal?
- Is it close to other services? (schools, stores, laundromats, parks, playgrounds, community centres, medical clinics, places of worship)
- Is the apartment building or house quiet?
- What are the other tenants like?
- If you have a car, is there a place to park?
- Do you pay extra for parking?
- Is the neighbourhood safe?
- If you have children, is it close to a school?
- Do you pay extra for heat and electricity?

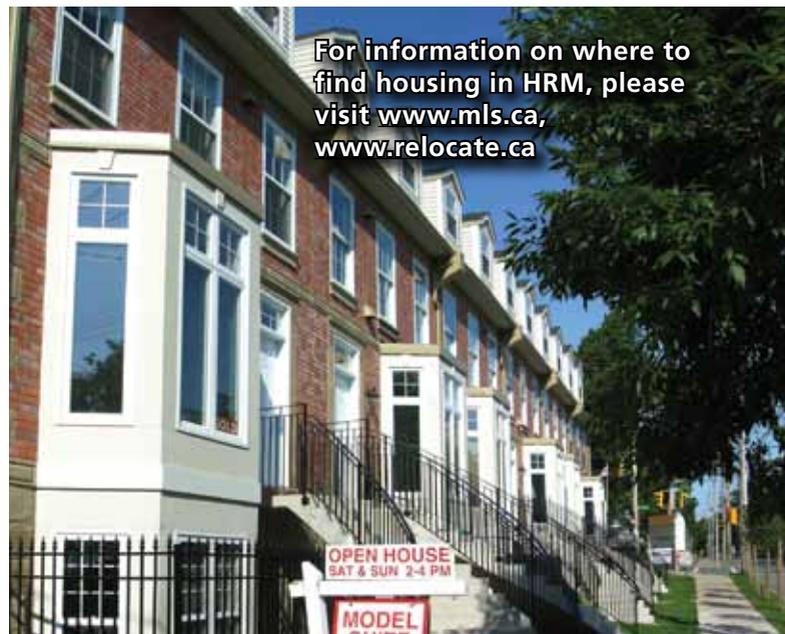
residents. Part of this security check includes calling previous landlords to ensure that prospective tenants paid their rent on time and were good tenants. As a newcomer, you probably will not have names for any local landlords. You might want to look for apartments from companies that have special arrangements for newcomers. A few of these companies are:

1. Universal Properties - www.universalgroup.ca,
2. Killam Properties - www.killamproperties.com
3. Twin City Management - www.twincity.ca

Typically, most rental agreements last for a 12-month period, and rent is due the first of each month. To rent an apartment, you will be asked to provide a deposit, which is usually half of the first month's rent. When you leave the apartment, this amount should be returned to you if the apartment is in good condition. In addition, some rental companies also require 12 post-dated cheques to ensure that rent is paid on time.

For more information on your rights as a tenant, please call the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations toll-free line at 1-800-670-4357 or in HRM at 424-5200.

For information on where to find housing in HRM, please visit www.mls.ca, www.relocate.ca



Buying a house

There are a wide variety of housing choices in many communities throughout HRM. You will find town houses in bustling neighbourhoods, farm-like homes with green acres, coastal properties, modern condominiums in the heart of downtown, and single, detached homes for families of all sizes – and in a range of prices. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, HRM is one of the most inexpensive housing locations in the country.

In HRM, the majority of people looking to buy homes buy existing houses. Newly constructed homes can be much more expensive, at times exceeding \$300,000. Below you will find a chart on average prices of homes that were sold in 2010 in different areas of HRM. The sales price includes both existing homes and new homes:

Location	Average Sales Price
Halifax City	\$ 301,264
Dartmouth City	\$ 206,841
Bedford/Hammond's Plains	\$ 331,680
Sackville	\$ 196,846
Halifax County Southwest	\$ 242,959
Halifax County East	\$ 223,015
Fall River, Beaver Bank	\$ 223,737

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2010

Utilities

Electricity – Nova Scotia Power

Nova Scotia Power Customer Service
You may reach NSP's call centre for customer service information or requests from Monday to Friday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
1-800-428-6230 (toll-free) 428-6230 (Metro Halifax)
1-800-565-6051 (TDD/Deaf or hard of hearing)

Oil

For a list of companies that provide home heating oil, please look in the Yellow Pages of the phone book under "Oils – Fuel".

Water – Halifax Regional Water Commission

<http://www.halifax.ca/hrwc/>

Phone: (902) 490-4820 Fax: (902) 490-4749

24-Hr. Emergency Phone: (902) 490-6940

Telephone / Internet Providers / Cable

In HRM, there are a number of telephone, Internet and cable providers to choose from. For more information on these services, please refer to the Yellow Pages of the telephone book.

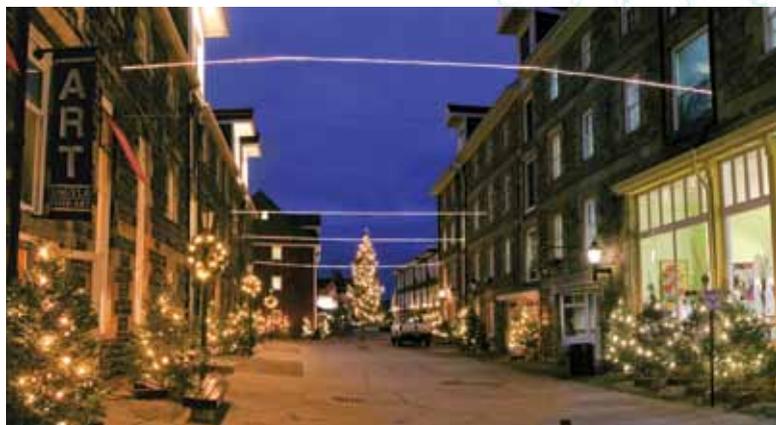
Garbage, recycling and green carts for organic waste

Single-family homes, duplexes, flats, and apartment buildings with six or fewer units have their household waste (including recyclables and compost) picked up at the curb. To find out what day your garbage, recycling or green cart is picked up, call the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000 or visit www.halifax.ca/wrms. This is also who you should call if your house does not have a green cart or mini-bin for composting.

If you live in a larger apartment building or condominium, please contact your building superintendent for details on their recycling and composting program. All properties are required by law to have a program in place.

Major Shopping Areas

Halifax Shopping Centre	www.halifaxshoppingcentre.com
Bayers Lake Park	www.bayerslakepark.com
Mic Mac Mall	www.micmacmall.ca
Dartmouth Crossing	www.dartmouthcrossing.com
Spring Garden Road	www.springgardenroad.com
Downtown Dartmouth	www.dartmouthdowntown.ca
Downtown Halifax	www.downtownhalifax.ns.ca
Quinpool Road	www.quinpoolroad.ca
The Hydrostone Market	www.hydrostonemarket.ca
Bishop's Landing	www.bishopslanding.com
The Farmer's Market in the Brewery Marketplace	www.halifaxfarmersmarket.com



Tip

Check with local phone companies for rates and phone cards. In addition, some convenience stores have phone cards, which in some cases offer better rates to specific countries.

Money

Affordable HRM

Monthly expenses for a family of three can vary widely depending on where you live, where you shop and whether you own a car. The table below will give you some idea of what your costs could be. Many families live on a lot less, and many spend much more. No matter what, it is important to budget carefully.

Item	Cost Per Month
Rent (you will likely be renting when you first arrive)	\$600-1200 for 1-2 bedroom apartment
Rent insurance	\$20
Oil, electricity or natural gas	\$50 - \$150
Telephone	\$30
Long distance	\$20 (depending on use)
Cable TV	\$30
Food	\$300-\$500
Clothing (dependant on what you have now and is weather dependant)	\$100-\$200
Household incidentals (newspapers, bank service charges etc)	\$50
Public transportation www.halifax.ca/metrotransit	Adult \$2.25-\$2.50 cash fare, \$70 monthly pass Senior and Child \$1.50 cash fare and \$52 monthly pass
Other expenses/entertainment	\$100
Total	\$1,080 - 2,460

Sales tax and property tax

Sales tax and property taxes are the main forms of government revenue in HRM. The funds are used to pay for many services. Understanding what they are and how you pay them will make things easier when you own a home and even when you visit the grocery store. It is not common to negotiate in stores for a lower price.

Sales tax

In Nova Scotia, the harmonized sales tax (HST) is charged on most goods and services. The rate of HST is 13 percent. It is a combination of the 5 percent federal goods and services tax (GST) and the 8 percent provincial sales tax (PST). If you bought an item for

\$100, for example, you would pay \$13 in HST. If this tax is not shown on the price tag of an item, it will be added when you pay for the item. Unless specified, HST is not included in price tags.

More detailed information can be found at Canada Revenue Agency website: www.cra-arc.gc.ca

Property tax

If you are planning on owning property in HRM, you must pay residential taxes, which help pay for services such as snow removal, garbage collection, fire protection, and road repairs. The amount of tax you pay will depend on the size, type, and location of your property. The provincial government performs the assessment; however, the municipal government sets the rate and collects the money. Local improvement charges may also be added to your tax bill for certain services. For more information, call 490-4000.

Property insurance

Property insurance is purchased by homeowners, renters, and condominium owners to protect their home and their personal belongings in case of fire, theft, flooding, and other serious problems. Many, if not all, of the costs of repairing or replacing your home and its contents are covered when you have insurance. There are many different insurance companies and insurance brokers that can assist you in finding the right plan.

For more information on companies that offer property insurance, please check the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory. Look under "Insurance (Insurance Agents & Brokers)." *Tip:* Call a few different companies to find the best rate.

Tip

Halifax Regional Municipality can help homeowners pay their property tax through a payment plan, a property rebate or deferral of property taxes (payment is put off to a later date). These programs are available to all homeowners with a combined household income of \$29,000 or less a year, who live within the boundary of Halifax Regional Municipality.

Legal Services

If you need legal services in Nova Scotia, there are many options available to you. For information on lawyers practicing in Nova Scotia, you can check the website of the Nova Scotia Barrister's Society (<http://nsbs.org/>) or the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia (www.legalinfo.org).

Legal aid

If you require legal services but can't afford to hire a lawyer, you may be eligible for assistance through Nova Scotia Legal Aid. It provides a lawyer for people who otherwise couldn't afford one.

There are 13 community-based law offices in Nova Scotia that deal with legal aid cases, as well as the Halifax/Dartmouth Metro Community Law Clinic. Legal aid is not available for refugee claimants.

Community Services

The Nova Scotia Department of Community Services provides a range of support for Children, Youth & Families, Services for Persons with Disabilities, Employment Support & Income Assistance and assistance with Housing & Repairs. To find out more, see www.gov.ns.ca/coms.

Getting Around HRM

Getting around HRM is easy. You can drive a car, ride a bus, hop on a ferry, ride a bike, take a taxi or walk.

Ride the bus, hop on a ferry...

Metro Transit is the name of our public transportation system. The standard fares for one-way service for ferry or bus service are:



Bus, Ferry and Access-A-Bus

Adult: 16 years and up
\$2.25, Monthly pass - \$70
Senior: 65 years and up, Child: 5 - 15 years
\$1.50, Monthly pass - \$52
Student: \$2.25, Monthly pass - \$64

MetroLink*

Adult: \$2.75, Monthly Pass - \$85
Child and Senior: \$2.00

*MetroLink provides three limited-stop, direct-service routes to downtown Halifax and Dartmouth from two major commuter areas. The #159 Portland Hills and #185 Sackville operate a full-service day, Monday to Friday, while the #165 Woodside operates during peak hours on weekdays only.

For specialized service fees and information on routes and schedules, see www.halifax.ca/metrotransit.

MetroX*

Adult & Student: \$3.25, Monthly Pass - \$100
Child & Senior: \$2.50

*MetroX brings commuter-oriented, limited-stop express bus service from Tantallon to the downtown Halifax.

Ferry Service

Ferries operate on two routes between downtown Halifax and Dartmouth. The service is fully accessible, is integrated with the bus and Access-A-Bus systems, and has adjacent Park & Ride lots which allow you to park your car and either take the bus or ferry.

Access-a-Bus

If you cannot use the bus or ferry system because of a disability, there is another option. Access-a-Bus is a shared-ride, door-to-door, public system funded by Halifax Regional Municipality.

There are several levels of eligibility for the Access-A-Bus Service. Some people may have disabilities that call for Access-A-Bus service for all trips, while others will only need the service when traveling alone, in the winter time or for specific trips. To find out more about this service, please call 490-4000 or email: contactHRM@halifax.ca.

Accessible Low-Floor Buses

Metro Transit has a number of accessible low-floor (ALF) buses that provide easier access for residents with physical challenges. Features include a bus floor that lowers to curb level and the ability to secure wheelchairs.

Take a taxi

There are a variety of taxi companies in HRM. To contact a taxi company to pick you up, please look in the Yellow Pages of the phone book under "Taxis."

Wheelchair Accessible Taxi

“Need-A-Lift” is an accessible taxi service that operates throughout HRM. The vehicles can carry a maximum of four wheelchairs and five ambulatory passengers. For trip rates and other information:

Phone: 222-LIFT (5438) Email: needalift@eastlink.ca
Website: www.needalift.ca

Get a driver’s license

If you will be getting around HRM in your own vehicle, please contact the Registry of Motor Vehicles. In some cases, licenses from other countries are recognized in Nova Scotia, but you will have to contact the Registry to see whether your license can be used here. If your license is accepted, you can only use it for 90 days and then you will have to apply for a Nova Scotia driver’s license. If your license is not accepted, you may have to take a written test and a road test.

If you have a valid driver’s license from another part of Canada, you can drive in Nova Scotia for up to 90 days before getting a Nova Scotia driver’s license.

For more information, please visit the Registry of Motor Vehicles at www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rmv/default.asp or call toll-free within Nova Scotia 1-800-898-7688 or 424-5851 within HRM.

Purchase your own vehicle

You can buy a used or new vehicle. The Nova Scotia Automobile Dealers Association is a good place to start your search. You can browse their website at www.nsada.ca. It is always good to do some research before visiting any dealers so that you can negotiate a good price for the vehicle you want to buy. If you will be buying a used car, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has some tips for you. You can find them at www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/consumer/tipsscar.asp.

Once you have bought your car, you must purchase both a vehicle permit, which will get you license plates, and a vehicle certificate registration, which proves ownership. This can be done through your dealership (at an additional cost to you), or you can go to the Registry of Motor Vehicles to get both documents yourself.

Tip: Identification Card

If you are not going to get a driver’s licence and you want proof of age or an identity card with a photo, you will want to get an identification card. This card is often needed in order to take part in age-restricted activities (for example, attending certain movies) or purchasing age-restricted products (for example, alcohol or tobacco products, etc.). It is available through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, is valid for five years and costs \$16.00.

Important

Speed limits and distances are in Metric (1 km = 0.62 miles). Unless otherwise posted, the speed limit within urban and residential areas is 50km/h (31mph); on the highway, 100km/h (60mph). Unless otherwise posted, it is legal in Nova Scotia to turn right on a red light after making a full stop. Seat belt use in Nova Scotia is mandatory. Driving under the influence of alcohol is against the law.

Child safety seats are required for children under 18 kg (40 lb.), and booster seats are required for children under nine years of age or 145 cm (4 ft 9 in) tall; for additional information visit www.momsanddads.ca or call 1-866-288-1388.

Approved helmets must be worn by all users of motorcycles, bicycles, scooters, skateboards and inline skates.

In Nova Scotia, it is against the law to use hand-held **cell phones** or to text message while you are driving. You can use a cell phone only in an emergency or if you are using a hands-free device.

For more information on registering your vehicle, getting a driver’s license, or taking a driver’s test, please contact the Registry of Motor Vehicles toll-free within Nova Scotia at 1-800-898-7688 or 424-5851 within HRM or visit www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rmv/default.asp.

Vehicle insurance

If you own a vehicle in HRM, you must have insurance. In Nova Scotia, it is illegal to drive a car without being insured. Insurance will protect you in the event of an accident, your car is stolen, or if your car is damaged.

For more information on companies that offer vehicle insurance, please check the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory. Look under “Insurance (Insurance Agents & Brokers).”

Bridges

There are two toll bridges in HRM linking downtown Halifax and downtown Dartmouth - the A. Murray MacKay Bridge and Angus L. Madonald Bridge. The toll required for a single crossing (one direction) is 75 cents. The Macdonald Bridge is the only bridge with pedestrian and bicycle access. You can also purchase an electronic Macpass for convenience. See www.macpass.com

Accessibility

Nova Scotia has many resources for people with disabilities. The government also provides financial assistance to people with a recognized disability. In all government buildings there should be wheelchair access. In most public places such as malls and schools, there is access for people with disabilities.

The Atlantic office of **VoicePrint** brings an audio version of printed material to people with vision difficulties. Phone (902) 444-7359 or go to www.voiceprintcanada.com.

The **Interpreter Service for the Deaf** is available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone (902) 429-5752.

Email: interpreterservice@ns.sympatico.ca

Emergencies: (902) 498-1198 (pager)

For more information, go to the Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission website at www.gov.ns.ca/disa.

Health Services

HRM is health conscious. According to the Places Rated Almanac, HRM has the fifth highest-rated health-care service in North America and the highest in Canada.

Tip: *Walk In Clinics*

If you don't have a family doctor, there are walk-in style medical clinics staffed by qualified, licensed physicians. You can call the clinics to make same day appointments as well. You can visit Doctors of Nova Scotia website for a listing of Walk In Clinics in HRM: www.doctors.ns.ca.

Health care

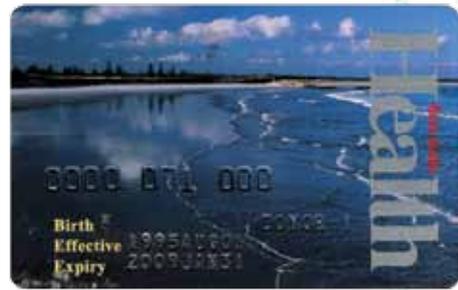
The excellence of our system is evident in our facilities. HRM has one of the largest concentrations of health-care facilities and specialists in Canada. Dalhousie Medical School is one of Canada's oldest medical schools and the only one in the Maritimes, with world-class research facilities and award-winning educators.

Find a family doctor

To find a doctor you can call the Physician Information Line at 424-3047 in HRM, and in some cases, lists of doctors accepting new patients can be found at hospitals. You can also visit this website from the Department of Health to find out which doctors are accepting new patients:

www.gov.ns.ca/health/physicians.

For information on where to find a dentist or optometrist, please check the Yellow Pages of the telephone book.



Apply for a Nova Scotia Health Card

In Nova Scotia, basic health coverage (called Medical Service Insurance or MSI) is already paid for through your taxes. It is important to apply for a health card as soon as possible. This card allows you to receive free medical and hospital services in Nova Scotia. Once you have received a card, you must carry it with you at all times, as it must be given to the physician and/or hospital each time you need insured medical services.

If you are a permanent resident moving to Nova Scotia from another part of the country, coverage will generally begin two months after you arrive. Be sure to contact your previous province to ensure your coverage is maintained until your Nova Scotia coverage begins.

If you are immigrating to Nova Scotia from another country, the provincial insurance program, will provide coverage from the first day you arrive.

For more information on applying for a health card, please visit www.gov.ns.ca/health/msi/ or call 496-7008 in HRM or 1-800-563-8880 toll-free.

Note: Since the provincial health card covers only certain medical services, additional health insurance is available from private companies for such things as prescription drugs, dental care, eye care, and medical equipment. These services are also often provided as part of an employee benefit plan.

Smoke-free Places Act

The *Nova Scotia Smoke-free Places Act* requires all indoor workplaces and public places to be smoke free. All outdoor licensed areas and restaurants, lounges, beverage rooms and cabarets must also be smoke-free.

Scent-free

Most work places also have scent-free programs in place which asks that employees and visitors do not wear products with fragrances. This is done in consideration of those with allergies or sensitivity to those products.

Major health facilities

Capital District Health Authority provides health services to HRM as well as specialized services to all of Atlantic Canada. Located in the heart of HRM, the QEII is the largest hospital in Atlantic Canada, occupying 10 buildings on two sites. In addition to providing care to tens of thousands of Atlantic Canadians each year, the QEII is a centre of excellence in health research.

The IWK Health Centre provides quality care to women, children and youth in Greater Halifax, the three Maritime Provinces and beyond. The IWK's health professionals have expertise in pediatrics, surgery, psychiatry, dentistry, laboratory medicine, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, obstetrics, gynaecology, pediatric emergency medicine, pediatric critical care, and family medicine.

While HRM is proud of its facilities, health is a lot more than just health care services. Capital District engages the community in HRM through six regional Community Health Boards made up of local residents. The Boards consult with community residents, groups and organizations to determine the priority health issues affecting people of all ages in the community. Together with other groups, the Boards support many different community activities that aim to improve health. As part of its mandate in accordance with the

Health Authority Act - Bill 34, each board annually submits a community health plan or update to Capital Health. For more information visit www.cdha.nshealth.ca or call (902) 424-3618.

Hospitals/Health Centres with Emergency Services

Cobequid Community Health Centre	40 Freer Lane Lower Sackville
Dartmouth General Hospital	325 Pleasant Street Dartmouth
Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital	22637, #7 Highway Sheet Harbour
Musquodoboit Valley Memorial Hospital	492 Archibald Brook Rd Middle Musquodoboit
QEII Health Sciences Centre	1278 Tower Road Halifax
Twin Oaks Memorial Hospital	7702 # 7 Highway Musquodoboit Harbour
IWK Health Centre	5850/5980 University Avenue, Halifax
*Please note: the number to call during all emergencies is 911.	

The IWK Health Centre



Did you know?

A communication barrier at a hospital could put your safety at risk.

Capital Health provides free cultural health interpreters. Interpretation is available in 24 languages, as well as sign language. Simply let hospital staff know if you require the services of an interpreter.

Holistic medicine practitioners and resources

If you're looking for a holistic medicine practitioner you will find the *Nova Scotia Good Health Directory* useful. Nova Scotia has dozens of holistic medicine practitioners from chiropractors and homeopaths to acupuncturists and naturopaths.

For more information:

Phone: 431-6370

Website: www.novascotiahealthdirectory.ca



Photo: Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services

Faith

Many religions and spiritual centres call HRM home, and there are a variety of places of worship. For more information, please look in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book under "Churches."

Cultural/Religious Organizations in HRM

For more information on how to contact a particular cultural/religious organization listed to the right, please call the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia at (902) 423-6534 or e-mail them at admin@mans.ns.ca.

Cultural/Religious Organizations in HRM

African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes
Afro-Canadian Caucus of Nova Scotia
Albanian Canadian Community Association
An Cumann-Irish Association of Nova Scotia
Arab Canadian Association of the Atlantic Provinces
Armenian Cultural Association of the Atlantic Provinces
Asha Indo-Canadian Women & Youth Association
Association of Nigerians in Nova Scotia
Association of Pakistani Canadians of Nova Scotia
Atlantic Jewish Council
Baha'i Community of Halifax
Black Cultural Centre of Nova Scotia
Canadian Lebanon Society
Canada Palestine Association
Caribbean Society
Chinese Society of Nova Scotia
Croatian-Canadian Cultural Education Society
Diman Association of Canada
Egyptian Coptic Community
Ethiopian Association of Nova Scotia
Federation of Scottish Clans of Nova Scotia
La Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse
Filipino Association of Nova Scotia
Filipino Canadian Heritage Society of Nova Scotia
Ghanian Friendship Association
G.U. of Palestinian Students
German Canadian Association of Nova Scotia
Greek Community of Halifax
Indo-Canadian Association of Nova Scotia
Halifax Iranian Cultural Society
Islamic Association of Nova Scotia
Islamic Community Centre of Nova Scotia
Islamic Information Foundation
Italian Canadian Cultural Association of Nova Scotia
Japanese Society of Nova Scotia
Korean Association
Latvian Association
Maritime Sikh Society
MicMac Native Friendship Centre
Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia
Nova Scotia Turkish Association
Palestine Social Association
Polish Association of Halifax/Dartmouth

Cultural/Religious Organizations continued

Portuguese Society of Nova Scotia
Russian Society of the Maritimes
Scandinavian Society of Nova Scotia
Shambhala Centre
South India Cultural Association of the Maritimes
South East Asian Association
Sisters from the Caribbean
Sri Lankan Association of Nova Scotia
Sri Lankan Canadian Association of Nova Scotia
Swiss-Canadian Cultural Association of Nova Scotia
Taiwanese-Canadian Association of Nova Scotia
Thai
Ugandan-Canadian Association of the Maritimes
United African-Canadian Women's Association
Vietnamese Association of Nova Scotia
Multicultural Council of Halifax/Dartmouth

Did you know?

Every resident of Nova Scotia has the right to practice their religion or creed. It is a right of all Canadians as outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. An employee cannot be fired because of their religious beliefs.



Education

Find a school

Public education is free and available to every child in Canada. Most children in this country attend public schools. In HRM, more than 54,000 students attend one of 140 schools where 3,600 teachers work to engage – and inform – young people. The current teacher-student ratio is 15:1.



Halifax West High School, Clayton Park

Approximately five per cent of students attend private schools, which charge an annual fee. Halifax has numerous private schools, which offer an equally high quality education and specialized options. Parents also have the choice to home school their child. To do this, you must register with the Department of Education and follow a specific curriculum.

Usually children start going to school when they are four or five and must attend school until the age of 15 or 16, depending on where they live.

For more information on the public school system, please visit the Department of Education's website at www.ednet.ns.ca.

Please note: There are both French and English schools in the HRM. For more information on this, please call the Halifax Regional School Board at 464-2000.

Register children

To register your child, you must first know which school they should attend. To determine this, visit the "Home Address Lookup" section of the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) website at www.hrsb.ns.ca/tools/addresslookup and type in your home address.

Once you have the school name, you will have to complete a registration form available from your local school or the HRSB website. The school will need proof of residency (such as a utility bill or lease agreement), proof of your child's date of birth, and the completed registration form including your child's health card number.

The earlier the principal is aware of a new student's arrival, the better prepared the school can be. Advance notice gives school staff time to meet with you to find out more about your family so that the transition into school will be successful.



Find a French-immersion school

French-immersion programs allow non-francophone students to acquire a high degree of proficiency in the French language. All subjects are taught in French, and graduates can communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

French-immersion programs are offered in designated schools as an alternative approach to learning French. The learning outcomes of the French curriculum are the same as those of the English program. There are two French immersion streams. The early program allows students entry into the program at the Primary level and extends to Grade 12. The late program allows students to start at Grade 7 and continue until Grade 12.

For more information on French immersion, please visit the Halifax Regional School Board website at www.hrsb.ns.ca/content/id/615.html, or call the HRSB at 464-2000.

Arrange for child care

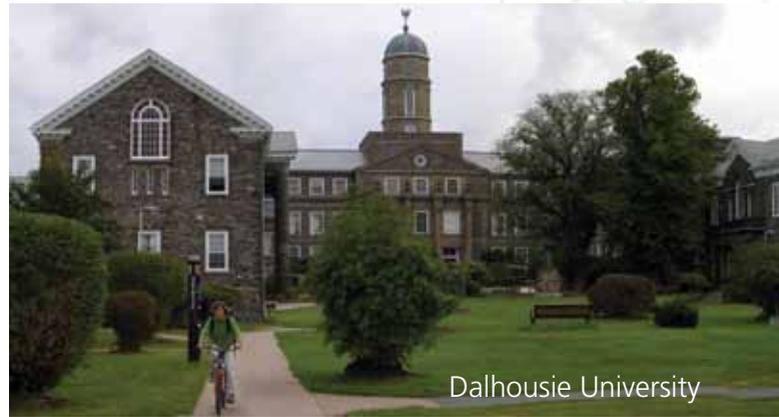
It is illegal to leave a child under the age of 12 home alone. Whether parents are working or have to go out for a short time, the child must be under the supervision of a caregiver. There are different options for parents who cannot always be home to care for children.

Child Care Connections Nova Scotia is a non-profit, community-based development organization that provides a directory of licensed child care centres. Visit www.cccns.org for more information. Also see www.hrmparent.ca.

Post-secondary education

HRM is a community that thrives on learning – and enjoys the energy and exuberance that comes with being in a place where young people are embraced.

Thousands of those young people attend one of the city's many post-secondary schools.



Dalhousie University provides more than 15,000 students with a first-class education in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. In addition to offering degrees in arts, social sciences, science, management, and computer science, the university provides professional and specialized training in a variety of health professions, medicine, dentistry, architecture, engineering, and law. www.dal.ca

Saint Mary's University (SMU)

SMU offers undergraduate and graduate programs in business administration, arts, and science. It prides itself on being student focused while providing quality research opportunities. With a strong focus on business administration, the university is the only institution in Atlantic Canada offering a PhD in Business Administration. www.smu.ca

Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU)

The Mount, as it is commonly called, offers an array of degrees in liberal arts and sciences and an array of professional programs including business administration, education, information technology, public relations, and tourism and hospitality management. The university is committed to providing accessible education through its innovative distance-learning and continuing education programs. www.msvu.ca

University of King's College (King's)

King's focuses entirely on undergraduate education and offers a unique first-year experience for students through its Foundation Year Programme. King's is also well known in the region for its outstanding Bachelor of Journalism degree. www.ukings.ns.ca



Nova Scotia College of Art and Design

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University (NSCAD)

NSCAD offers four-year undergraduate programs leading to a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Design, Bachelor of Design (Honours), and Bachelor of Arts. In addition, NSCAD also offers two graduate-degree programs: a Master of Fine Arts and a Master of Arts in art education. www.nscad.ns.ca

Atlantic School of Theology (AST)

AST is a graduate school created through the amalgamation of four faculties – Anglican, Roman Catholic, and the United Church of Canada – into one ecumenical school to serve the Atlantic region. Other Christian denominations including Lutheran, Presbyterian, and the Salvation Army are also represented. www.astheology.ns.ca

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)

NSCC has three campuses in Halifax providing training to more than 7,500 students. Programs offered at NSCC often include the option of work terms, cooperative education, and apprenticeship. NSCC has a proven track record: 90 per cent of graduates are employed and most in their field of study. www.nsccl.ns.ca

Career Colleges

In addition to these post-secondary schools, Halifax is home to more than 20 leading career colleges, which train students in specific industry occupations such as business, cosmetology, information technology, and media and film. A full list of these colleges is provided through the Nova Scotia Department of Education at <http://pcc.ednet.ns.ca/schools.shtml>.

Adult education

Metro Council on Continuing Education (MCCE) publishes *Opportunities For Learning* every fall, winter, and spring. This booklet promotes adult education program opportunities in the Halifax Regional Municipality. Over 89,000 free copies are distributed through *The Chronicle Herald* newspaper, local libraries, and various learning institutions. You can also access it online at www.mcce.ca.

English-language training

There are different organizations that can assist you with your English-language training. The Immigration settlement & Integration Services (ISIS) use the Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment program, a tool to evaluate newcomers' English skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The program includes language assessment and language-education counseling. Please visit this website for more information www.isisns.ca Or you can call the ISIS office at 423-3607. You can also find English as a Second language schools in the yellow pages in the phone book.

Public Libraries

Halifax Public Libraries are the life-long learning centres of the community and the place people turn to for the discovery of ideas, the joy of reading and the power of information.

The Halifax Public Libraries system includes 14 libraries, one mobile library (which serves the residents of the Musquodoboit Valley, Fall River, Lake Echo, Porter's Lake, Eastern Passage, Prospect Road, North Preston and East Preston), Books-by-Mail and Home Delivery services, and the library website. The library collection consists of more than 1,164,578 items – including books, magazines, videos, compact discs and cassettes.

In addition to borrowing services, the library offers Adult Literacy and Upgrading programs, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, public computer and internet access, and meeting rooms. They also offer a variety of programs for preschool and school age children and teens and adults – from Hobbies & Interests and Employment & Money Matters, to Hands On Activities for children and Teen Drop-ins.

Library staff are available, by appointment, at all library locations to provide a tour of the branch, and will familiarize you or your family with the library's buildings, collections and services.

To get a library card you need the following:

- Two pieces of identification. One must have a unique ID number.
- Proof of a mailing address.
- A parent's signature if you are under 14 years of age.

www.halifaxpubliclibraries.com
(902) 490-5744

Multilingual Books

The library carries books in English, French and 20 more languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Spanish. They have books for adults and children. If they don't carry books in the language you need, they may be able to access them from libraries outside the province.

www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca or ask for assistance at your local library branch.
Information Desk (902) 490-5710

Public Computer and Internet Access

Halifax Public Library Access for All

The assistive technology stations at the Alderney Gate, Halifax North and Sackville branch libraries are one way to make sure the computers fit your needs and not the other way around.

Computer Labs

Non-profit groups can book these labs free of charge for workshops and training sessions.

Book a Computer

Individual computers are available for booking in all branches.

Wireless Internet

All branch libraries have free wireless access to the internet. All you need is a library card.

Community Access Program (C@P Sites)

The Community Access Program (CAP) provides Canadians with affordable public access to the Internet and the skills to use it effectively. The program is an important part of "Connecting Canadians", the government of Canada's program to make Canadians the most Internet-connected

Keshen Goodman Public Library



people in the world. Under CAP, public sites such as local schools, libraries and community centres offer Internet access and provide support on how to make the best use of the Internet.

Find a C@P Site anywhere in Halifax Regional Municipality by dialing: 1-866-569-8428

Media

Television

For news, the local channels are the *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* (www.cbc.ca), *CTV Atlantic* (www.ctv.ca), and *Global Maritimes* (www.canada.com/globaltv/maritimes). Eastlink Television, a community television station, provides a wide variety of local programming.

Radio

Below is a selection of radio stations. For full list of radio stations, see "Radio Stations & Broadcasting Companies" in the Yellow Pages of the phone book.

- CBC Radio One **90.5 FM** & CBC Radio Two **102.7 FM** (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: Canada's national public broadcaster)
- **97.9 FM** Halifax Information Radio (weather, road conditions, airport arrivals and departures, stock exchange reports, dollar exchange rate, short information based features)
- **94.7 FM** Seaside FM (community based not-for-profit radio station based in Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia staffed by volunteers)
- **95.7 FM** News (news/talk radio format)

Newspapers

There are two daily newspapers in the HRM: *The Chronicle Herald* (www.thechronicleherald.ca), and a free daily, *Metro News* (www.metronews.ca). There is also a free weekly newspaper, *The Coast*, which dishes up local and entertainment news (www.thecoast.ca). There are also two national newspapers: *The Globe and Mail* (www.theglobeandmail.com) and *The National Post* (www.canada.com/nationalpost). As well, there are weekly newspapers in some communities.

Touch BASE: The Magazine for Global-Minded Canadians

Touch BASE is a free monthly news tabloid with an editorial perspective designed for newcomers to Canada and global-minded citizens. The publishers do at least three special ethnic community reports every

year as well as produce the Diversity Calendar in December. You can find it in most public places such as ferry terminals and libraries.

Papers from around the world... everyday!

Atlantic News (at Queen and Morris Street) is a family run newsstand which can print you your very own copy of today's paper from places around the globe.

www.atlanticnews.ca 902-429-5468

Seniors

Seniors – regardless of their income or age – are pleased to be living in HRM because it offers both a relaxed pace of life and a variety of social activities. Seniors feel included and respected in their communities, and feel that their contributions are recognized. Important aspects include our city's relatively small size, our many parks and trails, and the variety of opportunities for social participation available to seniors through many seniors' organizations and clubs, and its arts and culture.



Department of Seniors

The Department of Seniors serves as a single entry point to the government of Nova Scotia on aging issues, provides information on programs and services for seniors, and listens and responds to the concerns of seniors and others.

Programs for Seniors is a comprehensive information directory published each year by the department to give Nova Scotia's seniors quick and easy access to the many programs and services available in the province. To access this document, please visit the department's website at www.gov.ns.ca/scs/.

In addition, the Department of Seniors is pleased to provide information and assistance to seniors and persons acting on their behalf.

Seniors Information Line: 424-0065

Fax: 424-0561

E-mail: scs@gov.ns.ca

Youth

Halifax possesses a relatively young population; more than one-quarter are under 20. Youth in HRM have a voice in government! The Regional Youth Advisory Committee (RYAC) make recommendations to Regional Council regarding issues important to youth! For more information visit www.hrmyouth.ca!

Contact the Youth Advisory Committee: E-Mail: hrmyouth@halifax.ca Phone: 902-490-5451



hrmyouth.ca

hrmyouth.ca is a site designed by youth for youth ages 13 - 19 in HRM. It's an online "hub" for youth events & programs, jobs & volunteer opportunities, teen health info and much more!

www.hrmyouth.ca E-Mail: hrmyouth@halifax.ca
Phone: 902-490-5451

Safety

To ensure your safety, HRM provides police, fire and emergency services.

Police

HRM is unique in Canada. It is the only municipality that has both a fully employed police service (Halifax Regional Police) and a contracted police service (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or RCMP).

The Halifax Regional Police is primarily responsible for policing the urban core while the rest of the community is policed by the RCMP.

All emergency services in HRM, and throughout Nova Scotia, are accessible through a 911 system administered by the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office.

Police use the community-response model of policing, which addresses community issues and increases police visibility. A Community Response Officer is assigned to individual communities to work with citizens to identify and resolve issues. Patrol officers are assigned to specific areas so an officer can get to know the

community and assist directly with quality-of-life and crime-related issues.

Tip

911 should only be dialed in the case of an emergency; for all other calls, use the police non-emergency number, 490-5020, which is answered 24 hours a day.

Fire and emergency services

The municipality is divided into two broad areas for fire and emergency services (which include rescues, medical emergencies, accidents, and hazardous materials incidents). The urban core includes Halifax, Dartmouth, Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, Westphal, Bedford, and Sackville and is served by 17 stations. The non-core area is served by 42 stations and staffed by a mix of volunteer and career firefighters all coordinated by a central dispatch system.



Canadian Forces

HRM is home to Canada's East Coast naval base, which is the largest military base in Canada in terms of the number of posted personnel. The base, formed from a variety of military properties around Halifax Harbour, provides construction engineering, general and specific mandated safety, environment management, logistics, harbour support and emergency response services to Maritime Forces Atlantic.

Work

Smart. Youthful. Diverse.

Photo: Greater Halifax Partnership

Find a job

HRM is a thriving business centre with a strong creative community and established business organizations. Major employers in HRM include the telecommunications industry, the health care sector, and all three levels of government.

Business is good. In 2007, 86 per cent of firms anticipated steady or increasing sales, an optimistic outlook that is also reflected in the more than 2,000 new jobs created in 2006. The future looks bright.

The Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services provides assistance to newcomers looking to find jobs in HRM. An employment specialist will help you identify career goals; find out how to get your qualifications assessed and recognized; make a realistic action plan; get referral to other useful organizations; develop a resume; access information about educational opportunities; and network with potential employers. To speak with an employment specialist at ISIS, please call 423-3607 or e-mail employment_services@isis.ns.ca.

If you would like to find leading employment agencies in HRM, look in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book under "Employment Agencies."

To take a closer look at current job opportunities in HRM, visit:

www.careerbeacon.com
www.jobspress.com
www.allstarjobs.ca
www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Tip

Foreign credentials

If you are an internationally-educated professional in a regulated occupation, you will need to contact the regulatory authority in your field. For more information about this process, and for services to prepare you for successful integration into the workforce, contact ISIS and ask about employment services.

www.isisns.ca/iep.php
Phone: 423-3607

Nova Scotia Nominee Program

Nova Scotia Office of Immigration
1741 Brunswick Street, Suite 7104

www.novascotiainmigration.com
Phone: 424-5230

Employment assistance for persons with disabilities

TEAM Work Cooperative Ltd. brings together organizations that deliver employment-related services to persons with disabilities. Services include career counselling and an onsite resource facility to assist in your career search.

www.teamworkcooperative.ns.ca
Phone: 422-8900

WORKink is a website that provides employment services to people with disabilities. The website provides job search tools, career guidance, and resources on education and employment.

<http://ns.workink.com>
Email: workink@ccr.org

Networking

Apart from recruitment agencies and job sites, finding a job in HRM involves networking with people in the community. Once you have settled in, it is time to get involved. Join a professional organization, get involved in a local charity, or sign up for a sport. These are all great ways to meet new contacts and further explore the job market. Below is a quick list of helpful organizations:

Halifax Chamber of Commerce

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is the largest among mid-sized Canadian cities and considered the leading chamber in North America. As the voice of business in HRM, the Chamber advocates on behalf of almost 2,000 members and the 90,000 men and women they employ. The Halifax Chamber of Commerce offers networking opportunities with people in the business community.

www.halifaxchamber.com

Phone: 468-7111

FUSION Halifax

FUSION Halifax is a networking group for young professionals 20 to 40 years old. These individuals are inspired to make their city a better place to live, work and play. FUSION Halifax highlights existing social, volunteer, economic, leisure, and cultural opportunities and creates new opportunities where none existed before.

www.fusionhalifax.ca

E-mail: info@fusionhalifax.ca

Halifax Women's Network

The mission at the Halifax Women's Network is to provide opportunities for professional women to enhance their careers, increase their contacts, create a positive image, and strengthen their links to the community.

Since 1980, the Halifax Women's Network has become a strong non-profit association of career-directed women who are getting the most out of their busy schedule by networking.

www.halifaxwomensnetwork.com/

E-mail: info@halifaxwomensnetwork.com

Photo: ISIS



Employment Rights & Responsibilities

In Nova Scotia, the Labour Standards Code and its Regulations set the basis for the employer-employee relationship. It outlines benefits such as minimum wage, vacation and holidays, pregnancy/parental leave, the right of retail workers to refuse work on Sundays and holidays, and others. The labour code also outlines rules for the employment of children under 14 and under 16 years of age. It is important to make yourself familiar with these rules whether you are looking for a job or would like to hire employees in your own business.

Both employees and employers have rights and responsibilities under these rules. If either party believes the rules have been broken, a complaint can be filed with the Labour Standards Division. A simple guide to the Code can be found at: www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/employmentrights/docs/LabourStandardsCodeGuide.pdf or you can call 1-888-315-0110 for more information.



Photo: ISIS

Minimum Wage Rate

A wage rate is the amount of money an employer pays an employee for each hour of work. In Nova Scotia, the General Minimum Wage Order sets minimum wage rates, which is the least amount of money an employer must pay an employee for each hour of work.

In Nova Scotia there are two wage rates, one for experienced employees and one for inexperienced employees. An experienced employee has done a kind of work for at least three calendar months. An inexperienced employee has done a kind of work for less than three calendar months.

The General Minimum Wage Order also sets employment standards for the following:

- overtime, for some groups
- partial hours
- being called into work at times other than scheduled working hours
- employees waiting for work on the owner's premises
- piecework
- the cost of uniforms
- the cost of board, lodging, and meals

Starting April 1, 2010, employers must pay experienced employees at least \$9.20 per hour. They must pay inexperienced employees at least \$8.70 for each hour of work. The minimum wage rate applies to a work week of 48 hours or less.

For more information, please see the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Workforce Development website at www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/employmentrights/MinimumWage.asp or call Labour Standards Division at 1-888-315-0110 or 902-424-4311.

Income tax

In Canada, people pay income tax each year, and this money is used to support essential programs such as health care. Although residents must submit their income tax return to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) by April 30th, most people automatically have taxes deducted from their paycheque throughout the year. You will receive a refund if too much was deducted or you will have to pay the balance if not enough was deducted.

Once you have filed your income tax, you will also be eligible for tax-credit programs such as the Child Tax Credit and Goods and Services Tax Credit.

Libraries offer assistance on filing income tax.

For more information on services provided by the CRA call 1-800-267-6999 or visit www.cra-arc.gc.ca

Childcare tax benefit

If you have children, you may qualify for certain benefits from provincial and federal governments. You can obtain the application forms and further information from the Canada Revenue Agency: www.cra-arc.gc.ca/benefits



Photo: ISIS

Start Your Own Business

If you are interested in starting your own business, there are many resources available to assist you. Your first stop should be to see the Immigrant Business Development Services (IBDS) team at Immigration Settlement & Integration Services.

IBDS

The IBDS team at ISIS provides services and support to immigrants at all stages of business start-up and business development. Their services include providing individual information sessions and referrals, as well as training and networking opportunities. IBDS also creates links with the business community at large and promotes contributions of immigrants while addressing the challenges they encounter. You will also find “Connections: A Business Start-Up Guide” helpful.

http://www.isisns.ca/business_development.php

Phone: (902) 443-2937 ext. 8644

Running Your Business

Once you have started your business, you will find helpful resources below.

Greater Halifax Partnership

The Greater Halifax Partnership focuses on business, people and community. With support from their investors and all three levels of government, the Partnership is working to create a competitive business climate in HRM. Through the Greater Halifax Partnership’s SmartBusiness program, the organization reaches out to business owners to hear about the challenges, needs, and opportunities that affect competitiveness. With this information, their task

becomes one of tackling obstacles and clearing the way for an even more vibrant and growing economy in Greater Halifax.

www.greaterhalifax.com

Phone: (902) 490-6000

Toll-free: 1-800-565-1191

Human Rights Act

As stated by the Nova Scotian Human Rights Commission: “Nova Scotia’s Human Rights Act is a provincial law that affirms every person is free and equal in dignity and rights without regard to age, race, colour, religion, creed, sex (gender), sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, ethnicity, national or aboriginal origin, family or marital status, source of income or political belief, affiliation, or activity. The Act also prohibits sexual harassment in all areas of public life.”

This means that it is against the law to be judged, or refused employment, or equal pay for any of the reasons listed above. If you feel your human rights, have been violated, you can seek legal advice or action. More on this can be found by reading the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms at <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/Charter/index.html>

For more information about the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, visit the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission website at www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights.

Photo: ISIS





Creative. Active. Dynamic.

Whatever your interests – indoor or outdoor – there’s always something exciting going on in HRM, and that’s why more and more people are living and working here.

Enjoy the buskers that perform along our waterfront boardwalk in the summer, enjoy fine-dining or live entertainment in one of our many restaurants and pubs, take in a professional theatre or symphony performance, take a stroll in the historic Public Gardens or Point Pleasant Park, go sailing in the harbour on the Bluenose II schooner, take in an exciting hockey game, or visit one of our many museums, galleries, or heritage sites.

HRM also offers a variety of recreational facilities and activities for your enjoyment including natural parks for walking, cycling, or cross-country skiing; paddling groups; yacht clubs; golf courses; and fitness facilities. If you love organized sport – as a spectator or participant – you’ll find something to get your pulse pumping all year round.

Culture and Heritage

Creativity is what drives every dynamic and modern community. Halifax Regional Municipality has combined its rich history, its access to educational opportunities for people of all ages, and its relaxed way of life to provide a rich array of opportunities for new and current residents.

Apart from the strong quality of life, there are numerous art galleries, libraries, theatres, and museums including the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. There are also many free events taking place throughout the year for your family to enjoy.

Whatever your preference, this section gives an overview of some of the Culture and Heritage opportunities Halifax Regional Municipality has to offer and where to find more information:

Art Galleries

Anna Leonowens Gallery www.nscad.ns.ca/gallery

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia www.agns.gov.ns.ca

Dalhousie University Art Gallery <http://artgallery.dal.ca>

Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery www.msvuart.ca

St. Mary’s University Art Gallery www.smu.ca

There are also many private galleries in HRM.



The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

Museums

Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia www.bccns.com
Citadel Hill, National Historic Site www.parkscanada.ca
Federation of Nova Scotia Heritage www.fnsh.ns.ca
Maritime Museum of the Atlantic
museum.gov.ns.ca/mma
Museum of Natural History
www.museum.gov.ns.ca/mnh
Pier 21 National Historic Site www.pier21.ca

Music

JazzEast www.jazzeast.com
Scotia Festival of Music www.scotiafestival.ns.ca
St. Cecilia Concert Series www.stcecilia.ca
Symphony Nova Scotia www.symphonymnovascotia.ca

Special Events

Atlantic Film Festival www.atlanticfilm.com
The Halifax International Busker Festival
www.buskers.ca
Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo www.nstatattoo.ca

Theatre

Eastern Front Theatre www.easternfront.ns.ca
Mermaid Theatre www.mermaidtheatre.ns.ca
Neptune Theatre www.neptunetheatre.com
Theatre Nova Scotia www.theatrens.ca
There are also many community theatres.

Recreation

Recreational activities can help you and your family stay healthy – and meet lots of great people. For children and youth, participation leads directly to healthy development as well as the development of many important values and life skills. Recreation also builds strong families and healthy communities and can help bridge understanding among diverse cultures. HRM is an active community. Take a look at what is offered by HRM Community Recreation:

- numerous programs on everything from rock climbing to gardening, sailing to oil painting
- 300 junior leadership training opportunities
- 23 supervised beaches and 3 indoor pools
- 21 recreation centres
- 7 skateboard parks and 4 BMX dirt jump sites
- 175 ball parks
- 325 playgrounds
- 130 sports fields

For more information, please call the recreation hotline at 490-6666 or visit www.halifax.ca/recreation. Ask to be included on the e-mail newsletter list and receive the latest information on HRM's recreation programs. To sign up, simply drop a line to reconnect@halifax.ca.

Tip

HRM Kids is a program to provide financial assistance to ensure that children and youth can participate in sport, art, cultural and recreation activities. For more information call 490-4760 or go to www.halifax.ca/recreation/HRMKids

Community Recreation Centres

Your local community/ recreation centre is a great place to meet new people and get involved in your community.

<http://www.halifax.ca/rec/reccentres.html>



Sports facilities

Apart from the community recreation centres and the facilities mentioned above, HRM has numerous other sports facilities worth checking out. For instance, Dalhousie University and Saint Mary's University both have excellent athletic facilities that are open to the public. If you are interested in using one of these athletic facilities, please visit www.athletics.dal.ca or www.smu.ca/athletics

Other sports facilities include:

- Cole Harbour Place www.coleharbourplace.com
- Dartmouth Sportsplex www.dartmouthsportsplex.com
- Halifax Forum www.halifaxforum.ca
- Sackville Sports Stadium www.thestadium.ca
- St. Margaret's Arena www.stmargaretscentre.ca



Parks

Halifax Regional Municipality has over 1,200 parks, many open spaces and hundreds of kilometres of recreation trails that appeal to many people. Runners, walkers, dog walkers, nature enthusiasts, scientists, hikers, and picnickers all enjoy HRM's parks and open spaces as places to enjoy nature only a stone's throw from their community. HRM's parks are open year-round. For more information, visit the visitors section of www.halifax.ca and click on "Trails, Parks & Wilderness Areas" in the left-hand menu.



Joe Colley of the Nova Scotia Mass Choir

- Italian weekend
- Lebanese Festival
- Polish Festival
- Latin Festival

Fans of jazz, blues, rock, pop, classical, hip-hop and urban, folk, country and Celtic music will find lots to enjoy in HRM. Over the years, hundreds of talented musicians have arrived here to join a strong and welcoming arts community. Out of this has risen the Halifax Pop Explosion, In the Dead of Winter Festival, the Scotia Festival of Music, Ceilidh on the Docks, the Halifax Highland Games and Scottish Festival, Maritime Fiddle Festival, and DRUM, where four cultural groups come together to stage a breathtaking performance.

Be sure to check out Symphony Nova Scotia, the Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society, private music schools, our modern and flamenco dance troupes, and much more.

For more information on Festivals and Events, call HRM's 24-hour line at 490-6776 (ext. 2) or visit www.halifaxinfo.com for the most up-to-date information on what's happening.

For information on large-scale events, please visit:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Dalhousie Arts Centre | artscentre.dal.ca/box.html |
| Destination Halifax | www.destinationhalifax.com |
| Events Halifax | www.eventshalifax.com |
| Ticket Atlantic | www.ticketatlantic.com |

Festivals and Fun

HRM residents come together regularly to celebrate events such as Canada Day, Bedford Days, and Natal Day. Then there are events which attract performers and spectators from around the world including the Atlantic Jazz Festival, the Halifax International Busker Festival, and the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo.

The city's *major event venues* include the Halifax Metro Centre, the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium and the Sir James Dunn Theatre (both part of the Dalhousie Arts Centre), the Cunard Centre, and the Schooner Room (at Casino Nova Scotia). In some cases, various churches open their doors for musical events which can seat audiences of several hundred.

There are also many smaller venues like The Music Room, and bars and pubs which host all kinds of music.

The Nova Scotia Multicultural Festival usually takes place in June in Dartmouth. There are other cultural festivals taking place throughout the summer:

- Acadian Festival
- Greek Fest

Restaurants

HRM is home to a delicious – and diverse – array of restaurants. Visit www.thecoast.ca for a listing of places to eat. Simply click on the "Food & Drink Guide" or visit the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's website at www.edining.ca.



Enjoy one of HRM's many outdoor patios



Westmount Inclusive Playground

Good Neighbours, Great Neighbourhoods Initiative
Great neighbourhoods don't just happen... they happen one good neighbour at a time.

Becoming involved in your neighbourhood makes it a safer, healthier place for you and your family. Municipal government is the level of government where you can have the most input into the issues that affect your life. You can effect change in your neighbourhood through many different kinds of volunteer involvement with HRM, including Community Visioning and opportunities to work with Police, Fire and the library. All those opportunities can be found in one place on www.myHRM.ca.

How to Get Involved

Municipal boards, committees and commissions

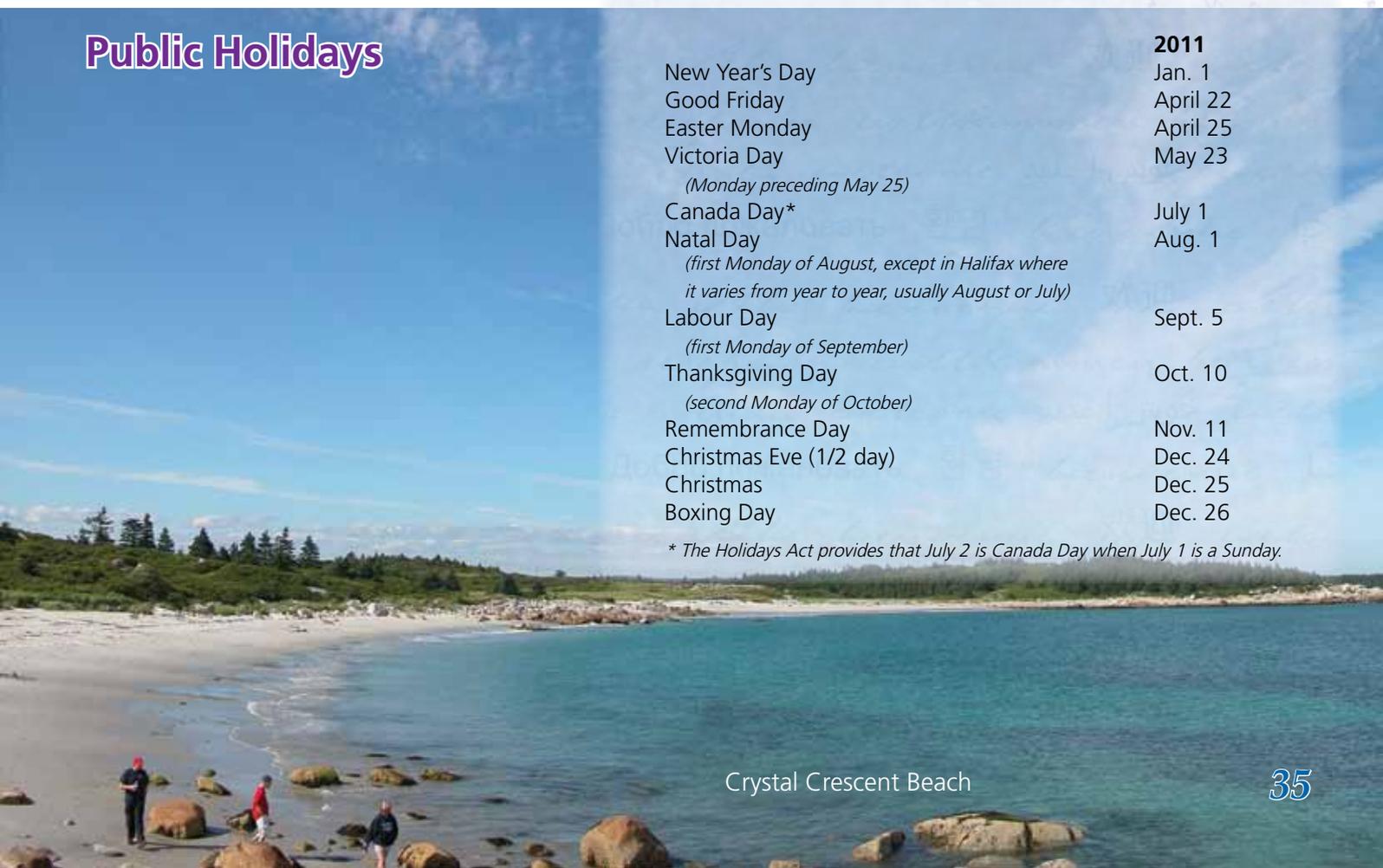
HRM's Mayor and members of the Regional Council appreciate and encourage citizen participation on municipal boards, committees and commissions. Each year in September, HRM advertises in local newspapers and on the HRM website for volunteers. In addition to this annual recruitment process, vacancies may arise at other times throughout the year and are advertised separately. You may submit your application electronically using the form provided on www.halifax.ca, or if you prefer, you may print the application form and mail or fax it to the Office of the Municipal Clerk, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Main Floor, P.O. Box 1749, Halifax, NS B3J 3A5 or fax it to 490-4208.



Public Holidays

	2011
New Year's Day	Jan. 1
Good Friday	April 22
Easter Monday	April 25
Victoria Day	May 23
<i>(Monday preceding May 25)</i>	
Canada Day*	July 1
Natal Day	Aug. 1
<i>(first Monday of August, except in Halifax where it varies from year to year, usually August or July)</i>	
Labour Day	Sept. 5
<i>(first Monday of September)</i>	
Thanksgiving Day	Oct. 10
<i>(second Monday of October)</i>	
Remembrance Day	Nov. 11
Christmas Eve (1/2 day)	Dec. 24
Christmas	Dec. 25
Boxing Day	Dec. 26

* The Holidays Act provides that July 2 is Canada Day when July 1 is a Sunday.



Contact Numbers and Information

Fill in your important numbers

	Name	Number	Address
Dentist			
Doctor			
Walk-in Clinic			
Emergency	Police	911	
	Fire	911	
	Ambulance	911	
	Poison Control	911 or Direct: 1-800-565-8161	
Non-Emergency	Police	490-5020	
	Fire	8:30am-4:30pm 490-5530 After Hours 490-5020	
Bank			
Credit Card			
Association for Newcomers	Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services	423-3607	6960 Mumford Road Suite 2120 Halifax, NS
Children's School			
Religious Institution			
Taxi			
Parent's Work			
Neighbour			

