

Tipsheet: After your refugee hearing

This tipsheet gives you things to consider after your refugee hearing at the Refugee Protection Division (RPD). A member of the RPD decides your refugee claim.

Provide important updates

- You can ask the RPD for permission to provide more evidence after your hearing. For example, if **something new happens** that shows you are at risk in your country, you **find new evidence**, or the Member **asks for more evidence**. Talk to your refugee lawyer, paralegal, or licensed immigration consultant first.

Get your decision

- Review the decision. You will get a written decision by email, mail, or both, even if you got a verbal decision at the hearing.

If your claim is refused

- Talk to an experienced **refugee lawyer** right away. You can try to challenge the decision. The process is complicated and there are tight deadlines.
 - If you have a low income, Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) might pay for a lawyer. Call LAO at **1-800-668-8258**. For TTY, call **711**.
- Ask your lawyer **where** to challenge the decision. They will know if you can:
 - appeal to the Refugee Appeal Division (RAD) or
 - apply for judicial review at the Federal Court instead.
- If you can appeal to the RAD, you must file your Notice of Appeal **within 15 days** of getting the written decision. A lawyer should do this. If you follow the rules, you can stay in Canada while the RAD decides your appeal.
- If you cannot appeal to the RAD, you can **apply for judicial review** at the Federal Court. File your Application for Leave and for Judicial Review **within 15 days** of when you became aware of the negative decision. A lawyer should do this. You may need to ask the court to pause your removal from Canada while they review your case.

If your claim is accepted

- Most approved refugees can apply for **permanent residence** for themselves and their family, even if they're overseas. The process can take years. It is best to start early and have a lawyer review your application. Your family includes:
 - your spouse, common-law partner, or conjugal partner
 - your dependent children and your partner's dependent children
 - any dependent children of you or your partner's dependent children
- Apply for Ontario Health Insurance Program (**OHIP**) at Service Ontario. The insurance you had as a claimant ends 90 days after your claim is accepted.
- Apply to renew your **work and study permit** before it expires. You still need these permits until you get permanent residence.
 - CLEO's Guided Pathways has a free online tool that can help you draft the forms you need to apply for a work permit. Visit stepstojustice.ca/workpermit.
- Keep your refugee protection.** Certain things can put your status at risk.

As a refugee, you can lose your refugee protection in Canada if you travel to the country you claimed refugee protection against, apply for a passport from that country, or travel using a passport from that country. You can also lose your refugee protection if you get citizenship in a country other than Canada. If you're thinking of doing any of these things, **talk to a refugee lawyer first.**

- If you are **charged with a crime**, get advice from **both** a criminal and refugee lawyer. Certain crimes put your status at risk.
- Learn about the **residency requirement** for Permanent Residents. They usually must be in Canada for at least **730 days** in every 5-year period to keep that status.
- Apply for a **Refugee Travel Document** if you want to travel outside Canada.
- Learn about applying for **Canadian citizenship**.

You can find more information about refugee law at stepstojustice.ca. This is general legal information for people in Ontario, Canada. It's not intended to be used as legal advice. Cette publication est également disponible en français. Reviewed: February 2025.