



Know the risks of using an unlicensed consultant

Every year, hundreds of thousands of people choose to make Canada their home. Many of these newcomers decide to hire a consultant to help them navigate the immigration or citizenship process.

If you hire a consultant, they must be licensed by the [College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants](#). Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will only deal with representatives who are licensed to provide paid immigration advice or representation. IRCC will **not accept applications submitted by unlicensed consultants**.

Hiring an unlicensed consultant can have serious consequences

Beware of people who present themselves as immigration consultants, but who are not licensed by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants. Unlicensed consultants may not have the same training and education as licensed consultants or other paid representatives (lawyers and notaries).

Unlicensed consultants are not held to the same ethical standards as members of the College. That is why using an unlicensed consultant can have serious consequences, such as:

- losing your money:
 - ~ paying for a service you never received
 - ~ paying for fraudulent services
- having your application denied:
 - ~ an unlicensed consultant tells you to apply for a program you're not eligible for so your application gets rejected

- being barred from entering Canada:
 - ~ an unlicensed consultant told you to lie or hide information on your application and now you are not allowed to come to Canada for 5 years

Using an unlicensed consultant can also lead to:

- identity theft
- money stolen from your bank account or credit card
- threats of violence
- exploitation

For more information on detecting, avoiding and reporting fraud, visit Canada.ca/immigration-fraud.

To make sure your immigration or citizenship representative is authorized, check Canada.ca/immigration-representative.

