

International Experience Canada

Working *Holiday*

Application
Instructions





Welcome to the next step on your journey to Canada through International Experience Canada (IEC)! In this document, you will find process timelines and instructions for the government application.

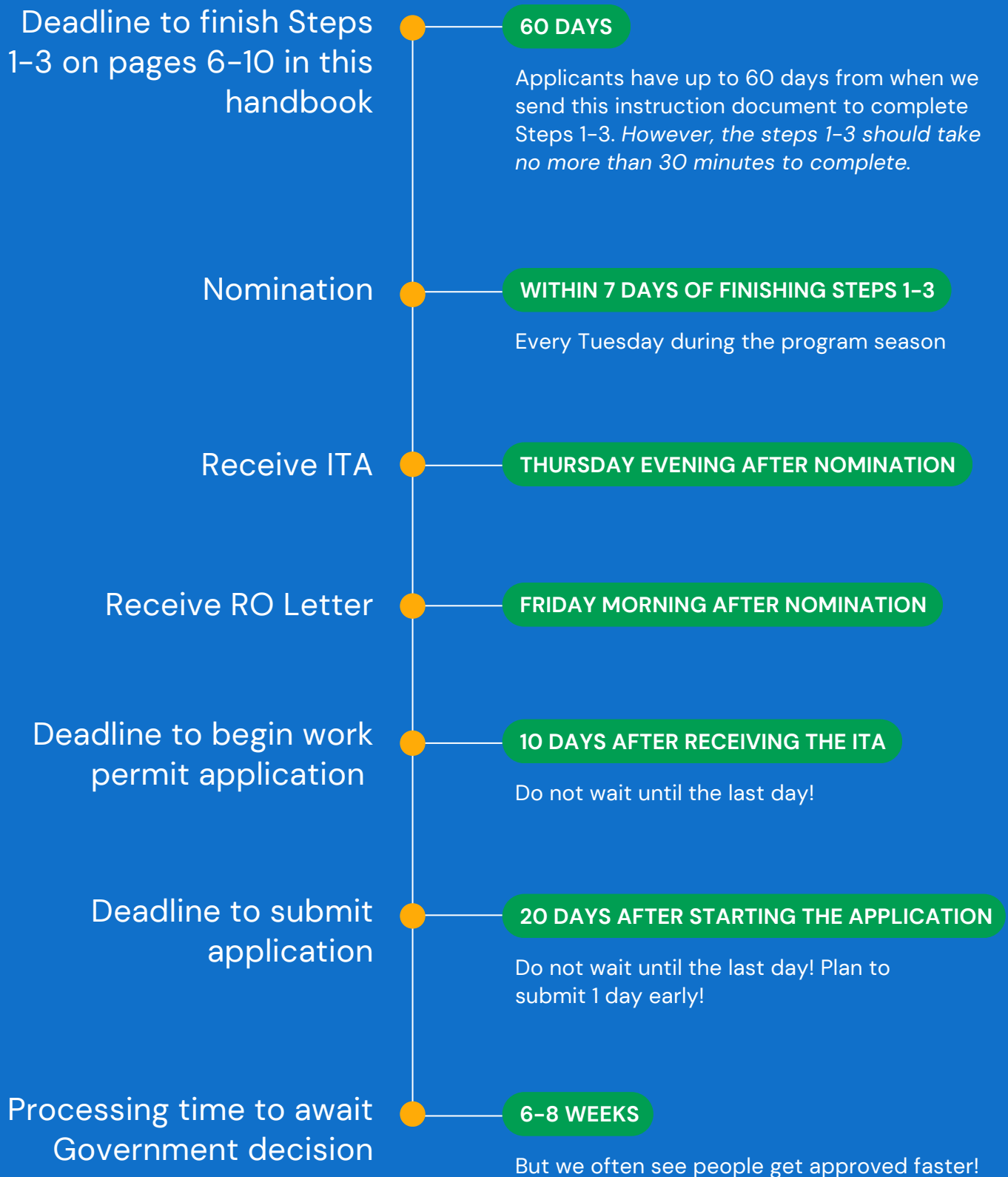
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TIPS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Read and follow these guidelines.** We cover answers to frequent questions from over the years serving thousands of participants.
- **Utilize additional resources.** Helpful information is found in the government-provided process overview on the [International Experience Canada website](#). There are also many other [FAQs and answers provided by the government](#).
- **Plan out your time!** Time-to-fill applications vary but takes most people 2–3 days. In any case, you should **plan to submit your application at least one day prior** to the deadlines provided by the government.
- **Contact us if you need support.** You can contact us in the following ways, we strive to respond well within 24 hours:
 - Start a chat from within your InterExchange account
 - Reply to any email from us
 - See our contact information in the footers of each page of this document

APPLICATION TIMELINE



Checklist:

- **Resume** – this can be a straightforward, chronological document, and should be thorough, explaining any gaps. It may differ from the one you typically share with employers.
- **Scan of passport information page** (the page with your photo on it!) It is strongly encouraged that you complete the application process with a passport that has at least one year of validity.
- **Digital photo of you** (Visa/passport style, see IRCC Photo Guidelines [here](#))
- **Supporting documents:** Not applicable to all applicants. Please note that if applicable to you, obtaining these documents may incur additional time and expense not included in the typical timeline or in your InterExchange program fee.
 - [Police certificates](#) are often requested of individuals who have lived in another country outside of the U.S. for 6+ months since age 18.
 - [Medical exams](#) are required if you indicate on your application that you plan to work in childcare, healthcare, or education. The exam must be performed by a panel physician. **Note: US citizens do not have to provide biometrics!**
 - [RCMP Background Check](#) with fingerprinting is sometimes requested of people who have been in Canada for extended periods.
 - Sometimes, an [FBI rap sheet](#) or [rehabilitation](#) documents related to past convictions or charges is requested. Feel free to email us if you need help with this.
- **RO Letter** – InterExchange will provide this after your nomination (See Step 4 in these guidelines).

Technology Requirements

- **Two-factor authentication (2FA)** – for the Government of Canada login, you'll need 2FA. Sometimes this is a phone program or an app. You also have the option of login codes if you do not have 2FA.
- **Adobe PDF Reader** – During the application, you will need to have access to an Adobe program to open the Government PDFs.
- **This application works best from a computer.**

Troubleshooting Tips!

- The government webpages can be glitchy at times! Don't panic!
- Stuck in a "loop" of web pages?
 - Use Google Chrome browser or an incognito window
 - Clearing your cookies and cache
 - Retry links several times / try back later or clear your entire browsing history
 - Toggling pop-up blockers on/off may also help.
- **PDF not opening? See the bottom of Step 5.**

STEP 1

Complete eligibility questionnaire (~5 minutes)

It is recommended to read all of the instructions for Step 1 first before you begin. Then, come back here to access the Coming to Canada [eligibility questionnaire](#).

The questionnaire yields a Personal Reference Number for you to copy or write down.

Instructions:

- On the questionnaire homepage entitled “Do you want to come to Canada? Find out if you are eligible to apply.” Scroll down the page and click the button that says “Check your Eligibility”. This will take you to a new page with drop-down questions. Some questions are basic identifying information or based on your personal situation, and some questions that are important to answer more precisely, according to our instructions. See below!

- What would you like to do in Canada?**
You must select “IEC – Travel and Work”

Please make a selection

- Study
- Visit
- Move there
- Work
- Transit only - less than 48 hours
- ✓ IEC - Travel and Work

- How long are you planning to stay in Canada?**
Select either “Temporarily - less than 6 months” or “Temporarily - more than 6 months” depending on how long you intend to stay on this program. Even if you hope to stay longer on a different program, do not select “permanently” as it is not possible to stay there permanently on this program.
- What is your current country/territory of residence?**
If your **current** residence is in another country besides the US (including Canada) that’s perfectly okay. There is a question later about your permanent residence. Your **permanent** residence should be the US, and is typically the same as your mailing address.
- Do you have a letter proving one of these organizations will help you plan your trip or find work in Canada?**
You must select “Yes.” If you do not select “Yes”, you will be deemed ineligible automatically, by the Government. Note: You will receive the RO letter from us, after your nomination (Step 4 below).

- **Select the name of the Recognized Organization (RO) helping you plan your trip or find work in Canada.**

Select **SWAP Working Holidays**. Do NOT select any other answer.

- **Do you plan to do a work placement or internship in Canada as part of your studies?**

The answer to this is usually “no” since most applicants are not traveling for a job/internship that is required for an academic program, but if it applies to you, select “yes.”

- **Do you have a signed letter of offer, contract of employment, or internship agreement from an employer in Canada?**

For the IEC Working Holiday program it is NOT required to have a job offer in advance. Even if you do have one, it's okay to indicate “no” for this question and this could simplify the application later on. Note: if you do have a job offer and indicate “yes” for this answer it's also fine, but if you are asked for information about your job/employer that you cannot answer, you may need to refer to this government webpage (under “[Complete the online form](#)”) later in the process.

- **Save the personal reference code** (see image below) which is generated after you complete the eligibility questionnaire. You will need this later so that the application system can pull your answers over to your profile. If you are directed straight to the profile creation process without a reference code, it may be fine -- sometimes your questionnaire answers are automatically pulled over, for example if you already had an account from a previous program that you were logged into. If you experience an error message regarding the reference code, see the [IRCC troubleshooting page](#).

Your results

To apply online, you will need this personal reference code: **AT9428303694** ← save this personal reference code

International Experience Canada

Based on your answers, you appear to be eligible for International Experience Canada

Step 1: Record your personal reference code. This code will expire on Sat November 20 15:48:17 GMT 2021. It is valid only for this profile. After you login to your account, you will need to enter your personal reference code. We will use this code to retrieve the information you have already provided.

Step 2: Print this page. ← then click here and create a “GCKey”

Step 3: Register / sign in to submit your online profile. To apply online, you will need an electronic “key” for secure access to your profile. [Register to get a key](#) if you are a new user. [Login to your account](#) if you are a returning user.

Step 4: When you are logged in to your electronic credential (known as your key), you'll be automatically directed to your account. You will be prompted to register for an account if you are a first time user. Returning users will be directed to their account.

STEP 2

Create and Submit an International Experience Canada profile and send proof to InterExchange (~10–15 minutes)

After completing the questionnaire you will be notified which programs you may be eligible for. Proceed to the screen depicted in the screenshot above. Read through the steps and then proceed to click on “Register to get a key (or GCKey)” or “Login to your account” per the screenshot above.

- If you need to register for a [MyCIC \(aka GCKey\) account](#) for the first time:
 - Create a username and password that you can remember.
 - You will be asked to create security questions. Make sure you know the answers to them and write them down if needed. You will be asked at least one of your security questions at random, each time you log in to the site.
 - A prompt for 2-Factor Authentication will also come up during the account creation process.
 - You will also be given a set of “recovery codes.” Screenshot, print, or write these down just in case you need them later or if you get locked out of your account.
- This is where people sometimes get stuck in a “loop” of links and are not directed to the correct page to proceed in creating your profile. If this happens to you, refer to the box before the beginning of Step One above.
- If you find yourself at [this page](#) click a link in the right-hand column that says “Sign in or create an account to apply online.”

Services and information		Most requested
My application Sign in or create an account, check application status and processing times, find forms, pay fees, learn about medical and police checks, learn about representatives and protect yourself from fraud	Visit Find out if you need a visa to visit, do business or transit through Canada, and how to extend your stay as a visitor	• COVID-19: how it's affecting our services • Sign in or create an account to apply online • Check your application status • Check application processing times • Find an application form
Immigrate Find out what immigration programs you can apply for, sponsor your family and use a representative	Work Apply for or extend a work permit, learn about International Experience Canada and being a caregiver, get your credentials recognized, and hire foreign workers	

- You may be directed to the following page. If so, click "Apply to come to Canada" under "Start an application" and continue following the prompts.

View the applications you submitted
Review, check the status or read messages about your submitted application.

Search: Showing 0 to 0 of 0 entries | Show 5 entries

Application type	Application number	Applicant name	Date submitted	Current status	Messages	Action
No data available in table						

Did you apply on paper or don't see your online application in your account? [Add \(link\) your application to your account](#) to access it and check your status online.

Continue an application you haven't submitted
Continue working on an application or profile you haven't submitted or delete it from your account.

Search: Showing 0 to 0 of 0 entries | Show 5 entries

Application type	Date Created	Days left to submit	Date last saved	Action
No data available in table				

Start an application

Apply to come to Canada
Includes applications for visitor visas, work and study permits, Express Entry and International Experience Canada. You will need your personal reference code if you have one.

Refugees: Apply for temporary health care benefits
Use this application if you are a protected person or refugee claimant who wants to apply for the Interim Federal Health Program.

Citizenship: Apply for a search or proof of citizenship
Use this application to apply for proof of citizenship (citizenship certificate) or to search citizenship records.

- Fill out the eService section.**
The eService section simply contains dropdowns in which you will enter passport and contact information.
- There may be an additional question with a dropdown that asks what your RO is.**
Select or enter **SWAP Working Holidays**.
- You will be asked to select which pool you would like to enter. Select the "Working Holiday" pool.**
- Pool confirmation update:** Within a short period of time (from a few minutes to a few hours), you will see the IEC Profile Status (see screenshot below) update from "Date Submitted" to "Date Received." The date received indicates what day the IEC received your entry into the pool. Note down this date. If you don't see the IEC Profile Status change to Date Received, use the date on your pool confirmation letter (see below).
- Pool confirmation letter.** Within a short period of time (from a few minutes to a few hours), you will receive a letter titled "Welcome to the Pool". Keep for your records.
- Send proof of your profile to InterExchange: Go back to your [InterExchange application](#).**
 - Navigate to the InterExchange application and log in.
 - Enter in 2 things in the window: 1. Your UCI number and 2. the *date received*. **Don't forget to press submit!** When you press submit, our system will automatically let us know that you have submitted this information, which will enable us to nominate you.

- **Finding your UCI number**

The UCI is not in the IRCC pool welcome letter, but is within the IRCC online portal. On your IRCC account page, there's a link to see the application status. Once clicked, you should see a page called International Experience Canada profile status, with the UCI number in the "applicant information" section. See below:

International Experience Canada profile status

Check the status, review the details and read messages for your International Experience Canada (IEC) profile. [View your profile](#)

Your IEC profile status ?

We are processing your application. We will send you a message when there is an update or if we need more information from you.

You may not hear from us for a little while, this is normal. Most of the progress on your application happens closer to your estimated completion date.

Applicant information

Principal Applicant: Louis Applicant
Unique Client Identifier (UCI): 1103295190
Application number: W300035589
Date Received: June 26, 2019
Biometrics:
Biometrics Number:
Date of Biometrics Enrolment:
Expiry Date:

STEP 3

Payment

Before continuing you must pay the InterExchange program fee (in US dollars). if you have not already done so via our payment site, click:

<https://app.interexchange.org/payments/new>

Select “Programs for US Citizens” and leave the invoice number blank.

Important Note: *If you paid a program fee deposit with your application, the deposit goes toward your total program fee.*



STEP 4

Nomination, Invitation to Apply (ITA), and RO Letter. (Within 7–10 days after payment)

After you have completed Steps 1–3, you are then considered a fully enrolled participant in our program. **Every week on Tuesdays** during the program season, InterExchange sends a list of newly enrolled program participants to IEC via SWAP. This is a process called *nomination*. Nomination yields an **Invitation to Apply (ITA)** typically within 2–3 business days after nomination, but it can take up to 1–2 weeks in the busiest times as the IEC is issuing hundreds of invitations at a time!

Nomination and next steps information (refer to the timeline on page 1):

- **The ITA is simply the Work Permit application appearing in your online account in the “Applications” section.** It is highly recommended to note the date and time that you begin, and mark your calendar with the deadline provided by the government. It is HIGHLY recommended you do not wait until the last day. Submit early!
- **You may also receive a letter from IEC via email, stating that you may now begin your application.** If you don’t get this letter, don’t panic! Just login to your online GCKey account. In the “Applications” section, you’ll see the “Work Permit Application.”
- **If you do not begin within 10 days, your profile will be removed** and you will have to wait at least two business days to create a new profile. You will then have one more chance to apply as we are only able to submit applicants to SWAP up to two times.
- **Once you accept your ITA, you will have 20 days to complete your full application.** AGAIN: *Do not wait until the last day! Do not time out of the application.* If you need assistance completing your application in a timely manner, please contact us! We are here to support you.
- **We send RO Letters on Fridays each week.** Depending on your timezone, this might not be until your afternoon. Double check the RO letter for accuracy as soon as you receive it.

STEP 5

Completing the Work Permit Application

The IEC / Work Permit application is straightforward. We do not provide exact answers to questions, as answers vary greatly between individuals. Below are tips. Additional detailed information on the work permit application, required documents, and fees can be found [here](#).

- **Current vs permanent address.** Provide a permanent or mailing address in the US. It is okay if you do not currently live in the US. See a detailed explanation [here](#).
- **Work History.** It is in your best interest to be as thorough as possible (Skipping a short temp gig from years ago is ok). The Work History section should match your resume as much as possible. The **job categories in the drop-downs are limited**, you may need to choose a title closely matching your actual job title. Use your best judgment.
- **Health and Social Services.** There is a question asking if you will require Social Services support while in Canada. For most people, the answer to this is “No.” *Having a condition or diagnosis, taking medication, or having a disability, is not the same as requiring Social Services support.* Answering “yes” may incur added paperwork including medical exams.
- **National Identity Document.** Many people ask if they need to provide a “National Identity Document”. This does not apply to US citizens so you can answer “No.”
- **Lawful permanent resident.** As a US citizen you will also answer “no” when asked if you’re a lawful permanent resident or have a USCIS number (this applies to non-US citizens, e.g. green card holders).



* Do you have a National Identity Document? (required)

No

* Are you a lawful permanent resident of the United States with a valid U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) number? (required)

No

- **Family Information Form.** To open an IRCC-provided document, right-click / control-click the link to download and save the file (or “save link as...”) to your computer. Go to the file location > right-click / control-click the document > open with > choose Adobe.
 - You must fill out the information for your parents even if you do not live with them. For a deceased or unknown parent, indicate status on the form, but please fill in any known information you may have.
 - The PDF setting won’t allow you to e-sign this form. The IEC has indicated that your signature isn’t needed, in [their comment here](#). We know a Facebook post feels casual – but **trust us – you really do not have to sign** – nobody does!

PDF Troubleshooting Tips!

- The Government forms are in type of file called an XFA. An XFA is not a regular PDF so it can't be opened with just any program. – **it needs to be the latest version of Adobe.** For some users, this will necessitate you purchasing software. The IRCC has several [troubleshooting tip pages](#) specifically for their forms. Check those out. You may need to update Adobe, or you might need to close the form and refresh your browser or clear cache in order for it to work.
- **To open forms:** download > right-click to "open with" > choose "Adobe Acrobat PDF Reader."
- **To upload forms:** press [Validate](#) then save and upload, see more [tips](#). *Make sure it says "Submitted to IRCC" next to the document name next to the upload field.*
- **To reiterate: You do not need to sign the Family Information Form, as your e-signature at the end of the visa/work permit application covers all the documents within your application. See note on previous page.** Respectfully, please do not email or call asking for extra assurance, we will repeat this exact same information to you!
- **IF YOU TRULY CAN'T OPEN A DOCUMENT:** *Please consider using another computer or device. In a few cases, past participants have gone to a public library to open and fill the PDF. It is not recommended to download a random old version of the form off an internet forum or unknown source because the file might be corrupted or may not be accepted by IRCC.*

Fees Payment

- **At the end of the work permit application, applicants pay the separate Government of Canada visa fee directly in the application portal. The fees are comprised of an IEC processing fee, plus a Work Permit fee.**
- Typically, major US debit cards are accepted. Every once in a while, a US debit card from some US banks are not accepted. You may need to use a credit card. If a payment error occurs, try an incognito window, or logging out and waiting 24 hours before attempting another payment.

Support Note

- ***Before you submit your application, we are happy to review your entire application with you. Email your InterExchange contact person for this option.***
 - Review sessions typically run 15 minutes.
 - During high-season times, appointments may be limited. Plan early!
 - For the most effective support, applicants should meet with us virtually from a computer and plan to **screen-share** with us.

STEP 6

Awaiting a decision

Now sit back and wait! Refer back to the timeline on page 1 of this document for insight into timelines. In some cases, processing time could take shorter or longer. You are responsible for checking your GCKey account and application status updates. **We cannot guarantee processing times. Any indication of recent processing times is not to be taken as assurance that you will be approved within a certain time frame.**

To check processing times on the [IRCC website](#):

- Select “Temporary Residence” > “International Experience Canada” from the dropdown. (DO NOT choose “work permit” as those permit types yield very different timeframes.)

Common Follow-Up Form: Travel History

- **Sometimes the applicant is asked for more information** about their travel history. A common form is the [IMM 5257 Schedule 1](#). If you receive this form, **follow the IRCC’s instructions in the letter they send to you**. The personalized instructions may differ slightly from the information on the form. Usually you will need to include both domestic and international travel.
- It can be helpful to make a spreadsheet or list of your past trips, prior to filling out the form. Some past participants have had to look in old emails or even their phone photo album metadata, in order to accurately remember trips.

Example: You are asked to provide travel history from December 2012–May 2015. (Typical Canadian format: 2012-12 – 2015-05). In that period, you studied abroad for a year in Germany without leaving the country, flew home, took a 2-week Asia trip the second half of July, then went home with no more travel. This could look like:

ARRIVAL		DEPARTURE		COUNTRY	REASON
YYYY	MM	YYYY	MM	XXXXX	XXXXX
2012	12	2013	08	United States	Residence
2013	08	2014	05	Germany	Study Abroad
2014	05	2014	07	United States	Residence
2014	07	2014	07	Vietnam	Tourism/Vacation
2014	07	2014	07	Cambodia	Tourism/Vacation
2014	08	2015	05	United States	Residence

- **If an issue comes up with your application:** Since we do not have the authorization to mediate or intervene into IEC processes, in some cases we will need to refer you to the IEC’s [Case Specific Inquiry Form](#) aka “WebForm,” if you need to provide updates or details to your application.
- **IEC cannot discuss individual applications with SWAP or InterExchange.** Talk to us or refer to the [application help page](#).

STEP 7

Inform InterExchange as soon as your application is approved

When a decision is issued, you will receive notification of a letter from IRCC. Approval comes in the form of a letter called a “Pre-Approval,” a Letter of Introduction (LOI), or a Port of Entry Letter (POE). Yes – that’s 3 interchangeable terms for one letter! **Once you receive this letter you must inform InterExchange by email. Once we hear from you, we will send you important next steps.**

ENTRY TO CANADA

Documents required for border entry and work permit activation (printed and digital backups recommended!):

- **Passport** – over one year of validity or at least 6 months validity past your intended stay.
- **Letter of Introduction (LOI)**
- **Proof of [travel medical insurance](#).**
- **Proof of personal support funds** – equivalent of \$2500 CAD, typically shown from banking app on phone or a recently printed statement
- **Any supporting documents** used in your application, (police records, medical exam).
- **You can travel to Canada as soon as you receive your LOI or anytime within up to one year.**
- **All travelers are strongly encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)**, a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals to enroll their trip abroad so the Department of State can accurately and quickly contact them in case of emergency.
- **We have a very handy guide and checklist** for entering Canada, plus answers to many questions on the [FAQs on our website](#)! Check it out and *bon voyage!!!*