



## PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST FOR MOVES TO CANADA

As you prepare for your upcoming international move, please use this checklist of important documents and items to carry with you in person (do not include these in checked luggage or in a household shipment). We also highly recommend that you scan these documents and have them stored on a computer or flash drive, as you may be emailing some of them in the future.

*While this is a thorough list, it is not exhaustive and some items vary depending on local requirements and on the needs of you and your family.* It is important to note that requirements from various regulatory agencies change frequently, and sometimes without advance notice. It is important to be as flexible and patient as possible.

**Should you have any questions about this list, please contact your Destination Services Consultant.**

### Before you arrive in Canada

Secure and bring to Canada all official documents belonging to you and the family members who are moving with you.

Common documents include:

- birth certificate or baptismal certificates
- passport
- marriage, separation or divorce papers
- adoption records for adopted children
- death certificate for a deceased spouse
- school records, educational diplomas and certificates, including transcripts listing the courses you took to obtain a degree or certificate
- medical records (prescriptions, test results, x-rays, allergies, etc.), list of administered vaccines for children and dental records
- letters of reference from previous landlords
- letter of employment (for rental home finding)
- car registration documents (if you are importing a motor vehicle into Canada)
- Letter from car insurance provider with a history of driving record. This will ensure you will not be classified as a “new driver.”

- Ensure that Driver's Licence indicates that driver has been driving for at least two years or notarized or government documents to verify the same. (It should be noted that when obtaining a driver's licence in Canada, the driver will have to forfeit their original licence when they receive a Canadian licence).
- photocopies of all essential and important documents in case the originals get lost (be sure to keep the photocopies in a separate place from the originals)
- If you have family members that will be immigrating at a later date, you should also bring copies of their documents with you.
- If traveling with pets, or if pets are being brought in at a later date, vaccination records should be available.
- You may not need these documents immediately, but it is better to bring all your official documents in case they are needed in the future. It is often much more difficult to obtain these documents after you have left your country of origin.

## Crossing the border

**You must have these documents with you to enter Canada. Without the documents mentioned below, you will not be allowed into Canada.**

**Essential documents:**

- a Canadian immigrant visa (if applicable) and a Confirmation of Permanent Residence for each family member travelling with you
- a valid passport or other travel document for each family member travelling with you
- two (2) copies of a detailed list of **all** goods (personal or household items) you intend to bring into Canada as settler's effects (showing the value, make, model and serial number if the item has one). Divide the list into two sections: the goods you are bringing with you and the goods to follow.
- Two (2) copies of a list of items that will arrive later and their money value.

**Do not pack these documents in your luggage. Keep them with you at all times.**

**Miscellaneous to bring:**

- Electrical converters for electrical appliances you are bringing
- Loose/unlabeled pills may be confiscated or cause inconvenience at customs entry. Bring copies of prescriptions

**Disclosure of funds:**

- Advise a Canadian official when you arrive in Canada if you are carrying more than \$10,000 CAN, if you do not, you may be fined, and your funds could be seized. These funds could be in the form of: cash, securities that belong to you (for example, stocks, bonds, debentures, treasury bills), or bank drafts, cheques, travellers' cheques or money orders.

#### **Customs declaration card**

- Before you arrive in Canada, you may be asked to complete a Customs Declaration Card. You must complete this card before you meet with customs and immigration officials, even if you are not a Canadian citizen. If you are travelling by air, it is a good idea to complete the card before you leave the airplane.

## **What to declare**

Use the Customs Declaration Card to declare the following:

- Any items that you must pay duty on, including alcohol, tobacco and gifts that you are bringing into Canada.
- Any business goods, plants, food, animals, firearms or other weapons that you are bringing into Canada.
- Any amount of money more than \$10,000 CDN that you are bringing into Canada.

Do not use this form to list the personal and household goods that you are bringing with you or are following you to Canada. You will show your lists of those items separately to a customs officer.

## **Declare all items**

- If you do not tell an official that you are carrying items that should be declared, you may be fined or put in prison. The money you declare can be in the form of cash, securities in bearer form (for example, stocks, bonds, debentures or treasury bills) or negotiable instruments in bearer form (for example, bank drafts, cheques, travellers cheques or money orders).
- Visit the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) website to find more information about Moving to Canada.

## **Interview**

When you arrive in Canada, you will have to go through two screening interviews. If all your documents are available and in order, your interviews should be completed quickly:

### **First interview — official documents**

- An officer from the CBSA will greet you. The officer will ask to see visa and travel documents for you and any family members traveling with you to ensure they are the correct documents. The officer will inquire about your health and will ask you questions similar to those on the immigrant application form.

### **Be prepared to answer these questions:**

- Are you traveling with your family?
- Have you been convicted of a serious crime in your home country?
- How long do you plan to stay in Canada?
- How much money do you have with you?
- Are you healthy?
- Have you been to Canada before? Were you required to leave?

After you complete your first interview, you will meet with another officer from the CBSA. This officer will check the items you are bringing with you. At some ports of entry, you will work with the same officer twice.

### **Second interview — personal goods**

- The second interview is for you to declare what you are bringing with you into Canada.
- The officer will ask to see your declaration card. You must tell the officer that you have arrived in Canada to immigrate. At this point, the officer may direct you to another area for the customs procedure.
- You must give the officer the list of goods you are bringing with you and the list of goods that will be arriving later. The officer will go through both lists with you and may ask questions about some of the goods. The officer may also inspect your luggage.

### **Be prepared to answer these questions:**

- What are you bringing with you to Canada?
- Do you have any live animals or plants with you?
- Do you have any firearms, ammunition or fireworks with you?
- Do you have any meat or dairy products with you?
- Do you have any fresh fruits or vegetables with you?
- Do you have any items from endangered species?

### **Do not give false answers**

- You must answer all the questions truthfully. It is a serious offence to make a false statement. If you make a false statement you may not be allowed to stay in Canada. If you are well prepared and you have no items that are not allowed in Canada, the process will go quickly.
- If there are no difficulties, the officer will sign your Confirmation of Permanent Residence and authorize your entry into Canada as a permanent resident.

## In your first two weeks in Canada

- Learn about the different resources and sources of information available to help you settle in Canada.
- Call or visit an immigrant service organization in your city or town to learn about the services they provide.
- Apply for important documents like:
  - Government health insurance card, so you can receive medical care in Canada. You should apply as soon as possible after arriving in Canada and provide your new Canadian address, so that you can receive your permanent resident card in the mail.
  - Social Insurance Number (SIN). You cannot work in Canada without a SIN.
- Open a Canadian bank account. To do that this you will need to have secured a home and provide them with a mailing address.
- Explore your city or town, and learn about the transportation options available.
- Learn how to make telephone calls and access the Internet.
- Memorize the national emergency telephone number: **911**. If you experience a medical or other type of emergency, call for help.

## In your first two months in Canada

- Obtain a Canadian driver's license if you plan to drive in Canada.
- Learn about Canadian laws as well as your rights and civic responsibilities as a resident of Canada.
- Find a doctor or health-care centre where you can go for your medical needs. Make an appointment for a medical check-up and vaccination update when you receive your government health insurance card.