

Welcome to Canada



WHAT YOU MUST DO AFTER YOU ARRIVE IN CANADA



Shortly after you arrive in Canada, there are important tasks that you must do before starting your life in Canada.

Settlement service providers can help you. These organizations offer many programs and services to help newcomers after arrival in Canada. They can also connect you with mentors. To find a settlement organization in your community, consult: [Find free newcomer services near you](#) (web page is available in English and French).

IN YOUR FIRST TWO WEEKS

Apply for your Social Insurance Number (SIN). It is needed to work in Canada and access government services and benefits. You can get a temporary SIN for a short period. Do not give your SIN to anyone unless you are sure there is a legal reason. If someone asks for your SIN, ask why they need it. To learn more, consult: [Social Insurance Number– Overview](#) (web page is available in English and French).

Apply for government health insurance through your province or territory's health ministry as soon as you arrive in Canada. Depending on where you live, it may take 3 months to get coverage. To learn more, consult: [Learn about health care in Canada](#) (web page is available in English and French).

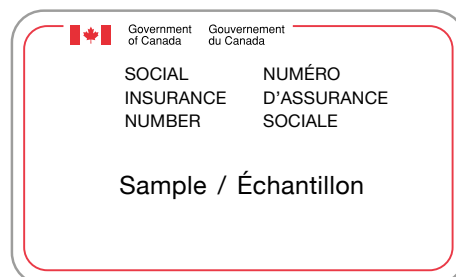
You will receive a **health card** as proof of your coverage. Each person receives their own health card. You must show your health card each time you get medical care.

While waiting to be approved for government health insurance, it is a good to get private medical insurance so you are covered for any medical needs.

Make sure that you understand what is covered under your health insurance. There are some medical services and products that are not covered by health insurance. You may need to pay for these on your own.

If you are a resettled refugee, made an asylum claim or are a protected person in Canada, you may be eligible to receive temporary medical care and prescription drugs under the Interim Federal Health Program. To learn if you are eligible, consult: [Interim Federal Health Program: Who is eligible](#) (web page is available in English and French).

Get your permanent resident card. Provide your Canadian address to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) within 180 days. Your permanent resident card will arrive at your home in the mail. To learn more, consult: [Applying for a permanent resident card \(PR card\)](#) (web page is available in English and French).



Open a bank account as soon as possible. Banks offer specific services for newcomers. There are 2 main types of bank accounts you can use: savings and chequing. The bank will give you a debit card to access your account at the bank, at an “automated teller machine” (ATM) or to make purchases at a store or online.

Canada has many different types of banks. Visit or search online to explore different banks and learn more about the services each can offer you.

To learn more about managing your money in Canada, consult: [Managing Your Money in Canada](#) (video is available in English and French).

If you have an emergency, call 911. This is the national emergency telephone number that connects to local police, firefighters, and ambulances.

Some places in rural or isolated areas may use a different number. Make sure to verify the local emergency number in the area where you live.

To learn more about the things you should do during your first two weeks in Canada, consult: [Your First Two Weeks in Canada](#) (video is available in English and French).



IN YOUR FIRST TWO MONTHS

Find a place to live. There are different types of housing in Canada. Housing costs in Canada are high, especially in large cities, and it can be challenging to find an affordable rental apartment or housing that meets your needs.

Location and cost are important to think about when choosing where to live. You may want to live close to work, schools, stores, places of worship, community centres or public transit.

You can search online, visit in person, and ask friends and family about different places to live. Contact the settlement service provider in your community for more information on finding housing, or consult the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation: [Housing for Newcomers to Canada](#) (web page is available in English and French).

Register your children in school. The school year starts in late August or early September, and finishes in June. Children attend school from Monday to Friday. Schools are closed on public holidays.

The registration process can take several weeks. It is best to enroll your child as early as possible.

During registration, you will need to show valid legal documents that prove:

- your child’s age (such as a passport)
- your legal relationship (as parent or guardian)
- where you live with your child (home address)
- record of immunizations to show that your child’s vaccines are up-to-date

You can ask about transportation options for your child to and from school during the registration process.

To learn more about the primary and secondary school system in Canada, consult: [Education in Canada: an overview of the primary and secondary school system](#) (video is available in English and French).

Contact your local settlement service provider to find out how to register your children in school: [Find free newcomer services near you](#) (web page is available in English and French).

Find a doctor and a dentist. Find a family doctor and dentist who can accept you and your family as a new patient. They can keep your medical history and see you regularly. You can find a regular doctor and a dentist by asking someone you know, looking online or contacting a community health centre.

It may be challenging to find a family doctor who is accepting new patients in your community. Ask your settlement service provider for more information on how to find a health care provider in your province or territory.

To learn more about Canada's health care system, consult: [Get to know Canada's Health Care System](#) (video is available in English and French).

Explore your community. Go to your local library or search online to learn about your new neighbourhood and public transportation options. Visit your local community centre or settlement service provider for more information.

Make connections and build relationships in your community. Your community can help with your settlement. Community centres, libraries and places of worship are great places to meet people and make friends.

Improve your English or French. There are many language training options and some have no cost. To learn more, consult [Language Training Options for Newcomers to Canada](#) (video is available in English and French) or visit the settlement provider organization in your community.

Driving in Canada. Learn about provincial or territorial laws to get your driver's license, or get an International Driving Permit.

Learn about Canadian laws and your rights and civic responsibilities as a resident of Canada. To learn more, consult: [Your Rights and Freedoms in Canada](#) (web page is available in English and French).

Find the settlement services you need in your community
(available in English and French):

