



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada



**Come to Canada**

Visa Process

Presentation for  
Event Organizers


2016



**Canada**<sup>101</sup>



## Overview

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## Purpose

- To provide an overview of Canada's visa process.
- To provide information on the services provided by the Special Events Unit of IRCC.
- To provide information on the responsibilities of event organizers planning an event in Canada and participants.





## Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

- IRCC is responsible for managing access to Canada to protect the security and health of Canadians and the integrity of Canadian laws.
- The Special Events Unit contributes directly to IRCC's mandate to facilitate the entry of visitors for the purpose of trade, commerce, tourism, international understanding and cultural, educational and scientific activities.





# Legislative Framework Governing IRCC

## Legislation

- [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#) (IRPA) sets out the core principles and general requirements concerning immigration and refugee protection
- Changes require approval from Parliament
- The Minister of IRCC is responsible for the administration of IRPA which received royal assent on November 1, 2001

## Regulations

- [Immigration & Refugee Protection Regulations](#) (IRPR) set out detailed requirements relating to immigration and refugee protection
- Changes require approval from Governor-in-Council

**All applications must be assessed against criteria established in IRPA and IRPR**





## What is a Visa?

- A visa is an official document issued by a Canadian visa office abroad which allows a foreign national to travel to Canada and present him/herself for examination at the port of entry.
- There are two types of visas: a single-entry visa and a multiple-entry visa. Both are valid for a fixed period of time.
  - A **multiple-entry visa** lets you enter and leave Canada repeatedly while it is valid. It can be valid for up to 10 years. It cannot exceed the validity of your passport. As of February 2014, multiple entry visas are the default visas issued to visitors.
  - A **single entry visa** allows you to enter Canada only one time. Once you have left Canada, excluding travel to the United States and St. Pierre and Miquelon, you will need a new visa to travel back to and enter Canada.
- A visa cannot be issued at the border or at the airport. Visit the IRCC website for information on [how to apply for a visa](#).







# TRV Specimen



The expiry date of the visa is the date by which the visa holder must enter Canada.





## Who needs a visa to visit Canada?

- As a general rule, all visitors to Canada require a visa, **except citizens of countries where an exemption has been granted**. Visit the IRCC website to [find out if you need a visa to come to Canada](#).
- Starting March 15, 2016, visa-exempt foreign nationals who fly to or transit through Canada will need an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA). Exceptions include U.S. citizens and travellers with a valid visa. From March 15, 2016 until Fall 2016, however, travellers who do not have an eTA can board their flight ,as long as they have [acceptable travel documents and identification](#), such as a valid passport. Travellers arriving in Canada without an eTA, must meet the [other requirements to enter Canada](#).







## What is an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA)?

- eTA applies to visa-exempt foreign nationals travelling to Canada by air. It allows Canada to screen travelers before they arrive. The authorization is electronically linked to your passport and is valid for **five years** or until your passport expires, whichever comes first.
- **Find out if you [need an eTA](#).**





## How to apply for an eTA for travel to Canada?

- To apply you must have a valid passport, a credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or a pre-paid Visa, MasterCard or American Express), and email address. It costs \$7 CAD to get an eTA. It will be valid for up to five years.
- Starting March 15, 2016, an eTA will be mandatory for certain visa-exempt foreign nationals who fly to Canada. Do not wait until the last minute – apply now for an eTA.
- The [application form](#) is now available.





## Basic Requirements to obtain a Visa

**All visa decisions must be made in accordance with IRPA and its Regulations. By law the client must satisfy the visa officer that he/she:**


- will leave Canada at the end of their authorized stay;
- has enough money to support themselves and their family members when in Canada and then to return home;
- does not intend to work or study in Canada unless authorized to do so;
- is a law abiding citizen and has no record of criminal activity;
- will not be a risk to the security of Canada;
- has produced all additional documents requested by the officer to establish their admissibility; and
- is in good health.





## Basic Requirements to obtain a Visa

To apply for a visa, all applicants **must** provide the following documents to the visa office:

- [Fully completed application form](#) with [photo](#) and signature
  - Valid passport or travel document (a minimum of 6 months validity is recommended)
  - Fee
  - Supporting documents demonstrating a valid reason to visit Canada and sufficient attachment to client's home country to ensure their return – **Letter of Invitation from organization hosting the event**
  - Other documentation as requested by a visa officer e.g. letter from employer
- 



## Basic Requirements for a Visa

Additional background documents in support of the visa application may include:

- Proof of present immigration status in the country of application
- Copies of previous passports (to show previous travels overseas)
- Evidence of financial resources (e.g. copy of bank statements, credit cards statement, pay slips)
- Evidence of links to the home country (e.g. letter from employer authorizing participation in the event)

Find out if you need to submit country-specific documents by consulting the website of the [visa office](#) serving your country of residence.

It is the responsibility of each individual to satisfy the visa officer that they meet the requirements of IRPA.

**Note:** The presentation of all requested documents does not guarantee the issuance of a visa.







## Submitting a Visa Application

- A visa application can be submitted in person or by mail at some visa offices [Visa Offices](#), a [Visa Application Centre \(VAC\)](#) or [online](#).
- An application can be submitted in the [client's country of nationality or country where the client has been lawfully admitted](#).

**Check the responsible visa office's web site for specific arrangements**



## Submitting an Application – Visa Application Centres

- Visa Application Centres (VACs) are private companies authorized by the Government of Canada to provide specific services to visa applicants under the terms of a formal agreement with CIC.
- What can VACs do for applicants?
  - answer questions in local languages and make sure that applications are complete
  - transmit application documents and passports to the visa office securely
  - return passport and decision documents securely
  - offer a tracking service
  - schedule interviews and provide application photographs and photocopies for a fee
  - provide access to a computer to [apply online](#) (study, work permits and visitor visa only)
  - collect [biometrics](#) (fingerprints and photograph)





## Submitting an Application – Visa Application Centres

- VACs do not play a role in the decision-making process and are expressly forbidden to provide any visa-related advice to applicants.
- All decisions on applications are made by Canadian visa officers at a visa office.
- VACs do not represent the Government of Canada. VACs are managed by private companies or international organizations. They are only authorized to provide specific services to applicants under the terms of a formal agreement with IRCC.





## Submitting an Application – Online

- [Online applications](#) (E-Apps) provide clients worldwide with a fast and effective option for submitting a visa application.
- Applicants who choose to apply on-line will not have to submit their passport (if needed) until a decision has been taken on their application.
- Completing an application online is an excellent option for people who have access to the internet, a scanner or camera, and a credit card.
- To find out more about E-Apps visit the [IRCC website](#).





## Submitting an Application - Biometrics Requirement

- Citizens from 29 countries and one territory are required to provide Biometrics information (fingerprints and photographs) when they apply for a visa, study permit and/or work permit.
- Biometrics facilitates the screening of all applicants by confirming their identity promptly.
- [Visit the IRCC website to obtain additional information on Biometrics](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/biometrics.asp) including who needs to provide it, where to go to provide it, how to provide it, and who is exempted from the Biometrics requirement.  
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/biometrics.asp>







## Application Process – Visa Decisions

- The decision to issue a visa rests solely with the visa officer. Once the decision is made, the file is closed.
- If a visa application is approved, the applicant receives a letter from IRCC requesting their passport. Once the passport is received, the visa will be affixed, and the passport is returned to the applicant.
- If a visa application is refused, the applicant will receive a letter explaining the reasons for the refusal.
- If there is new information not previously considered or if circumstances have changed since the refusal, the applicant can choose to submit a new application.
- If a new application is submitted, the processing fee will apply.
- Due to privacy legislation IRCC cannot comment on specific cases without the applicant's consent.





## Reasons why a person may not be allowed to enter Canada

There are many reasons someone may not be allowed to enter Canada:

- you are a security risk,
- you have committed human or international rights violations,
- you have been convicted of a crime, or you have committed an act outside Canada that would be a crime (e.g. theft, assault, manslaughter, dangerous driving, driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and possession of or trafficking in drugs or controlled substances).
- you have ties to organized crime,
- you have a serious health problem,
- you have a serious financial problem,
- you lied in your application or in an interview,
- you do not meet the conditions in [Canada's immigration law](#).

In some cases, if a compelling reason to travel to Canada exists, a [Temporary Resident Permit \(TRP\)](#) may be issued to overcome the inadmissibility.

[Visit the IRCC website for details on overcoming criminal inadmissibility](#)





## Roles and Responsibilities - IRCC

### IRCC's Special Events Unit :

Is the contact point for event organizers to assist in responding to questions and concerns leading up to the event.

The Unit:

- Is responsible for the overall coordination of IRCC services
- Will publish information about the event on IRCC intranet
- Will provide information to organizers on IRCC's services
- Will respond to questions visa offices may have about the event.

**The Special Events Unit cannot expedite visa applications or overturn a visa refusal.**





## Roles and Responsibilities – Event Organizers

### Event organizers:

- are the point of contact with IRCC.
- [Register events](#) with the Special Events Unit of IRCC well in advance of the event.
- Provide the Special Events Unit with sample letters of invitation to publish on IRCC's intranet.
- Provide IRCC with list of participants as required.





## Roles and Responsibilities – Event Organizers

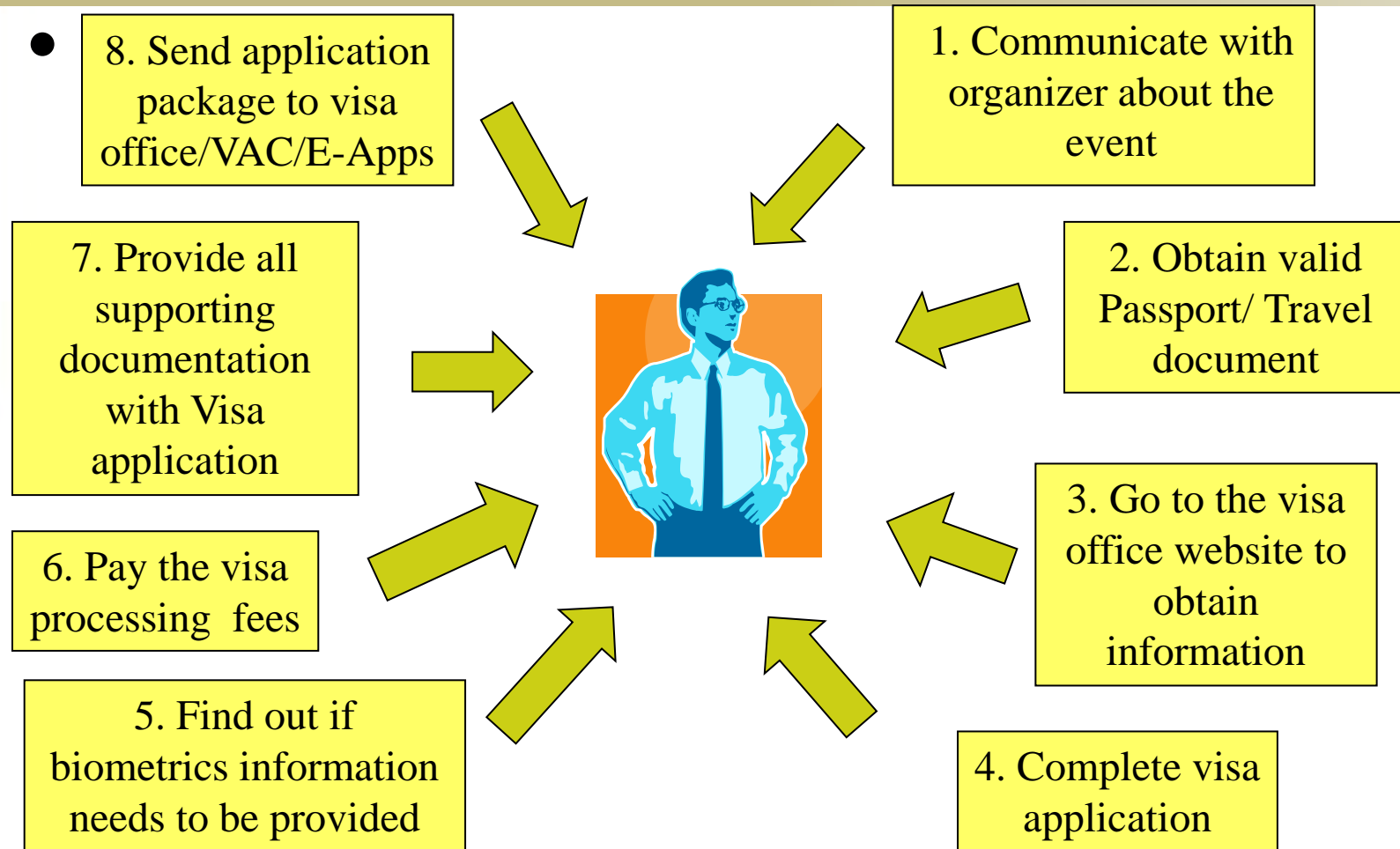
- Advise participants to go to the website of the [visa office responsible for processing their application](#) for information on the requirements to obtain a visa.
- Invite participants to visit the IRCC website to find out how long it currently takes to [process a visa application](#) in their country of residence.
- Encourage participants to submit complete applications including all supporting documents as early as possible.
- Provide a letter of invitation to participants printed on official letterhead and signed by a responsible person.
- Provide participants with any other documentation that may be required by the visa officer e.g. copies of contracts, airline ticket and others. Also provide information on expenses covered by the event organizer e.g. accommodation, meals, transportation.







## Roles and Responsibilities - Applicant





## Factors that can facilitate processing of Visa Application

- [Apply early](#), ensure application is fully completed, and include all supporting documents requested on the Visa Application Checklist with your visa application.
- Inform the visa office of any changes to your contact information or date of travel (e.g. mailing address, telephone number(s), e-mail addresses).





## Factors that can delay processing of Visa Application

Incomplete applications may be returned to clients and will result in delays in processing the file or the application could be refused.

Factors which can delay the processing of visa applications include:

- missing signature on application forms,
- incorrect payment,
- unclear photocopies of documents,
- documents not accompanied by a certified English or French translation,
- consultation is required with other offices in Canada and abroad.





## How to register your event with the Special Events Unit

- To Register an Event with IRCC:  
[http://www.cic.gc.ca/meeting-rencontre/meetingForm\\_rencontreFormulaire-eng.aspx](http://www.cic.gc.ca/meeting-rencontre/meetingForm_rencontreFormulaire-eng.aspx)
- For more information about Special Events web site:  
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/meeting.asp>





## Contact Information for the Special Events Unit

- E-mail: [special.events@cic.gc.ca](mailto:special.events@cic.gc.ca)
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada  
Special Events Coordinator (OMC)  
365 Laurier Avenue West D1463 (14<sup>th</sup>  
Floor)  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 1L1





## Citizenship and Immigration Canada Website

- To obtain additional information you may visit the IRCC website at:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.asp>







Thank you

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