

Landing in Canada Checklist

A practical first-arrival guide for new Canadian permanent residents

Use this checklist to organize your documents, border declarations and first settlement tasks. Requirements can vary by immigration program, province and personal circumstances, so verify time-sensitive details before you travel.

Traveller name	_____
Arrival date	_____ Port of entry: _____
Destination	City: _____ Province or territory: _____
Canadian address	_____

Your arrival plan



Critical items to confirm

- ☐ Passport and Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR) or other IRCC-issued landing document are valid for travel.
- ☐ Any required permanent resident visa is in the passport and has not expired.
- ☐ Documents are packed in carry-on baggage, not checked luggage.
- ☐ Currency and monetary instruments totalling **CAN\$10,000 or more** will be declared to CBSA.
- ☐ Two copies of the goods accompanying and goods to follow lists are ready, if applicable.
- ☐ Temporary accommodation and onward transportation are confirmed.

Important

This checklist is general information, not legal advice. Follow the instructions in your own IRCC documents and disclose material changes in your circumstances when asked.

1 Before You Travel

Prepare originals, useful copies and a clear arrival plan.



Travel and immigration documents

- ☐ Valid passport for each traveller.
- ☐ COPR or other current IRCC-issued permanent residence document for each family member.
- ☐ Permanent resident visa, if one was issued and is required for travel.
- ☐ Copies of key immigration documents stored separately from the originals.
- ☐ Travel itinerary, Canadian contact details and accommodation confirmation.
- ☐ Marriage, birth, custody or adoption records that may be needed after arrival.
- ☐ Certified English or French translations for essential records that are in another language.

Carry-on rule Keep all immigration documents, medication and essential records in your carry-on baggage.

Funds and financial records

- ☐ Bring recent bank statements or an official bank letter if proof of settlement funds applies to your immigration program.
- ☐ Keep records that explain the source of large or recent deposits, if relevant.
- ☐ Prepare a record of cash, cheques, money orders, bank drafts, traveller's cheques, stocks or bonds carried by the family.
- ☐ Plan how you will access money after arrival without relying only on cash.

CAN\$10,000 rule You may bring any amount, but you must declare currency and monetary instruments with a combined value of CAN\$10,000 or more. The threshold is CAN\$10,000 or more, not only amounts over CAN\$10,000.

Goods accompanying and goods to follow

- ☐ Prepare two copies of a list of goods arriving with you.
- ☐ Prepare two copies of a separate goods to follow list for belongings arriving later.
- ☐ Include approximate value, make, model and serial number where applicable.
- ☐ Add photographs or detailed descriptions for jewellery or other hard-to-identify valuables.
- ☐ Keep purchase receipts, ownership records or registration documents when useful.
- ☐ Review restrictions for food, plants, animals, vehicles, health products and other controlled goods.

CBSA states that goods arriving later generally qualify for duty- and tax-free importation under a settler's entitlement only if they appeared on the original list presented at first entry.

2 At Your First Port of Entry

Complete immigration processing and customs declarations truthfully.



Permanent residence processing

- ☐ Present your passport and COPR or other IRCC-issued landing document.
- ☐ Confirm your identity and answer the officer's questions accurately.
- ☐ Disclose any relevant change since approval, such as marital status or accompanying family circumstances, when asked.
- ☐ Provide a Canadian mailing address for the PR card if available, or follow IRCC instructions for providing it later.
- ☐ Review any document returned to you and report errors immediately.

Customs declaration

- ☐ Declare all currency and monetary instruments totalling CAN\$10,000 or more.
- ☐ Declare food, plants, animals and other items requested on the declaration.
- ☐ Present the goods accompanying and goods to follow lists, if applicable.
- ☐ Keep the stamped or completed personal effects document and file number for later shipments.
- ☐ Ask the officer if you are uncertain whether an item must be declared.

Do not guess

A truthful declaration is safer than assuming an item does not count. CBSA can seize unreported currency or monetary instruments and assess penalties.

3 Your First 48 Hours



Secure your essentials

- ☐ Travel safely to your accommodation and store passports and immigration records securely.
- ☐ Confirm that you can receive mail at the address supplied for the PR card.
- ☐ Get a Canadian phone number or reliable temporary mobile service.
- ☐ Open a Canadian bank account or arrange an appointment, if needed.
- ☐ Apply for a Social Insurance Number online, by mail or in person. Service Canada accepts a COPR within one year of becoming a permanent resident; after that, a PR card is generally required.

Protect your SIN

A SIN is needed to work in Canada or access government programs and benefits. Service Canada no longer issues plastic SIN cards. Keep your SIN private and provide it only when legally required.

4 Your First Week

Set up health coverage, housing and local services.



Health and insurance

- ☐ Apply for the public health insurance plan in your province or territory.
- ☐ Confirm the coverage start date and what services are excluded.
- ☐ If your province or territory has a waiting period, consider private health insurance until public coverage begins.
- ☐ Bring enough prescribed medication for the transition period and keep prescriptions or medical summaries available.

Coverage varies

Each province and territory runs its own plan, and start dates differ. Some begin as soon as you arrive: Ontario has no waiting period for OHIP. Others apply one: in B.C., coverage starts after the rest of your arrival month plus two months. Check your own province's rules. Dental care, prescriptions, vision care and ambulance services are usually not fully covered.

Housing and transportation

- ☐ Confirm temporary housing and research neighbourhoods before signing a long-term lease.
- ☐ Review the lease, deposits, included utilities and tenant insurance before committing.
- ☐ Learn local transit routes or obtain a transit pass.
- ☐ Check provincial driver's licence exchange rules and deadlines before driving.

Family and community

- ☐ Contact a local settlement service provider for orientation, language and employment support.
- ☐ Identify nearby clinics, pharmacies, grocery stores, schools and emergency services.
- ☐ Contact the local school board if children need to be enrolled.

5 Your First Month



- ☐ Confirm delivery or status of the first PR card and follow IRCC instructions if there is an address or photo issue.
- ☐ Create a settlement budget and track recurring housing, transportation, food, phone and insurance costs.
- ☐ Adapt your resume for Canadian employers and begin targeted job research and networking.
- ☐ Register for language assessment or employment programs if useful.
- ☐ Organize tax, banking, immigration and identity records in one secure system.
- ☐ Learn which federal and provincial benefits may require a separate application.

Final Departure Check

Complete this page before leaving for the airport.

- ☐ Passports, COPRs and required visas checked for names and validity dates.
- ☐ All immigration documents packed in carry-on baggage.
- ☐ Currency and monetary instruments counted across the family and declaration prepared if the total is CAN\$10,000 or more.
- ☐ Proof of funds documents packed if applicable to the immigration program.
- ☐ Goods accompanying and goods to follow lists printed in two copies.
- ☐ Restricted goods reviewed and anything uncertain identified for declaration.
- ☐ Accommodation, airport transfer and emergency contacts confirmed.
- ☐ Essential medication, prescriptions and basic medical records packed.
- ☐ Phone access and payment methods available immediately after landing.
- ☐ Digital copies of essential documents stored securely.

Personal notes

Official resources checked for this edition

CBSA currency reporting

<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/ttd-vdd-eng.html>

CBSA moving or returning to Canada

<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/mrc-drc-eng.html>

Service Canada SIN application

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/apply.html>

IRCC health care for newcomers

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/settle-canada/health-care.html>

Ontario: apply for OHIP (no waiting period)

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/apply-ohip-and-get-health-card>

B.C.: enrol in MSP (waiting period)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/msp/bc-residents/eligibility-and-enrolment/how-to-enrol>

Reviewed September 2026. Government requirements and provincial services may change. Verify current instructions shortly before travel.

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