

Important information on using immigration or citizenship consultants



Know that it's your choice.

Are you, a friend or family member going through the immigration or citizenship application process? You can get all the [forms and instructions](#) you need to apply for a visa, a permit or citizenship for free on the Government of Canada's website.

Following the instructions in the application guides will help you fill out the forms and submit them yourself. Using a representative to help you with immigration or citizenship applications is **entirely your choice**.

If you decide to use a representative, choose carefully:

- Ask people you trust to recommend someone. Get advice from several people before you choose.
- Ask questions. Be careful of choosing someone who will not answer your questions.

If you hire a paid representative:

- Make sure they are authorized, which means they have a licence to practise and give advice.
- Authorized representatives are members of one of these groups:
 - ~ the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council,
 - ~ a Canadian provincial or territorial law society, or
 - ~ the Chambre des notaires du Québec.
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will not deal with a representative who charges a fee but isn't a member of one of these groups.
- Ask about the representative's training and experience. For example, ask for references and find out how long they have been in business.
- Make sure to get a **written contract** and read it carefully before you sign it.
- Make sure the contract lists all the services the representative will give you, such as immigration advice or dealing with IRCC on your behalf, and clearly states the fee you discussed.

Be aware and protect yourself from fraud:

- Be careful of anything that sounds too good to be true.
- Using a representative **will not** draw special attention to your application. It **will not** guarantee that your application will be approved.

- Beware of a representative who suggests or encourages you to give false information in your application. It is against the law. You could be denied entry into Canada or deported after you arrive.
- Don't sign blank application forms. Don't sign any forms or documents that you cannot read. If you don't understand them, ask someone to translate them for you.
- Get copies of any documents that your representative makes for you.
- Any time you pay your representative, get a signed receipt.
- Make sure your representative updates you on your application often.
- Protect your money and remember that:
 - ~ IRCC will **never** call you and ask you to deposit money into a personal bank account.
 - ~ IRCC will **never** ask you to transfer money through a private money transfer company.
 - ~ IRCC [processing fees](#) are in Canadian dollars, and the fees are the same around the world.

If you have a problem, find out where to go to register a complaint:

- **For a citizenship or immigration consultant**, you can file a complaint with the [Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council](#).
- **For a lawyer or notary**, you can file a complaint with a [Canadian provincial or territorial law society](#) or the [Chambre des notaires du Québec](#) (available in French only).
- **For paralegals (Ontario only)**, you can file a complaint with the [Law Society of Ontario](#).

If you think your representative committed fraud or provided misinformation about your application:

- Notify IRCC using this [Web form](#).
- Notify the [Canada Border Services Agency](#).

For useful tips, a list of authorized consultants and general information to help you choose a representative, visit Canada.ca/immigration-representative.

