

# APPLYING FOR A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER

## If you live in Canada

### Applying at a Service Canada Centre

Bring all the necessary documents to the nearest Service Canada Centre (see the list of documents needed below). If everything is in order, you will get a Social Insurance Number (SIN) during your visit.

### Applying by mail

Normally you must apply for a SIN in person, or have someone else apply for you in person. However:

- ▶ If you live in a remote area with no Service Canada Centre within 100 kilometers, you **are eligible** to apply by mail. To confirm this is the case, go to [Canada.ca/social-insurance-number](https://Canada.ca/social-insurance-number) with your postal code ready, then select Applying for a Social Insurance Number or call Service Canada at 1-866-274-6627
- ▶ If you are unable to apply in person or to have someone else apply for you in person, you **may be eligible** to apply by mail. You must call Service Canada at 1-866-274-6627 in order to find out if you can apply by mail

## If you do not live in Canada

You **are eligible** to apply by mail using the “Application for a Social Insurance Number – Information Guide for Applicants” form. The form can be obtained by going to [Canada.ca/social-insurance-number](https://Canada.ca/social-insurance-number) and choosing option: “4. How to apply”.

# Documents needed

When you apply for a SIN, you **must** provide 2 documents:

- ▶ a valid original primary document to prove your identity and legal status in Canada, and
- ▶ a valid secondary document to confirm your identity

If the name on your primary or secondary document is different than the name you are currently using, you may also need to provide supporting documents.

If you are applying for someone else, you may need to provide additional documents.

**IMPORTANT:** All documents must be valid originals. Photocopies are not accepted. Refer to the translation requirements below.

## Acceptable primary documents

A primary document is an official document that proves your identity and status in Canada.

**Canadian citizens must provide one of the following documents:**

- ▶ **Certificate of birth (also known as birth certificate)** issued by the province or territory in which you were born  
In most cases, original birth certificates (certificates of birth) are considered acceptable. However, some birth certificates, although they are original documents issued by a vital statistics agency, may no longer be considered valid by the issuing province/territory or meet the requirements for various reasons. Service Canada must review the document to determine its validity  
Service Canada does not accept Quebec proof of birth documents issued before 1994
- ▶ **Certificate of Canadian Citizenship** issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) or Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)
- ▶ **Certificate of Registration of Birth Abroad** issued before 1977 by CIC

**Note:** If you have Indian status under the *Indian Act* and you want to register your status in your SIN record, you must provide your primary document and a Certificate of Indian Status issued by the Government of Canada.

### Permanent residents must provide one of the following documents:

- ▶ **Permanent Resident Card (PR card)** issued by IRCC or CIC
- ▶ **Confirmation of Permanent Residence** issued by IRCC, accompanied by either a travel document (for example, a foreign passport) or an alternate photo identification issued by a provincial/territorial authority (for example, a driver's licence)

**Note:** You can use the Confirmation of Permanent Residence within one year of the date you became a permanent resident. After that you must use the permanent resident card.

- ▶ **Record of Landing** issued by CIC before June 28, 2002
- ▶ **Verification of Landing** issued by IRCC or CIC when an original Record of Landing or the Confirmation of Permanent Residence is not available (if it has been lost, for example). This document is acceptable only to update a SIN record or confirm an existing SIN
- ▶ **Status Verification or Verification of Status** issued by IRCC or CIC. This document is acceptable only to update a SIN record or confirm an existing SIN

### Temporary residents must provide one of the following documents:

- ▶ **work permit** issued by IRCC or CIC
- ▶ **study permit** issued by IRCC or CIC, that:
  - states that the permit holder “may accept employment” or “may work” in Canada, or
  - is accompanied by a “confirmation to work off campus” letter issued by IRCC or CIC before February 11, 2015

**Note:** If neither of these requirements is met, you may contact IRCC to ask if you are eligible to apply for an amended study permit.

- ▶ **visitor record** issued by IRCC or CIC stating that you are authorized to work in Canada or that was issued under:
  - Regulation 186 (except for R186[a] – see Note)
  - 187 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations*
  - Regulation 19 of the repealed *Immigration Act*, or
  - issued to a member of the clergy

**Note:** Anyone who comes to Canada under Regulation 186 (a) as a “business visitor” is not entering the Canadian labour market, so they cannot get a SIN.

- ▶ **Diplomatic identity card** and a **work authorization** note/letter issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development

## Acceptable supporting documents

A supporting document is a legal document indicating the name you currently use. It is required if the name on your primary or secondary document is different.

In addition to your primary and secondary document, you will need to provide an original of one of the following:

- ▶ **certificate of marriage, record of solemnization of marriage, marriage statement or a document with a similar name**—to support your family name after getting married

**Note:** This does not apply to Quebec residents married after April 1, 1981, regardless of where they were married.

- ▶ **divorce decree, certificate of divorce, decree absolute or a document with a similar name** issued by a court (Canadian or foreign)—if the family name you request on your SIN record is different from the name on the primary or secondary document because of a divorce
- ▶ **legal change of name certificate or court order document** issued in accordance with provincial/territorial name change legislation
- ▶ **adoption order** certified by a Canadian court (applies to adoptions in Canada only)
- ▶ **notarial certificate**, also called **notarial adoption certificate**, issued by the country of origin of a child adopted abroad and used by the adoptive parents to have the SIN issued in the adopted child's Canadian name
- ▶ **request to Amend Record of Landing** issued by IRCC or CIC and used to amend a record of landing or a Confirmation of Permanent Residence document

## Acceptable secondary documents

A secondary document is an official document that confirms your identity.

### ▶ Notes:

- you need to provide a **secondary document** if you are applying for a SIN in person at a Service Canada Centre
- the secondary document requirement will not apply to:
  - applicants below the age of majority in their province or territory of residence, and/or
  - applicants applying by mail

### ▶ Requirements:

The secondary document presented must be valid, **original** and issued by a government (federal or provincial). The document must contain the following two elements:

- legal name (Surname and Given Name), and
- date of birth

▶ **Examples of acceptable secondary documents include:**

- a passport (Canadian or foreign)
- a provincial or territorial ID card or driver's license
- any other government-issued ID

## Applying for someone else

### Parents

#### Applying in person

- ▶ In addition to your child's primary document, you will need to provide:
- your SIN or if you do not have a SIN your primary document, and
  - a secondary document

#### Applying by mail

- ▶ In addition to your child's original primary document, you will need to provide an original primary document proving your identity

### Legal guardians

#### Applying in person

- ▶ In addition to the child's valid primary document, you must provide:
- your SIN or if you do not have a SIN your original primary document
  - an original secondary document, and
  - an original or a certified copy of a document that confirms your legal guardianship, issued by a provincial or territorial authority (In Quebec, a notarized will is an acceptable document)

#### Applying by mail

- ▶ In addition to your child's original primary document you will need to provide:
- an original primary document proving your identity, and
  - an original or a certified copy of a document that confirms your legal guardianship, issued by a provincial or territorial authority (in Quebec, a notarized will is an acceptable document)

## Legal representatives

Three types of legal representatives can apply for a SIN for a child or an adult:

- ▶ provincial/territorial employees
- ▶ lawyers who are appointed by a court, or
- ▶ individuals who are appointed by a court

All legal representatives must provide:

- ▶ the applicant's (the child or adult you are applying for) **original** primary document
- ▶ valid government-issued photo identification confirming their identity, and
- ▶ an original document or certified copy of a document that confirms their **legal representation**, issued by a provincial or territorial authority (In Quebec, a notarized will is an acceptable document)

## Additional information regarding provincial/territorial employees

- ▶ They must also provide the following document: an original letter on agency letterhead authorizing the employee to apply for a SIN on behalf of the agency. The letter must be issued by the agency and signed by its director or administrator
- ▶ They may also provide valid employee photo identification in lieu of government-issued photo identification

## Translation requirements

If you submit a document that is not in English or French, you **must also submit**:

- ▶ an English or French translation of the document, and
- ▶ an attestation or affidavit written and signed by the translator

If the document has been translated by a certified translator, you must submit an attestation. The attestation is a document stating that the translation is a true and accurate version of the original text. (A certified translator is a member of a provincial or territorial organization of translators and interpreters.)


If the document has been translated by a translator who is not certified, you must submit an affidavit. The affidavit is a document stating that the translation is a true and accurate version of the original text. **The translator must sign the affidavit in front of a commissioner for oaths or a commissioner for taking affidavits.** (A commissioner for oaths or a commissioner for taking affidavits is appointed by a province or territory.)

**Note:** Translations by family members **are not acceptable** (A family member is defined as being a parent, guardian, sister, brother, spouse, grandparent, child, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew or first cousin).

**There is no fee to apply for a SIN.**

## For more information

 **Click [Canada.ca/social-insurance-number](https://Canada.ca/social-insurance-number)**

 **Call 1-866-274-6627**  
**TTY: 1-800-926-9105**  
Outside Canada: 1-506-548-7961

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### Applying for your Social Insurance Number (SIN)

This publication is available for download at [Canada.ca/publiccentre-ESDC](https://Canada.ca/publiccentre-ESDC).

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