

Protect yourself: detecting, avoiding and reporting immigration scams



Are you or someone you know going through the immigration or citizenship application process? Unfortunately, there are people out there who try to take advantage of immigration and citizenship applicants.

Falling for fraud can have disastrous results

Whether these people are “crooked consultants” or simple criminals, the scams they push on applicants can have disastrous results, such as the applicant losing money, having their application denied, or being barred from entering Canada. Other results of these scams can include:

- identity theft
- money stolen from your bank account or credit card
- computer viruses

Always keep in mind

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is committed to detecting and combating fraud, and to protecting potential immigrants and Canadians alike from falling victim to scams. Here are some things that all prospective applicants should remember:

- No one can guarantee you a job or a visa to Canada.
- Only immigration officers in Canada, and at Canadian embassies, high commissions and consulates can decide to issue a visa.
- Processing fees for our services are the same in Canada and around the world. Fees in local currencies are based on official exchange rates. They are the same amount as fees in Canadian dollars. IRCC does not recognize gift cards or cryptocurrencies (bitcoin etc.) as a payment for processing fees.
- We will ask you to pay fees for Canadian government services to the “Receiver General for Canada” unless we state something different on a Canadian visa office website.
- Be wary of representatives or individuals charging a fee for supporting documents, such as Labour Market Impact Assessments and job offer letters, etc.

- Our employees will never:
 - ~ ask you to deposit money into a personal bank account
 - ~ ask you to transfer money through a private money transfer service
 - ~ offer special deals to people who want to immigrate
 - ~ use free email services, such as Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo Mail to contact you
 - ~ contact you via social media
 - ~ threaten to have you removed from Canada if you do not send money.
- You do not need to hire a lawyer or consultant to help you apply – that decision is up to you. You will find [free application forms and guides](#) for all our services on our website.
- Be careful if the salary of a job you are applying for seems too high.

What to do if you spot a scam:

To report an Internet, email or telephone scam, contact the [Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#) toll-free at 1-888-495-8501. Outside of Canada, report the scam to your local police.

Call the Canada Border Services Agency [Border Watch Toll-Free Line](#) at **1-888-502-9060** to report offences such as, but not limited to:

- suspicious activity at the border
- a marriage of convenience
- a person who has given false information on an immigration application or
- a person wanted on an immigration warrant

For more information on detecting, avoiding and reporting fraud, please visit Canada.ca/immigration-fraud.

