

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] in the City of Port Coquitlam, in the Province of British Columbia, MAKE OATH AND SAY AS FOLLOWS:

1. I am the affiant and as such have personal knowledge of the matters included in this affidavit, except where statements are made based on information and belief, in which case I verily believe them to be true.
2. I am 27 years old. I have two children, a five year old son and a 21 <sup>months</sup> year old daughter. Both children reside with me and I am their primary caregiver as a single mother. I am separated from my husband. I receive no child support from him.
3. My husband and I immigrated to Canada from Colombia in 2014. In Colombia, I worked as a doctor, but I have not worked since arriving in Canada. Shortly after our arrival, I gave birth to my daughter. After that, my husband worked and I was financially dependent on him.
4. I left my husband on November 4, 2014 because of physical violence. Experiencing abuse was very hard. Leaving my husband was a very difficult and sad experience. When I was leaving, I did not think about my financial security; I was focused only on my safety and the safety of my children.
5. After we left, the children and I stayed in a transition house. While I am very appreciative of the transition house and its staff, I did not feel supported as a mother there.
6. I had no income and the transition house did not have child care. I was forced to bring my children with me to all appointments, including appointments with my lawyer. At one point, my lawyer told me that my son

should not be present at appointments while we discussed the violence I had experienced because he was old enough to understand the conversation. However, I could not leave my son at the transition house, so he had to come with me. For most appointments, I had no one who could attend with me to watch my son.

7. While staying the transition house, my daughter was taken by ambulance to the hospital with respiratory problems. The ambulance attendants who came to get her would not let my son come with us in the ambulance and the transition house staff told me I could not leave my son there. I had to phone someone I did not know well and ask her to take my son. In that moment, I wondered whether it would have been better to stay with my husband because at least I could have left my son with him.
8. My daughter was hospitalized for three days. During that time, my son stayed with the person I did not know well so I could stay in the hospital with my daughter.
9. Since September 2015, my children and I have been living in subsidized housing. I currently receive social assistance. I am not working because of language barriers, although I am currently taking English language classes five days per week.
10. During the classes, my son goes to free child care that is provided as part of the English training program. My daughter goes to unlicensed, home-based child care that I initially could not afford to pay for because I was awaiting approval of my child care subsidy. My daughter's child care provider initially said she would allow me to repay her for the months she had already attended once my subsidy was processed. The full cost of my daughter's child care is \$1000 per month for half-day care five days per week.

11. In October, 201~~8~~<sup>5</sup>, my child care subsidy was approved for \$450 per month for my daughter's child care. I have no way to pay the \$550 per month in addition what the subsidy covers, so my daughter's child care provider is not charging me anything above the subsidy amount as a personal favour to me.
12. If I had not been able to get a subsidy, I would have had to stop taking my English training because I cannot afford child care for my daughter.
13. It is already very hard to survive on income assistance without adding in any additional expenses for child care. Prior to starting my English training, I had been depending on visiting the foodbank once a week, but the foodbank hours are at the same time as my English classes, so I cannot go there anymore.
14. I have no vehicle so I rely on the bus for transportation, which is very hard with two small children. I have a very difficult time understanding the transit system as well. Because I am a single parent and I cannot afford additional child care, I have to take the children with me everywhere I go. Even running a quick errand can be very stressful.
15. Since I came to Canada, I have had no time to take care of myself. Because I am with my children constantly, I have had no downtime to deal with the violence that I experienced.
16. If I had access to free or very low cost child care, I could take the time I need to process the violence and trauma that I have been through, and I would be able to work and achieve my goals. I could feel like an active participant in society instead of relying on welfare.
17. Although employment would benefit me and my children, if I get a job, most of my income will likely go to pay for child care.



person swearing or affirming the affidavit from the English language into the Spanish language and the person swearing or affirming the affidavit appeared to fully understand the contents.

Date: June 21, 2016

  
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Signature of Interpreter