

# 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.yellowpages.ca)) and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation ([www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/corp](http://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 residents. Part of this security check includes calling

## 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?

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](http://www.universalgroup.ca),
2. Killam Properties - [www.killamproperties.com](http://www.killamproperties.com)
3. Twin City Management - [www.twincity.ca](http://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](http://www.mls.ca), [www.relocate.ca](http://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](http://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](http://www.halifaxshoppingcentre.com)

Bayers Lake Park [www.bayerslakepark.com](http://www.bayerslakepark.com)

Mic Mac Mall [www.micmacmall.ca](http://www.micmacmall.ca)

Dartmouth Crossing [www.dartmouthcrossing.com](http://www.dartmouthcrossing.com)

Spring Garden Road [www.springgardenroad.com](http://www.springgardenroad.com)

Downtown Dartmouth [www.dartmouthdowntown.ca](http://www.dartmouthdowntown.ca)

Downtown Halifax [www.downtownhalifax.ns.ca](http://www.downtownhalifax.ns.ca)

Quinpool Road [www.quinpoolroad.ca](http://www.quinpoolroad.ca)

The Hydrostone Market [www.hydrostonemarket.ca](http://www.hydrostonemarket.ca)

Bishop's Landing [www.bishopslanding.com](http://www.bishopslanding.com)

The Farmer's Market in the Brewery Marketplace  
[www.halifaxfarmersmarket.com](http://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 <a href="http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit">www.halifax.ca/metrotransit</a>	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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:needalift@eastlink.ca) Website: [www.needalift.ca](http://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](http://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](http://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/tips/car.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/consumer/tips/car.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](http://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](http://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. Macdonald 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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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.

### 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.

### 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](http://www.doctors.ns.ca).

### 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](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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

### 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](http://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](http://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.



## 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

### 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](http://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.ccns.org](http://www.ccns.org) for more information. Also see [www.hrmparent.ca](http://www.hrmparent.ca).

### Dalhousie University (Dal)

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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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



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](http://www.cbc.ca)), *CTV Atlantic* ([www.ctv.ca](http://www.ctv.ca)), and *Global Maritimes* ([www.canada.com/globaltv/maritimes](http://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](http://www.thechronicleherald.ca)), and a free daily, *Metro News* ([www.metronews.ca](http://www.metronews.ca)). There is also a free weekly newspaper, *The Coast*, which dishes up local and entertainment news ([www.thecoast.ca](http://www.thecoast.ca)). There are also two national newspapers: *The Globe and Mail* ([www.theglobeandmail.com](http://www.theglobeandmail.com)) and *The National Post* ([www.canada.com/national-post](http://www.canada.com/national-post)). 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](http://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/](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.hrmyouth.ca)!

Contact the Youth Advisory Committee: E-Mail: [hrmyouth@halifax.ca](mailto:hrmyouth@halifax.ca) Phone: 902-490-5451



### [hrmyouth.ca](http://hrmyouth.ca)

[hrmyouth.ca](http://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](http://www.hrmyouth.ca) E-Mail: [hrmyouth@halifax.ca](mailto: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.