

# Tipsheet: Gather evidence for your refugee hearing

This tipsheet lists general tips on gathering evidence for a refugee claim. The evidence you need **depends on the facts of your case**. Evidence is due **10 days before your hearing** at the Refugee Protection Division (RPD). It usually takes a long time to get ready so start early.

**Get legal advice** on what **specific evidence** you need from a refugee lawyer, paralegal, or licensed immigration consultant. **Have them review** any evidence that you plan to file. They're called Counsel. Learn about finding Counsel at [stepstojustice.ca/refugeehelp](https://stepstojustice.ca/refugeehelp).

## Check your evidence

- Is the evidence **correct** and **consistent**? Tell your Counsel if there are **mistakes, differences, updates, or missing information** and ask if any documents need to be corrected. File any Basis of Claim (BOC) form amendments that may be needed at least **10 days** before the hearing. Learn more at [stepstojustice.ca/changeBOC](https://stepstojustice.ca/changeBOC).
- Is the evidence in English or French? If not, your Counsel must get it **translated**.
- Keep the envelopes, texts, or emails used to send you evidence.

A member of the RPD decides your refugee claim. The Member **compares** what you say at the hearing with your BOC, narrative, portal, forms, past interview answers, prior immigration applications, what any witnesses you bring say, and any evidence you file. If the evidence is not **consistent**, the Member may not believe you.

## What if you cannot get something?

- Keep a record of **your attempts to get evidence**. For example, written requests for documents, letters from people who tried to get something for you, written refusals to release documents to you, or articles showing it's hard for anyone to get those documents. You may have to explain what you did at your hearing.

Your evidence should show that **your story is true**, you are who you say, you're at risk of **persecution** in your country, there's nowhere in your country you can be safe, and your country cannot or will not protect you.

## Types of evidence

Here are some types of evidence. Every refugee case is different so not everything on this list may help you. Talk to your Counsel about what you need.

- Identity documents** like passports, national identity cards, driver's licenses, and birth, baptism, marriage, divorce, and school certificates
- Copies of threats** you received or harassment you faced including on social media
- Legal documents** like police complaints or reports, detention records, court cases
- Proof of membership or participation** in organizations that are a part of a persecuted community like ethnic, cultural, religious, political, or LGBTQ+ groups
- Medical documents** like doctor, hospital, or psychological reports and records
- Photographs and videos**
- Screenshots of social media**
- Letters from witnesses** who can confirm what happened to you. The letter writer should say who they are and how they know you, write only what they know and saw, and not just repeat your BOC and narrative. They should also:
  - sign and date the letter, and include their name
  - attach a copy of their identity document
  - get the letter commissioned or notarized if possible
- Country evidence** like news articles or videos, human rights reports, or official documents like copies of laws

There's a National Documentation Package (NDP) with information on each country that Members must consider. You can read the NDP for your country at [stepstojustice.ca/ndps](https://stepstojustice.ca/ndps).

You can find more information about refugee law at [stepstojustice.ca](https://stepstojustice.ca). This is general legal information for people in Ontario, Canada. It's not legal advice. Cette publication est également disponible en français. Reviewed: February 2025.