

Welcome to Vancouver: A Guide for International Students



**LANGUAGE
SCHOOLS**



Greystone
COLLEGE

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Part 1: Academic & Student Support Essentials

Main Support Contacts

Whether you are studying at ILSC Language Schools, or Greystone College, there are dedicated teams and staff to support you. If you have any questions or need help, you can contact:

Student Services

Questions about documents, letters, student records, student engagement, activities, events and general support.

Greystone College: advisors.vancouver@greystonecollege.com

ILSC: advisors.vancouver@ilsc.com

Academics

Questions about your program, timetable, grades, academic concerns, or classroom issues.

Greystone College: academic.vancouver@greystonecollege.com

ILSC: academic.vancouver@ilsc.com

Co-op

Helps you prepare for the work-experience (co-op) portion of your program by providing support with resumes and cover letters, interview preparation, connecting you with job leads, and following your progress during placement.

Greystone College: coop.vancouver@greystonecollege.com

University Pathways

Helps students prepare for their post-secondary transfer goals by supporting them with program selection, application requirements, document preparation, and guiding them through each step of the admissions process.

ILSC & Greystone College: universitypathways.van@ilsc.com

Student Housing Support

Assists students with housing options and supports homestay and residence placements.

ILSC & Greystone College: studentaccommodations.canada@ilsc.com

Visa & Immigration Support

Greystone College has partnered with Encubate Inc., an authorized immigration consulting firm that offers step-by-step visa and permit application assistance and immigration advice.

For more information visit: [Greystone College | Canada | Student Services | Visa & Immigration](#)

Academic Expectations: Attendance & Progress

To stay in good academic standing and meet your study permit conditions (if applicable), it is important to understand the expectations for attendance and academic progress in your program.

Attendance Expectations

- You are expected to attend all scheduled classes and learning activities.
- Students are required to attend a minimum of 80% of classes in each session / course to meet the attendance requirements.
- **ILSC** students whose overall attendance is below 80% will not receive a certificate of completion.
- **Greystone College** students who fail to meet the 80% attendance threshold may not receive credit for the course, and will impact your academic standing.
- If you will be absent for legitimate reasons (illness, family emergency, etc.), please inform Academic staff or Student Services as early as possible.
- Extended absences may require approval and documentation.

Academic Progress

- **ILSC** students who do not pass the level at the end of the session may continue at the same level next session without any academic penalty.
 - Level progression is based on assessment of language proficiency
- **Greystone College** students must achieve the minimum passing grade in their courses to remain in good academic standing. If your grades fall below the minimum, you may be:
 - Given an academic warning
 - Placed on academic probation
 - Given a failing grade and be required to retake the course at your own expense, or
 - Dismissed from your program

If you are having difficulties with your studies, please speak with your instructor, Academic staff, or Student Services early so they can provide support.

Academic & Learning Supports

ILSC & Greystone College provide a range of supports to help you succeed in your studies.

Academic Advising & Student Support

- Both ILSC and Greystone College offer access to student advisors and support staff who can help you understand program expectations, navigate academic questions, and connect you with the right campus services.
- Advising services may include assistance with progression, understanding academic policies, and getting help if you are experiencing challenges that affect your learning.

Instructor Support

- Your instructors are your first point of contact for questions about assignments, class expectations, and academic progress.
- If you are struggling or need clarification, you are encouraged to speak with your instructor early so they can help guide you, or connect you with additional support.

Digital & Online Learning Tools

- Many Greystone College programs use a Learning Management System (LMS) to provide access to learning materials, digital resources, and program information.
- School staff will help you access your LMS account and online tools during orientation.
- ILSC Language Schools also provide digital tools and resources to support language learning and help track your progress.

Student Services Support

- Student Services can assist you with general academic questions, program information, school policies, and how to access additional supports.
- They can also guide you on who to speak with for specific academic concerns or other issues affecting your studies.

Wellness Supports

Both ILSC & Greystone College are committed to supporting your wellbeing during your studies. Available supports include:

- Confidential counselling and wellness services through the school's external partner, [Stay Healthy at School \(SHAS\)](#)
- Student Services and Academic staff, who can help you navigate challenges and connect with appropriate resources
- Referrals to community health services, mental-health agencies, crisis lines, and other external supports

If you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or facing personal difficulties, you are encouraged to reach out to Student Services or access [SHAS](#) for confidential support.

Academic Accommodations & Disability Support

If you have a disability, chronic health condition, or learning difference, you may be eligible for academic accommodations to help you fully participate in your studies.

Example of academic accommodations may include:

- Extra time on assessments or exams
- Alternative formats for course materials
- Assistive technology or equipment

- Adjusted participation or attendance expectations in certain circumstances

To request support:

- Inform Student Services or Academic staff that you require academic accommodations.
- You may be asked to provide verifiable medical documentation so staff can understand your needs and explore reasonable supports.

ILSC and Greystone College's inclusion and anti-discrimination policies commit to creating an accessible and respectful environment for all students with disabilities.

Key Policies

You are expected to become familiar with the main policies that apply to you as a student. These policies protect your rights, describe your responsibilities, and explain how the school can support you.

Some of the key policies include:

- Academic Standing and Attendance
- Academic Integrity / Plagiarism
- Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination
- Sexual Violence and Misconduct
- Complaints, Harassment and Dispute Resolution
- Deferral, Withdrawal, and Dismissal
- Tuition and Refunds
- Health, Safety, and Critical Incident Response
- Respectful and Fair Treatment of Students
- Privacy Policy

To read the full and most up-to-date policies, visit:

[Greystone College | Canada | Policies](#)

[ILSC | Language Schools | Policies & Procedures](#)

[ILSC | Policies | Privacy Policy](#)

How to Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint

If something goes wrong, we encourage you to let us know. Both ILSC and Greystone College have a formal process for resolving academic and non-academic concerns.

You can make a complaint about:

- Academic or administrative issues
- Student services or support

- Misleading information from representatives or education agents
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Safety or wellbeing concerns

1. Informal Resolution (Recommended First Step)

Most concerns can be solved quickly by speaking with your instructor, Student Services, or the relevant department or staff member. Your concern will try to be resolved quickly and fairly.

2. Formal Complaint

If the issue is not resolved informally, you can submit a formal written complaint to the appropriate school staff member.

- Director of Studies (ILSC)
- Director of Greystone College Programs (Greystone College)

The correct contact will depend on your school and program. The Student Services team can direct you to the appropriate contact.

3. Review, Investigation & Outcome

The school will review your complaint, gather information, speak with involved parties as needed, and provide you with a written response explaining the decision and any follow-up actions.

4. Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may be able to submit an appeal to a more senior administrator. Appeal procedures are outlined in the official policy for your school.

5. External Options

If you are enrolled in a program regulated by PTIRU, you may contact the Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit if:

- You believe you were misled
- You feel the school did not follow its policies
- Your complaint is related to a regulated private career college program

If you're unsure how to proceed, Student Services can help you understand the process and direct you to the correct contact.

To read the full and most up-to-date policies visit:

[Greystone College | Canada | Policies](#)

[ILSC | Language Schools | Policies & Procedures](#)

Part 2: Health, Wellness & Campus Safety

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Adjusting to a new country, school and culture can be exciting – but it can also be stressful. Reaching out for support is a sign of strength, and both ILSC and Greystone College are committed to supporting your wellbeing throughout your studies.

Student Health Supports

All ILSC and Greystone College students in Canada have access to [Stay Healthy at School \(SHAS\)](#), a confidential, third-party counselling and wellness services. SHAS provides:

- 24/7 mental-health and wellbeing support by phone, chat, video, or app
- Counselling in multiple languages
- Resources to help with stress, homesickness, anxiety, cultural adjustment, and personal challenges

Student Services staff can also help you:

- Log into [SHAS](#) and understand the types of counselling available
- Book appointments or access multilingual support
- Connect with local community mental-health services, crisis and emergency supports and external wellness resources available in Vancouver

Students can also use the crisis and emergency resources listed in this guide if you or someone you know is in immediate distress.

Respect, Safety, and Inclusion on Campus

ILSC and Greystone College are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning and working environment. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence are not tolerated.

Some examples of prohibited behaviour include:

- Bullying (including online / cyberbullying)
- Harassment based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or other protected grounds
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Any behaviour that creates a hostile or unsafe environment

If you experience or witness such behaviour:

- Speak with Student Services, Academic staff, or any available school staff member
- Follow the steps in the applicable school policies
- In emergencies or situations involving immediate danger, call **911**

You can also access external community supports and crisis lines listed in this guide.

Emergency, Crisis & Safety Support

Your safety is our priority. In any life-threatening emergency anywhere in Canada, **call 911 immediately**.

Examples of emergencies include:

- Fire
- Serious injury or medical emergency
- A crime in progress or immediate danger

On-Campus Emergencies and Major Incidents

ILSC & Greystone College have Health & Safety, Critical Incident & Crisis Response policies and procedures that describe how serious incidents are managed.

In the event of an emergency or critical incident affecting the campus:

- Follow instructions from campus staff, security, or emergency services
- Use the campus emergency contact details provided during your orientation
- Stay informed through official communication from the school

If you witness or are affected by a serious incident, please speak with Student Services afterwards for further support.

Crisis Support 24/7

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, or at risk of harming themselves or others, call **911** or visit your [nearest emergency room](#).

For mental-health crises:

- [988 Suicide Crisis Helpline](#): Call or text **988** anytime, toll-free
- [Crisis Centre BC](#): Chat online with a crisis responder (available during select hours)

Local Emergency and Non-Emergency Contacts

It's important to know who to call for both urgent and non-urgent situations in Vancouver.

Emergency – Dial **911** (Canada-wide)

- Police Services
- Fire Department
- Ambulance Services

Non-Emergency Contacts

- Vancouver Police Department (VPD): 604-717-3321
- BC Ambulance Services: 604-872-5151

Addiction and Overdose Support Resources

If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use, addiction, or is at risk of overdose, there are confidential, judgment-free supports available throughout Vancouver. These services follow provincial harm-reduction guidelines and are accessible to all residents, including international students.

Overdose Prevention & Naloxone

British Columbia provides free naloxone kits and training to help prevent opioid-related deaths.

Naloxone can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose and is safe to use.

Naloxone training teaches you how to recognize an overdose and respond effectively in an emergency.

Free Naloxone kits are available at the front desk of the school campus.

Additionally, you can also access free naloxone kits and basic overdose-prevention information from:

- Pharmacies across Vancouver (no prescription required)
- [Vancouver Coastal Health clinics](#)
- [Overdose Prevention Sites \(OPS\)](#)
- [B.C. Centre for Disease Control](#) (BCCDC) – training and “Take Home Naloxone” program

Substance Use, Addiction & Harm-Reduction Supports

HealthLink BC (8-1-1)

Free, confidential phone support available in many languages. Call **811** to access the following:

- Substance-use specialists
- Addition and recovery information
- Referrals to local treatment and harm-reduction services
- Guidance on overdose prevention

Vancouver Coastal Health – Substance Use Services

Provides access to the following:

- Addiction-treatment navigation
- Harm-reduction supplies
- Community overdose response resources

Website: [Vancouver Coastal Health | All Services](#)

In an Overdose Emergency

- Call **911** immediately
- Stay with the person and follow the instructions of the emergency operator
- You will not get in trouble for calling **911** to save a life

Health Insurance for International Students in British Columbia

All international students in B.C. **must have health insurance for the entire duration of their studies.** Health insurance helps pay for doctor visits, hospital care, and other select medical services.

You can purchase health insurance through [StudyInsured](#) (the school's official partner) or through another private insurance company.

If you will live in B.C. for **six months or longer**, you must also apply for the [Medical Services Plan \(MSP\)](#) when you arrive in the province. MSP is the provincial public health insurance program, and it covers basic medical services. It does not cover dental care, vision care, or most prescription drugs, so you may still want to consider private insurance for additional coverage.

Please review the full [list of medical services](#) that MSP covers.

MSP does not begin immediately after applying, there is a three-month waiting period. During this waiting period, you must have private health insurance, so you are always covered. It is very important to have continuous insurance at all times, from the day you arrive in Canada.

Once your MSP coverage begins, the B.C. government charges a mandatory **\$75 monthly International Student Health Fee (ISHF)**. You will receive a bill directly from the government. You can [pay online](#) and set up online services, such as seeing your balance, setting up paperless invoicing, and autopayments.

Any family members staying with you must only pay this fee if they also hold study permits; family with work permits or visitor status are not charged a fee. These fees are subject to change and you are encouraged to check the [MSP website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

You should apply for MSP online as soon as you arrive in B.C. Processing may take some time, and when you are approved you will receive a [B.C. Services Card](#) in the mail. After you have MSP, you can also choose to register for [Fair PharmaCare](#), a program that may help reduce the cost of prescription medicines and some medical supplies. It is free to register and can be done at the same time as your MSP application.

More information about MSP and health coverage in British Columbia:

[Eligibility for MSP - Province of British Columbia](#)

[How to Apply - Province of British Columbia](#)

[Apply for MSP - Province of British Columbia](#)

[Apply for B.C. health and drug coverage - Province of British Columbia](#)

[Health fee for international students - Province of British Columbia](#)

If you have any questions about MSP or health coverage in British Columbia, you can speak with Student Services on campus, or contact Health Insurance BC directly by phone:

- From the Lower Mainland, [1-604-683-7151](#)
- Elsewhere in B.C., [1-800-663-7100](#)

Part 3: Living in Vancouver

Cost of Living in Vancouver

The cost of living in Vancouver can vary depending on the region, lifestyle, and personal preferences. Cities like Vancouver that are more densely populated tend to have higher living costs compared to smaller cities or rural areas.

Note: The costs outlined in the table below represent average estimates and can greatly vary depending on various factors of your specific lifestyle choices. It's important to remember that these figures are not fixed, and your actual expenses may be higher or lower depending on your individual situation.

Expense	Estimated Cost (per month)
Accommodation (shared room)	\$1,200- \$1,600
Groceries	\$350 - \$600
Transportation (Public transit)	\$100 - \$180
Health Insurance	\$75 (MSP) / \$100 (private)
Utilities, Internet, Cellphone	\$100 - \$150
Entertainment & Miscellaneous	\$150 - \$300
Total Estimated Monthly Cost	\$1,975 - \$2,900+

Housing in Vancouver

Finding safe and comfortable housing is an important part of your experience in Vancouver. While ILSC and Greystone College do not offer on-campus housing, we provide access to several accommodation options and support students in exploring off-campus rentals in the community.

ILSC Homestay

ILSC's Homestay program is one of the most popular accommodation choices for international students. Homestay placements are arranged directly through ILSC and offer:

- A safe and welcoming home environment
- Opportunities to practice English daily
- Meals included (varied by plan)
- Furnished private rooms
- Supportive Canadian host families
- Access to household essentials (laundry, utilities, internet, etc.)

To learn more, visit: [ILSC | Accommodations | Homestay | Canada](#)

ILSC Student Residences

ILSC also partners with student residence providers offering furnished off-campus housing for international students. Residences may include:

- Private or shared rooms
- Furnished living spaces
- Shared kitchens and lounges
- On-site amenities (security, laundry, common areas, etc.)

To learn more, visit: [ILSC | Accommodations | Residences | Canada](#)

Other Off-Campus Housing Options in Vancouver

Students who prefer to arrange their own housing may consider:

- Shared apartments or houses
- Private apartment rentals

Availability and prices vary widely depending on neighbourhood, type of housing, and amenities.

Students are encouraged to research early and explore multiple options.

Resources for Finding Off-Campus Housing

NOTE: This list is provided for informational purposes only. ILSC & Greystone College do not endorse any of these companies, nor do they take any responsibility for any interactions students may have with them.

Here are commonly used platforms to search for housing in Vancouver:

- [Casa Student Housing](#) – Furnished student accommodations
- [VanMates](#) – Shared student housing and furnished rooms
- [Unique Accommodations](#) - Furnished rental options
- [Hollyburn Properties](#) – Apartment rentals in Greater Vancouver
- [BCIT Off-Campus Housing Resources](#) - Search engines and other sources for rental properties
- [UBC Student Housing](#): Provides information about off-campus living and various housing types

Housing Search Tips

To increase your chances of securing proper student housing:

1. **Plan Ahead** – begin your search before arriving in Vancouver when possible
2. **Explore Multiple Sources** – compare listing across several platforms
3. **Ask Questions** – understand what is included (furniture, utilities, internet, etc.)
4. **Request Virtual Tours** – see the unit before committing
5. **Review Rental Agreements Carefully** – know the terms and conditions before signing a lease

Tips to Avoid Housing Scams

Housing scams are prevalent in large cities. Be cautious of the following:

- Listings that seem overly inexpensive, or too good to be true
- Landlords who refuse to show the property ahead of time
- Requests for large upfront payments and deposits before verifying the rental

- Communication only through messaging apps with no verifiable contact details
- For safety, avoid sending money before confirming that the accommodation is legitimate

More information on avoiding rental scams can be found by visiting the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) website: [Rental scams | Royal Canadian Mounted Police](#)

Tenancy Rights in British Columbia

All renters in B.C. are protected under the [Residential Tenancy Act](#) (RTA). This legislation outlines:

- Tenant and landlord rights
- Rules for deposits, rent procedures, and evictions
- Requirements for notice of entry
- Standards for safe and secure rental housing
- Your responsibility to maintain reasonable cleanliness and care

Support for Tenants

If you have a conflict with your landlord or need help understanding your rights, the following services can assist you:

[Residential Tenancy Branch](#) (RTB)

- Official Information, resources, and dispute resolution
- Toll-Free: 1-800-665-8779

[Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre](#) (TRAC)

- Free legal information and tenant education
- Infoline: 604-255-0546

Tenant (Renters) Insurance

Tenant insurance is optional, but strongly recommended to protect your belongings and provide coverage in case of emergencies. Tenant insurance typically covers the following:

- Personal belongings
- Damage caused by fire, flood, or theft
- Temporary accommodation if your unit becomes uninhabitable

Tenant insurance providers commonly used by students include:

- [Square One Insurance](#)
- [Westland Insurance](#)
- [Sonnet Insurance](#)

Before choosing a tenant insurance provider, review coverage details carefully and compare options to select what fits your needs.

Part 4: Working & Daily Life

Student Work & Employment Rights

Many international students work while they study in Vancouver. Before working, you must make sure:

- You have the legal right to work according to your immigration permits and IRCC conditions.
- You understand the difference between on-campus work, off-campus work, and co-op/practicum work.

For Greystone College students, the Visa & Immigration section of the website explains where to get guidance on your work rights and who can provide authorized immigration advice.

[Greystone College | Canada | Student Services | Visa & Immigration](#)

Your Rights as a Worker in British Columbia

Workers in B.C. have rights under provincial employment standards, including:

- A minimum wage and rules for overtime and breaks
- A safe workplace and the right to refuse unsafe work
- Protection from discrimination and harassment in the workplace

If you have questions or concerns about work conditions, you can:

- Speak with Student Services or Co-op (if applicable), and
- Review information from the [B.C. Employment Standards Branch](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#) (official provincial agencies)

Career & Post-Graduation Support

Your program may include:

- Co-op components (Greystone College programs)
- Pathways to higher education
- Connections with career and employer networks in Canada

Career-related services provided by the school include:

- Help with resumes and cover letters
- Interview preparation
- Workshops on Canadian workplace culture
- Support connecting to job postings and networking opportunities

If you are considering staying in Canada to work after your studies, you may want to learn about:

- [Work in Canada after you graduate: About the post-graduation work permit \(PGWP\) - Canada.ca](#)
- [Work permit: How to apply - Canada.ca](#)

NOTE: Only authorized immigration professionals (for example, RCICs, layers, or RISIAs) can provide immigration advice. You should always check the most up-to-date information on the [official IRCC website](#) and through the certified immigration advisors at [Encubate](#).

Transportation

Vancouver offers a robust public transportation system managed by [TransLink](#). These options make it easy for international students to navigate daily life.

- **Buses** – Connect almost every neighborhood in the city, as well as the surrounding areas
- **SkyTrain** – Connects downtown to surrounding areas, including Vancouver International Airport
- **SeaBus** – Passenger ferries that connect downtown Vancouver (Waterfront Station) to North Vancouver (Lonsdale Quay)
- **West Coast Express** – Commuter train service that connects Vancouver to suburbs in the Fraser Valley
- **Public bike share** – Provides bike sharing options throughout the city

For more information about schedules, maps, and fares, visit: [Pricing and Fare Zones | TransLink](#)

Internet, Phone and Cable Services

There are many service providers in Vancouver that offer internet, mobile phone, landline phone, and cable television. You may be eligible for a student discount or by bundling several services together from one company. If a contract is required, make sure that you fully understand it before signing.

PhoneBox

ILSC & Greystone College have partnered with [PhoneBox](#) to help students get a Canadian phone number before they arrive in Canada. PhoneBox offers competitive phone plans including:

- Free eSIM
- International calling
- Fast 5G internet speeds
- No contract – cancel anytime

Setting up your phone plan is easy and takes just 5 minutes! No Canadian ID, address, or credit card is required for activation. Be ready to call, text, and roam as soon as you arrive in Canada.

[PhoneBox - Canada's #1 eSIM Provider | Instant Activation for International Students & Visitors](#)

List of Local Phone Providers

NOTE: The providers mentioned below are for informational purposes only. ILSC & Greystone College do not endorse any of these companies, nor do they take any responsibility for any interactions students may have with them.

[Freedom Mobile](#) | [Public Mobile](#) | [Koodo](#) | [Rogers](#) | [Telus](#) | [Fido](#) | [Bell](#) | [Virgin Plus](#) | [Novus](#)

Banking Services

There are several banking options available to students, and many local banks offer services tailored specifically for international students.

Setting Up a Bank Account

Required documents:

- Passport or government-issued ID
- Study permit or student visa
- Proof of enrollment from your school
- Proof of a current Canadian address (utility bill, lease agreement, etc.)
- Social Insurance Number (SIN)

List of Local Banks

NOTE: *This list is provided for informational purposes only. ILSC & Greystone College do not endorse any of these companies, nor do they take any responsibility for any interactions students may have with them.*

- [Vancity](#)
- [Scotiabank](#)
- [Coast Capital](#)
- [Bank of Montreal \(BMO\)](#)
- [Toronto Dominion \(TD\)](#)
- [Tangerine](#)
- [Royal Bank of Canada \(RBC\)](#)
- [CIBC](#)

Child Care Options

For international students who are caregivers in Vancouver, several childcare options are available to support your studies while ensuring quality care for your children.

- [YMCA Metro Vancouver](#) – Operates early learning centers with a play-based curriculum. Notable centers include:
 - Citygate
 - Crabtree Corner
 - Emma's and Leslie Diamond Centers
- [Child Care | YMCA BC](#)
- [Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre](#)
- [Child Care - Vancouver Community College](#)

Part 5: Adjusting to a New Culture & Community

Cultural Differences and Norms in British Columbia

As an international student in British Columbia (B.C.) understanding local culture and norms can help you integrate and make the most of your time. B.C. is one of Canada's most diverse provinces, with a rich mix of cultures, backgrounds and traditions.

It is the westernmost province in Canada, located between the Pacific Ocean and the Rocky Mountains. B.C. is known for its dramatic natural scenery, including coastal shorelines, dense rainforests, towering mountain ranges, and glacier-fed lakes. The province has a population of more than 5 million people, with Victoria as the capital and Vancouver as its largest city.

Social Norms

Canadians value respect, punctuality, and personal space. Social interactions tend to be casual and friendly, but Canadians are also quite private. Politeness is key, and you'll often hear "please" and "thank you" in conversations. Appointments and scheduling are also taken seriously, so if you need to cancel or reschedule, it's expected to give ample notice.

Cultural Diversity

B.C. is one of the most multicultural regions in Canada, and Vancouver is a particularly diverse city. It is a multicultural society that welcomes people of all backgrounds and beliefs. It's important to be respectful and open-minded towards all people.

Vancouver's main language is English, but many other languages are spoken, including Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, German, Italian, French, Korean, Japanese, Spanish and Farsi, as well as indigenous languages.

Casual and Relaxed Atmosphere

Vancouver has a more casual and laid-back atmosphere compared to some other places around the world. It's common to see people wearing casual clothing such as jeans, t-shirts, or hoodies in many public settings, including some workplaces and colleges.

Environmental Awareness

British Columbia is very environmentally conscious. Recycling, composting, and minimizing waste are integral parts of life in B.C. You'll often see separate bins for recycling, compost, and garbage in public spaces, and it's expected that you'll use them correctly.

B.C. is also known for its natural beauty, and many people enjoy outdoor activities like hiking, cycling, and skiing. Taking care of the environment is deeply ingrained in the local culture.

To learn more about British Columbia, visit: [WelcomeBC - About British Columbia](#)

Local Community Supports

Below is a guide to various community support programs, student groups, religious and cultural organizations, and sports groups in Vancouver that can help you feel connected and supported.

Programs Offered by PICS (Progressive Intercultural Community Services)

- [Intercultural Volunteer HUB \(IVH\)](#)
- [International Student Support Program](#)

Religious and Faith-Based Groups

- [Multifaith Centre - Simon Fraser University](#)
- [Mountainview Christian Fellowship | Church in Vancouver, B.C.](#)
- [Vancouver Buddhist Temple](#)

Community Groups and Cultural Clubs

- [ACCUEIL | Le Centre Culturel Francophone de Vancouver](#)
- [Latin American Cultural Association of Vancouver](#)
- [Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver Chinese Language School | Vancouver B.C.](#)

Sports and Recreation Groups

Sports and recreational activities are a great way to meet new people, stay active, and engage with local community.

- [Fitness and sports | City of Vancouver](#)
- [UBC Recreation](#)
 - Public Access – Include fitness classes, drop-in sports, and another recreational activity
 - Competitive membership rates
 - Eligibility for community services card (CSC)

Other Resources for Newcomers

Learn more by visiting the following sites:

- [WelcomeBC](#) – detailed information about the many resources available for newcomers to B.C.
- [WorkBC](#) – job listings and information about B.C.'s economy and labour market
- [SuperNatural BC](#) – local travel information
- [MOSAIC](#) – a registered charity serving immigrant, newcomer and refugee communities in Greater Vancouver for the past 40 years