

# Immigration and Citizenship

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## 1. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

### *Introduction*

The decision to immigrate to another country is not an easy one. You need information to make the right decision.

*Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is the government agency that oversees all immigration, refugee and citizenship applications.*

The IRCC website is divided into categories: for students, for workers, for visitors, for refugees, and for people who want to immigrate permanently. You can also look for IRCC offices around the world to get information on the application process.

- **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html>

The Immigration and Citizenship website explains the immigration process and the types of applications that are available.

- **Help Centre – IRCC**

<https://www.cic.gc.ca/english/helpcentre/index-featured-can.asp>

- **Immigration, Refugees and Immigration Canada Offices**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/contact-ircc/offices.html>

## 2. Can You Immigrate?

The demand to come to Canada is very high. The Canadian government selects candidates based on industries that require workers to maintain and grow the national economy.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that extended family can immigrate with you.

There are many programs that allow non-Canadians to live/work temporarily or permanently in Canada. Each has specific requirements, so do your research before starting the application process.

- **Getting Started – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/come-canada-tool.html>  
Take a questionnaire to see if you are eligible for immigration
- **WelcomeBC – Immigrate to BC**  
<https://www.welcomebc.ca/Immigrate-to-B-C>  
Explore the range of programs that can help you become a Permanent Resident in BC
- **Apply to Immigrate to Canada**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada.html>  
A list of the different programs that allow you to immigrate to Canada
- **Find Applications Forms and Guides**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides.html>  
Search for forms by the form number or by topic
- **Fee List – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada**  
<https://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/fees/fees.asp>  
A list of most applications that require a fee be paid

### 3. Getting Help to Immigrate

There are many companies who say they can help you immigrate to Canada.

*Tip:*

*Be careful to choose a representative who is authorised by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to help you. If you pay someone to help you who is not authorised, you may be a victim of fraud.*

Using an authorized immigration representative does not guarantee your application will be successful. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada officers do not work with immigration representatives. Representatives make it easier for you to apply by doing the work for you, but they can't promise you will be accepted by IRCC.

- **Learn About Using a Representative**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigration-citizenship-representative.html>

The Canadian government has information to protect you from bad representatives.

- **Choose an Immigration Representative**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigration-citizenship-representative/choose.html>

This offers advice how to choose an authorised representative.

## 4. Finding Work in British Columbia

Immigrating to Canada does not guarantee you will find work. It is important to research the local job market before immigrating. The BC government publishes a lot of information about the labour market in BC.

*Tip:*

*Certain industries are growing faster than others, so looking for work in those industries may be easier. In-demand industries include:*

- *Tourism*
- *Transportation*
- *Agri-Foods*
- *Construction*

Once you are legally able to work in Canada, you can use government employment programs to assist you with your job search. This usually means you must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.

- **Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre (SIIC)**

<https://pwp.vpl.ca/siic/>

An online and in-person resource centre that helps newcomers to Canada find the information you need to get a job or explore careers. It is based at the Vancouver Public Library and is free.

- **Work BC**

<https://www.workbc.ca/>

The BC government created WorkBC to provide information on the job market in BC. It has job postings, info on employment programs, and more.

- **Foreign Credential Recognition Tool – Job Bank Canada**

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/widget/>

## 5. Life in Canada

*Canada is the second largest country in the world. The climate and lifestyle is very different in each region of the country.*

It is important to research the Canadian lifestyle before applying to immigrate or work in Canada.

- **Prepare for Life in Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/new-immigrants/prepare-life-canada.html>

Before starting the immigration process, a checklist of things to consider with links to information and help guides

- **Welcome BC**

<https://www.welcomebc.ca/>

Information about living and working in British Columbia

- **Living in Canada**

<https://www.cic.gc.ca/lctvac/english/index>

Answer questions to find help with your move to Canada

- **Welcome to Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/publication-welcome-canada-what-you-should-know.html>

A guide book with important information about moving to Canada

- **IRCC Offices**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/contact-ircc/offices.html>

IRCC visa offices process applications for permanent immigration, work permits and study permits

## 6. Citizenship

Citizenship is not automatically granted in Canada. You must apply for citizenship after meeting requirements for residency, language and employment.

- **Apply for Citizenship**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/canadian-citizenship/become-canadian-citizen.html>

The step-by-step process for applying for Canadian citizenship

- **Physical Presence Calculator – IRCC**

<https://eservices.cic.gc.ca/rescalc/resCalcStartNew.do>

Use the calculator if you are a permanent resident applying for citizenship.

- **Citizenship Testing**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/canadian-citizenship/become-canadian-citizen/citizenship-test.html>

To become a Canadian citizen, you must take the Citizenship test. This helps you prepare for the test and interview.

- **Citizenship Counts**

<http://www.citizenshipcounts.ca/>

This has practice questions to help you study for the Citizenship test. It is partly paid for by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

- **Discover Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada/read-online.html>

The study guide for Citizenship test preparation

## 7. Settlement Services

Newcomers to Canada have many programs available to help after moving to Canada. These types of programs are called **settlement services**, which mean services that can help you settle into your new life.

These services cannot help you apply to immigrate. You must talk to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for questions about immigrating to Canada.

- **New To BC**

<https://newtobc.ca/>

A project by public libraries in to help newcomers to BC. Learn about community services that help you settle in your BC community, including public libraries. Services can be searched by location or service.

- **Immigrant Services Society of BC**

<https://issbc.org>

Career and settlement services, and language classes for newcomers.

- **MOSAIC**

<https://www.mosaicbc.org>

Helping immigrants and refugees since 1976, MOSAIC offers multilingual services.

- **SUCCESS**

<https://www.successbc.ca>

One of the largest settlement services in BC, offering many programs to immigrants and refugees.



## 8. Your First Week in Canada

After your application is successful and you move to Canada, there are a few things to do immediately.

- **First Few Days, WelcomeBC**

<https://www.welcomebc.ca/Start-Your-Life-in-B-C/First-Few-Days/Things-to-Do-Right-Away>

A list of the most important things to do as soon as you arrive in BC

- **Community Airport Newcomers Network - SUCCESS**

<https://cannyvr.ca/>

This organization welcomes newcomers to the Vancouver International Airport and gives information for starting your life in BC.

- **Find Free Newcomer Services Near You - IRCC**

<https://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/services/index.asp>

A guide to free services for newcomers to Canada

- **Banking – Financial Consumer Agency of Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/banking.html>

You can learn about basic banking in Canada

- **Social Insurance Number – Employment & Social Development Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/before-applying.html>

To work in Canada or have access to government programs, you need a Social Insurance Number. This site helps you apply for a SIN.

- **Get Health Care – Welcome BC**

<https://www.welcomebc.ca/Start-Your-Life-in-B-C/Daily-Life/Get-Health-Care>

All BC residents must register with the BC health insurance provider, Medical Services Plan (MSP). The cost of coverage varies, but the BC government pays for a majority of your basic care when you are registered.

- **Housing for Newcomers – Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/buying/newcomers-housing-information>

The CMHC is the Government of Canada’s housing agency. It gives information on renting an apartment or buying a house.

## 9. Additional Resources

- **IRCC Client Support Centre**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/contact-ircc/client-support-centre.html>

Contact IRCC for any questions not covered on the IRCC website.

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.*

