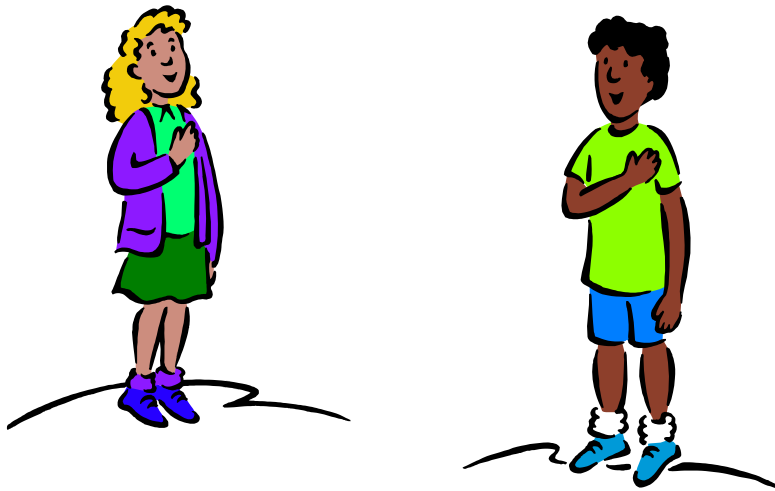


All people who are born in Canada are automatically considered to be Canadian citizens. They are called "naturalized" citizens.

Newcomers to Canada first must be accepted by the federal government as immigrants and must live in Canada for three years before they can apply to become citizens.

To become citizens, immigrants to Canada must

- be 18 years of age or older
- be permanent residents of Canada
- have lived in Canada for at least three years
- be able to communicate in either English or French
- pass a test that includes knowledge of Canada and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
- make a public affirmation of Canadian citizenship in an official ceremony sponsored by Citizenship and Immigration Canada



Following is the affirmation of citizenship that citizens must pledge in a citizenship ceremony.

Affirmation of Canadian Citizenship

From this day forward, I pledge my loyalty and allegiance to Canada and Her Majesty Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada. I promise to respect our country's rights and freedoms, to uphold our democratic values, to faithfully observe our laws and fulfill my duties and obligations as a Canadian citizen.

Following is a summary of the responsibilities and rights of citizenship, based on information that the federal government provides to immigrants to Canada.

Responsibilities of Canadian Citizens

- obey Canada's laws and the laws of the provinces and cities
- respect others' rights to live in a secure and safe place
- express opinions while respecting others
- respect the rights and freedoms of others
- care for and protect Canada's heritage
- respect private and public property
- respect and care for the environment
- know about Canada and its laws
- work against discrimination and injustice
- support the rights of minorities
- refuse to spread hatred against others
- vote in elections
- respect the authority of the courts and the legal system

Rights and Freedoms of Canadian Citizens

- legal rights to the protection and services of the police and the courts
- rights to be treated equally and without discrimination
- the right to enter, remain in, or leave Canada freely
- the right to earn a living and reside in any province/territory
- minority language educational rights (English or French)
- Aboriginal peoples' rights as stated in laws and treaties
- freedom of thought
- freedom of speech
- freedom of religion
- the right to gather, assemble, or meet peacefully
- the right to apply for a Canadian passport
- the right to be a candidate in federal and provincial elections
- the right to vote in federal and provincial elections

This information has been adapted from the following sources:

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada, How to Host a Citizenship Ceremony:
<<http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/citizen/cerem-e.html>>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Rights and Responsibilities in Canada:
<<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizen/rights-fs.html>>