

Immigration To Do List

If you have decided to immigrate to Canada or are still thinking about it, there are many things that you will need to do. We have compiled a to-do list for you to help you get organized for the immigration process. What are you waiting for? Let's get started!

1. *Applying for immigration to Canada*

- Find out what the best way is for you to immigrate to Canada and decide whether you want to hire an immigration consultant or lawyer to help you or if you want to do the process yourself. See "finding immigration and settlement help" about how you can find an authorized representative. You will need to gather many documents for Citizenship & Immigration Canada which can include educational, work and medical documents. You can obtain a list of documents from the immigration consultant or lawyer that you hire or from Citizenship & Immigration Canada.
- Depending on the immigration application you have chosen, gathering documents may take a few months as you will need to request these documents from governmental and educational institutions. Once you have gathered all documents your application will be sent in to the visa office that has been assigned to your country of origin and now you will need to wait for a decision. In the meantime it is important to you start preparing yourself and your family for the transition of moving away from your home country to Canada. The following list will help give you an idea of what needs to be arranged in your home country and in Canada. Let's get crackin'!

2. *Civic registration*

- Some countries, such as the Netherlands, require that you de-register as a citizen in your municipality. Visit your local town office prior to departure to complete this task. In Canada, communities do not keep a civic registration list as population census' take place on a regular basis.

3. *Housing*

- In your home country: You need to take steps to sell your home and it is likely that you will need to offer your home for purchase prior to receiving a decision from Citizenship & Immigration Canada.
- In Alberta: You will need to arrange for housing in Alberta and you can do that in a variety of ways such as doing the process yourself or hiring a real estate agent. It is highly recommended that at least for your first home purchase you hire a real estate agent as the buying process can be very different in Alberta than what you are used to. To familiarize yourself with real estate in Alberta and finding an agent, www.abrea.ab.ca. This website will give you an overview of the real estate process and will help tremendously in preparing you for it.
- Read our [housing information sheet!](#)

4. Finances

- In your home country: You need to inform your financial institution of your plans to immigrate to Canada. They can assist you with transferring funds to Canada once you have established bank accounts in Canada. It is also recommended that you have the bank officer/director write a letter that includes information as to how long you have been a customer, what your holdings at that bank were, and what your repayment history is with any debt. Also include contact information, position title and a business card.
- In Alberta: You will need to meet with a bank representative as soon as possible and it is recommended that you familiarize yourself with the types of banks available in or near your community (see business directory). Some banks such as the CIBC have programs and offers in place for newcomers to Canada on permanent residency including bank accounts, credit cards and mortgages.
- Read our [banking information sheet!](#)

5. Moving

- You need to find a moving company who will transport your belongings to Canada if you choose to take those with you. The most popular way to transport belongings is by renting a container that is trucked to the nearest sea port and sent by boat to Canada. From the Netherlands, for example, De Haan Verhuizingen and "De Gruijter & Co specialize in shipping materials while VCK Logistics specializes in the transportation of animals.

6. Transportation

- Once you have received a positive decision from Citizenship & Immigration Canada you will need to book transportation to Canada and a hotel for your first few nights after arrival.
- You will also need to purchase a vehicle because you need to be able to move around. You can purchase a vehicle through private sales or a dealership such as Ford or General Motors which are located throughout the province and in most communities. There are also used car dealerships such as repo.com that are located in Calgary. As a newcomer to Canada, it is recommended that you have funds available to purchase a vehicle as you may not be able to finance as you do not have an employment history in Canada yet.

7. Find adequate schooling in Canada for your children.

- Your child may need to take English as a Second Language Courses (ESL) and do a test to see which grade he/she can enter in Canada. Contact the schools in your community and they can direct you with which steps to take. If you would like to see what topics your children will be studying in Alberta you can visit www.education.alberta.ca. This government website is excellent

and gives you access to curriculum handbooks which shows you examples of the courses your child will take and specific examples for content.

- Read our [school information sheet!](#)

8. Arrange utilities for your home (telephone, electricity, natural gas, etc.)

- Once you have rented or purchased a home and are ready to move in you will need to arrange for utility hook-ups such as electricity, water, natural gas and telephone.
- Examples of frequently used utility companies include
 - o Direct Energy – electricity and natural gas provider (www.directenergy.com)
 - o Atco Gas – natural gas provider (www.atcogas.com)
 - o Epcor – water and wastewater distributor and electricity provider (www.epcor.ca)
 - o TELUS Communications – provider of television, high speed internet and home phone services (www.telus.com)
 - o Shaw Communications – provider of entertainment and communications (www.shaw.ca)

9. Obtain a social insurance number

- In order to work in Canada you must have a social insurance number that consists of nine digits. You can apply for a SIN at any Service Canada Centre such as the Harry Hays building in Calgary or by sending in an application form. You will need to provide your permanent resident card and a second piece of identification such as your passport. Both sets of identification must be in English. Your social insurance number is unique to you and can also be used as a second piece of identification for other services such as financial services when opening a bank account. For application forms or more information please visit www.servicecanada.gc.ca.

10. Find employment

- Create your resume and cover letter
- Research job search engines online and submit your resume
- Read the local newspaper for employment opportunities
- There is more out help there! The Alberta and federal governments have put together some publications that will help prepare you for and during your job search. You can get these books at any government location such as the Employment and Immigration building in Claresholm, Alberta. Here they are:
 - i. Working in Alberta: A guide for internationally trained and educated immigrants (published by the Government of Alberta)
 - ii. Looking for a Job: Innovation and Learning for Canadians (published by the Government of Canada)

- iii. Job Seeker's Handbook: An Introductory Guide to Finding Work (published by the Government of Alberta Human Resources and Employment Department)
- iv. Advanced Techniques for Work Search (published by the Government of Alberta)
- v. Making Sense of Labour Market Information (published by the Government of Alberta)
- vi. Job Smart: Tips for staying employed (published by the Government of Alberta Human Resources and Employment Department)

11. Miscellaneous

- Cancel memberships of magazines, newspapers, clubs, etc.
- Forward your mail to Canada.
- Practice English! Get into the habit of reading English content online, watching English movies and set a one hour time period when your family only communicates in English. This will help ease any nervousness with speaking English and the transition from your native language.

There is a lot of work to be done when you immigration to our beautiful corner in Alberta and you can get help in all of these areas and more. Chinook Immigration Consulting specializes in settlement services in 10 important areas including education, employment, housing, financial, insurances, etc. Visit www.chinookimmigration.ca for more information.

My Immigration To Do List

- 1. Research immigration programs or hire a consultant/lawyer*
- 2. Civic Registration*
- 3. Arrange housing (at home and in Alberta)*
- 4. Arrange finances (at home and in Alberta)*
- 5. Arrange belonging to be moved to Alberta*
- 6. Arrange transportation (drivers license in Alberta, purchase vehicle)*
- 7. Arrange for schooling (children)*
- 8. Arrange hook-up of utilities*
- 9. Obtain a Social Insurance Number in Canada*
- 10. Find employment in Alberta*
- 11. Miscellaneous (cancel memberships, forward mail, practice English!)*

