

COVID-19: HOW COVID-19 IS AFFECTING IMMIGRATION IN CANADA (January 27, 2021)

In an effort to help you understand the changes in Immigration due to Covid-19, we have prepared the following information.

This information is solely for informational purposes. Given all of the rapid changes happening in response to COVID-19, we will seek to update our resources on a regular basis and urge you to consult with us if you have any specific legal questions about a client's situation.

Travel Ban

- All passengers travel by air with Covid-19 symptoms are prohibited from boarding flights to Canada. (Covid-19 symptoms such as fever and cough or fever and respiratory difficulties.)
- All passengers age 5 and up will have to provide negative test results for Covid-19. The passengers must test negative in a laboratory molecular test.
- All tests must be taken 72 hours before travel.
- Airlines will refuse all passengers who are unable to prove a negative test result or those who tested positive within the last 14 and 90 days prior to departure.
- Passengers must download the ArriveCan app to answer screening questions as well as input contact information to enter Canada.
- A mandatory 14 day quarantine period is required for all those entering Canada. This quarantine period applies regardless of symptoms or a negative Covid test.
- Once in Canada it is mandatory to have a credible quarantine plan for 14 days.
- Without a quarantine plan there will be mandatory stay in one of the facilities designated by the Chief Public Health Officer.
- It is now possible for Foreign nationals to enter Canada with a limited release from the current mandatory quarantine period (14 days) if they are traveling for compassionate reasons, including (1) Being present for the final days of a loved one, (2) Caring for a critically ill loved one (3) Attending a funeral, memorial, or end of life ceremony
- **Other reasons one might be exempt from quarantine include:**
 - provide essential services
 - maintain the flow of essential goods or people
 - are receiving medical care within 36 hours of entering Canada (non-related to COVID-19)
 - regularly cross the border to work
 - live in an integrated trans-border community
- Border crossings are still possible for those entering from the US for essential travel. In response to COVID-19, the CBSA reduced its service hours at some land border crossings.
- When coming to Canada from outside the US the traveler must prove they are exempt from restrictions and that they are traveling for essential purpose; or apply for travel exemption as an authorized family member by emailing IRCC at IRCC.Covid-TravelExemptions-Exemptionsdevoyage-COVID.ircc@cic.gc.ca with: (1) Full name (2) Date of birth (3) Unique Client Identifier (4) Passport number (5) Detailed reason for Travel (6) Proof of relationship with immediate family member (7) Proof of immigration status (8) Proof of temporary resident or ETA (this only applies to those who already have visitor visas or an ETA)

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Citizenship Applications, Permanent Residence Applications, Temporary Residence Applications

- All in person citizenship tests and ceremonies have been cancelled until further notice.
- Online tests are now possible by invitation via phone or email from IRCC.
- Urgent processing for Citizenship applications is available upon request with supporting documents with regards to the emergency.
- Oath ceremonies are done via Zoom upon invitation.
- There is no global expedited processing for applications currently in queue, in fact with some Visa offices worldwide remain functional and others are closed.
- IRCC has granted 90-day extensions. Due to Covid-19 service disruptions at Service Canada locations, Visa Application Centres and Application Support Centers, biometrics collection deadlines have been automatically extended from 30 days to 90 days from the date on your letter.
- All temporary residents in Canada unable to depart from Canada must apply for an extension if their status will soon expire. They must meet all the requirements and pay the associated fees.
- Temporary residents who have already applied for an extension will benefit from implied status and be able to remain in Canada until a decision on their application for extension has been rendered.
- If a temporary resident's status has expired, they must apply for restoration and pay all associated fees for restoration.
- All temporary foreign workers are exempt from travel restrictions and can travel to Canada by air or land if they're coming for an essential purpose.
- Permanent residence applicants who received their confirmation of permanent residence and their permanent resident visa but are unable to travel to Canada while their documentation is still valid must inform IRCC via a web form submission. If the documentation has expired, they must also inform IRCC via web form submission. Immigration officers will re-open their application and review within 90 days.
- Physical presence requirements remain in effect. Days spent outside of Canada due to Covid-19 will not count towards Residency requirements for Citizenship.

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| Refugee Hearings & Refugee claimants on COVID Frontlines | International Students & Tourist Visas |
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| <p>REFUGEE CLAIMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By mutual agreement with the USA • Those entering Canada from the US to make a refugee claim will be sent back to the US. • Those entering the US from Canada from will be sent back to Canada. • STCA is under appeal and his still in affect, therefore only those benefitting from an exemption under the STCA will be able to make a refugee claim. <p>REFUGEE HEARINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In person Hearings have resumed as of September 14, 2020 with strict health guidelines. • Montreal IRB has open as of September 28, 2020. • Once hearings resume advance notice will be given to claimants. Resumption notice of 30 days will be given. <p>REFUGEE CLAIMANTS ON COVID FRONTLINES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pathway to permanent residency for asylum seekers working on COVID frontlines has been created. • This is for health care workers who are providing direct care to patients in health care institutions. • To qualify you must have sought asylum before March 13th. • You must have received your work permit after having made the asylum claim. • Have worked in health care no less than 120 hours between March 13 -August 14, 2020. • Have 6 months experience in your designated occupation before receiving PR by August 2021. | <p>INTERATIONAL STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a bid to attract skilled immigrants, on January 27, 2020 IRCC will allow former international students who currently have or have had a Post Graduate work permit to apply for an open work permit. This move seeks to stabilize the precarious situation, of those whose chances of obtaining work experience has been jeopardized due to the pandemic. Canadian Work experience is extremely important when applying for permanent residence through Express Entry. The one-time open work permit will be valid for 18 months and allow former international students to remain in Canada to seek employment. <p>TOURIST VISAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those with valid visiting visas and super visas will not be permitted to enter Canada at this time, if the purpose of their travel is non-essential. • A person with a visitor visa would only be able to enter Canada through the US/Canada border if they fall into the category of those who are exempt from the Travel Ban. |