

What happens after I become a Permanent Resident of Canada in terms of immigration? - Refugee Sponsorship Program¹

- Upon landing in Canada through the Refugee Sponsorship Program, you are now a Permanent Resident of Canada (PR);
- You will eventually obtain a permanent resident card, which will be valid for a period of 5 years;
- The permanent resident card does not give you PR status, it is simply an identity document which allows you to travel to Canada as a PRC;
- You can apply for the renewal of your PR card a few months before the expiration of your PR card;
- In order to maintain your status as PR, you will need to reside at least 730 days (consecutive or non consecutive) in Canada out of the 5 year period immediately preceding the application for a renewal of your PR card;
- If you travel outside Canada and you do not meet the residency requirements, your PR card will not be issued and you will eventually lose your status as a PRC;
- If you were forced to be outside Canada for reasons beyond your control (ill parent, ill family member etc), you may be eligible to apply for a PR card renewal under humanitarian and compassionate grounds;
- If, as a PR, you worked outside Canada for a Canadian company, or if you were accompanying your Canadian spouse outside Canada, then every day you spent outside Canada counts towards your residency requirements as if you had been in Canada;
- In the last few years, immigration has been scrutinizing PR Card renewal applications consistently, especially for individuals with Middle Eastern citizenship by asking PRs to complete a Residence Questionnaire (RQ) outlining in detail all travels outside Canada as well as evidence of establishment in Canada. PRs who have resided 5 year out of 5 in Canada are also receiving this RQ;
- For this, always keep records of the following in the event that you need to submit it to immigration:
 - Passports with travel stamps, travel itineraries and plane tickets;
 - Notice of Assessments, proof of assets, investments, insurance;
 - Proof of employment and education, Canadian bank accounts.
- As a PR, you are under certain conditions and should you not meet these conditions, your PR status can be removed from you:
 - Not meeting the residency requirements;
 - Misrepresentation: lying to immigration in previous/current immigration applications;
 - Being charged of certain criminal convictions.
- Currently, in order to be eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship, you must reside in Canada as a permanent resident for at least 1460 days during the 6 years immediately preceding your citizenship application;

¹ Written by Mary Keyork, Immigration Lawyer – February, 2016

- If you are frequently travelling outside of Canada, ensure that you keep records of your travels as immigration might request to see these documentation when reviewing your citizenship application;
- Immigration rules and regulations are often changing and it is important to you consult with Citizenship and Immigration Canada regularly to obtain updates.