

Spouse and Dependent Children

Canadian citizens or Permanent Residents who are at least 18 years old can sponsor close relatives to immigrate to Canada. If you are sponsoring your spouse, common law partner, conjugal partner, or dependent children, you do not need to meet minimum income requirements.

For spouses, common law partners, and conjugal partners, you must prove that the relationship is genuine, and not entered into primarily for the purposes of immigration. Besides a marriage certificate, or evidence of cohabitation for at least 1 year, you may be required to provide evidence such as pictures, letters, telephone bills, emails, and other things to prove your relationship is real.

When sponsoring your spouse or partner to immigrate, you must undertake to support him or her for basic life necessities, for at least 3 years (for spouses and common law partners), and 10 years or more for children. This Undertaking will continue, regardless of whether you stay together or get divorced.

If your spouse or partner is already in Canada, you may have the options of an “In Canada” sponsorship, as well as the “Overseas” sponsorship. Each process has its pros and cons, and every case must be carefully analyzed to determine which procedure is best.

You may also sponsor your dependent children. These are children who are under age 22 at the time of application, and financially supported by you. If they are 22 or over, they may still be considered your dependents if you are financially supporting them, and are either full time students, or have some physical or mental disability. They can be natural or adopted.

All relatives must pass medical and criminal background checks. If there are any issues about these, they can sometimes be overcome on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

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