Islamic Relief Canada

ORPHAN SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM GUIDE & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1 WHO DOES ISLAMIC RELIEF SUPPORT THROUGH THE ORPHAN SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM?

Our Orphan Sponsorship Program targets orphans younger than 18 and their families when they fulfil either of the following criteria:

- The father or both parents have passed away
- A child whose father's whereabouts have been unknown for two years or more (one year or more for refugees and internally displaced people)

A Sponsorship can continue past the age of 18 up to the age of 24 if the orphan is in higher education or if the orphan has medical needs which require the sponsorship to continue.

Children who are identified for sponsorship are usually within a family home, living with their mother or extended family members such as aunts, uncles, or grandparents.

Islamic Relief sponsors children regardless of race, gender, religion, or ethnicity, if they meet the requirements set out in the program selection criteria.

2 HOW IS AN ORPHAN SELECTED FOR SPONSORSHIP?

To select an orphan for sponsorship, Field Offices use a scoring system which analyzes the orphan family situation based on five main criteria:

- Vulnerability
- Financial need
- Family size
- Housing conditions
- Health

Through using a scoring system covering the above factors, the field offices are able to prioritize orphans based on their needs.

Official documentation is required to confirm an orphan's sponsorship, and the selection of children must not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, age, gender, or disability.

3 HOW DOES MY SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT THE FAMILY?

When you sponsor an orphan, your support extends to their entire household. In most cases, this monthly assistance is a key source of income for the family and is used to meet essential needs such as food, rent, utilities, and other basic living expenses.

An orphan's vulnerability is closely linked to the wellbeing of their family. Supporting the child means supporting the environment they depend on for stability and care.

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4 WHY SHOULD I SPONSOR WITH ISLAMIC RELIEF CANADA?

The Orphan Sponsorship Program is one of the oldest running programs within Islamic Relief, having started in 1986, and has since grown to support over 65,000 orphans worldwide. It serves orphans around the world, including Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, where we have Field Offices.

The program provides life-saving necessities to orphans and thier families, improving their health and nutrition, implementing projects within the community, and supporting the orphan educationally, socially, and morally.

This program is uniquely a true 1-1 sponsorship model which means donors are paired on a one-to-one basis with an orphan. This allows for the life of the same orphan to be continuously transformed long term, which means they are able to truly rise above their circumstances, gain the opportunities they deserve, and build a better life for themselves and their families.

Many orphans also benefit from other Islamic Relief run programs such as, micro-finance, Ramadan food parcels, Qurbani packages, water projects, social activities, health, vocational and educational projects.

5 DO YOU ONLY SPONSOR MUSLIM CHILDREN?

As an organization, Islamic Relief works with a wide range of communities, both Muslims and non-Muslims. We do not discriminate on the basis of religion, gender, race or ethnicity but give aid to those who are most in need.

For those who are interested, our orphan sponsorship program is Zakat eligible. If you would like to designate your orphan sponsorship as part of your Zakat donations, kindly let us know. We can pair you with a Muslim orphan.

FINANCIAL AND PAYMENT INQUIRIES

6 DOES THE ORPHAN RECEIVE SPONSORSHIP MONEY EVERY MONTH?

The donations are transferred to your orphan's guardian on a quarterly basis. This allows a consistent income, not only for your sponsored orphan, but for their entire household.

Sponsorship funds are used for vital necessities such as:

- Food
- Shelter
- Education
- Health care needs

**Kindly note, if you have a recurring donation and your payments have not gone through for more than 2 consecutive months, the sponsorship will be closed and your sponsored orphan will be reassigned to another donor.*

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7 HOW MUCH OF MY SPONSORSHIP CONTRIBUTION SUPPORTS THE ORPHAN DIRECTLY?

Every sponsored orphan receives a guaranteed monthly disbursement of €50, delivered directly to their family each month without exception. Over the past year, exchange rates have fluctuated. In the first quarter of 2026, the average exchange rate was approximately €1 = CAD $1.60. At this rate, the €50 monthly sponsorship equated to about CAD $80. Regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates, the full €50 continues to be delivered to the family each month without exception.

In addition, Islamic Relief covers the systems behind the program, including field office operations, social worker visits, and secure international transfers. This amount is fixed and built into the overall cost of delivering the program.

The operational expenses entail the extensive field office work Islamic Relief conducts to ensure best practices are in place for your sponsored orphan. Orphans are monitored through both regular home visits conducted by our social workers and group gatherings to ensure that they are receiving the full benefits of sponsorship.

When exchange rates move unfavourably, Islamic Relief Canada absorbs the difference using program reserves to cover administrative, implementation, and banking costs, ensuring support remains steady and uninterrupted.

8 WILL MY SPONSORSHIP ALWAYS COST THE SAME AMOUNT?

In 2023, Islamic Relief Canada conducted its first sponsorship price review in over 20 years and introduced a new price model of $90 per month ($1,080 per year) for all countries. This change was made in response to inflation and the significant rise in the cost of living, which made it increasingly difficult to meet the basic needs of orphaned children and their families under the previous pricing model.

This updated pricing allows us to better respond to global cost pressures while remaining true to our values of excellence and sincerity, ultimately delivering greater impact for orphan families.

You can learn more about this change through our **Pricing Increase FAQ.**

We regularly review the program to ensure it continues to meet the needs of orphaned children and delivers meaningful impact. As costs and conditions change, the sponsorship amount may be adjusted. However, you will always be informed in advance of any changes.

9 HOW LONG WILL THE SPONSORSHIP CONTINUE?

We encourage a minimum sponsorship time of **ONE YEAR** but you may sponsor an orphan for as long as you wish until they have graduated from our sponsorship program.

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10 WHAT HAPPENS IF I WISH TO CANCEL MY SPONSORSHIP?

If possible, we ask that you give us a **3 months notice**, so we can find another donor for your orphan. If this is not possible, the orphan will be supported from our Orphan General fund until another sponsor is found.

You can support our orphans through contributing to our **Orphan Care** fund that allows us to cover any immediate costs related to educational or medical expenses for orphans, as well as projects that support orphans and their well-being.

11 WILL I ALWAYS BE SPONSORING THE SAME CHILD?

Sponsorship may be terminated by the field offices if the orphan is over age, gets married, has a significant increase in income, moves out of an Islamic Relief working region, or if the family/orphan does not cooperate. In this case, we immediately redirect your donations towards a new orphan and provide an update.

In case of death, the sponsorship will be extended for a period of one year to provide continued support to the family, ensuring they are not left without assistance. In certain circumstances, if there is an eligible sibling within the program, the sponsorship may be transferred to them to maintain the support.

If you would prefer to sponsor a child other than the one we've chosen for you, you can call us at 1-855-377-4673, Monday - Friday 9am-5pm (EST) or email us at info@islamicreliefcanada.org

CONNECTING WITH YOUR SPONSORED ORPHAN

12 WHAT INFORMATION WILL I RECEIVE ABOUT THE ORPHAN I SPONSOR?

When you start your sponsorship, you will receive a biodata report that includes a photograph and detailed information regarding your sponsored orphan. At the end of each year, field offices begin collecting data and updating your orphan's progress. This information is consolidated into a progress report, which you will receive by December of the following year. Reports are subject to availability from the respective field office.

If you are sponsoring multiple orphans, you will receive a consolidated progress report covering all sponsored children. Donors can contact orphans@islamicreliefcanada.org to request a progress report if they have not received one within 15 months.

**Please note, the timing of the first report may vary depending on the country you selected and local reporting timelines.*

Sponsors can also access their orphan sponsorship details through the Donor Portal. Through the portal, you can view your sponsored orphan(s)' profiles, access available progress reports, submit meeting requests, and send monetary gifts. If you support multiple orphans, you can also split gifts among your sponsored children at any time. **If you have not yet registered for the Donor Portal, you can sign up here!**

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13 CAN I WRITE A LETTER TO MY SPONSORED ORPHAN?

Yes, the sponsor and orphan can exchange correspondence via Islamic Relief Canada!

We encourage donors to send letters and pictures to their orphans annually. You can email any letters and photographs to your orphan via the following email address, orphans@islamicreliefcanada.org.

We monitor all letters to ensure they are suitable and remove any contact details. Your letter will then be forwarded to the relevant field office.

Please note that a confirmation or a response can take months due to various factors including political conflict, orphan location (as most of our orphans live in remote areas), field office workload, natural disasters, and security, amongst other factors outside of our control.

14 CAN I MEET WITH MY SPONSORED ORPHAN?

Yes, a supervised virtual or in-person meetings can be organized with the field office through prior arrangement with Islamic Relief Canada.

We will send you an application form that needs to be filled out at least 8 weeks prior to the meeting once we receive your request as well as our Orphan Meeting Guidelines that needs to be read and signed.

15 CAN I SEND A GIFT TO MY ORPHAN?

Of course! 100% of your gift goes directly to the orphan and their family with no overhead costs. If you'd like to give an additional monetary gift, you can do so online at islamicrelief.ca/orphangifts or through the Donor Portal.

The Donor Portal allows sponsors to submit monetary gifts at any time. If you are sponsoring multiple orphans, you can easily split gifts among your sponsored children. Please make sure to select the correct orphan for each gift so it is allocated accurately.

Gift donations are transferred on a quarterly basis.

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Islamic Relief is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved in the sponsorship programme including children, their families and guardians, and donors. As such, any personal data collected for administering the sponsorship program will be strictly processed (stored, used and disposed) in accordance with this policy, Islamic Relief's Archiving and Record Management Policy and relevant data protection and privacy related legislation.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT OUR DONOR CARE DEPARTMENT FOR ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

PHONE: 1.855.377.4673 **EMAIL:** INFO@ISLAMICRELIEFCANADA.ORG