

## Legal update

### Canadian citizenship requirements amended

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**October 2017**

#### **Business immigration and international mobility**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada officially implemented on October 11 important changes to physical presence and the age required to meet language and knowledge requirements for permanent residents who are applying for Canadian citizenship.

Notably:

- The physical presence in Canada requirements have been reduced from four out of six years to three out of five years (or 1,095 cumulative days during the five years preceding the date of signing one's application);
- A portion of time spent in Canada before permanent resident status for temporary residents will count towards residency requirements;
  - Each day spent physically in Canada as a temporary resident or protected person before becoming a permanent resident within the last five years will count as one half-day, with a maximum of 365 days, towards your physical presence;
  - Temporary resident status includes lawful authorization to enter or remain in Canada as a visitor, student, worker or temporary resident permit holder.
- The age range for language and knowledge requirements has been reduced to 18- to 54-year-old persons.

In order to apply for Canadian citizenship, it is important to note that regardless of age, you must still have:

- Permanent resident status in Canada; AND
- No unfulfilled conditions related to your permanent resident status.

Nonetheless, it is important to note you do not need a valid permanent resident card to apply for citizenship. If you have an expired permanent resident card, you can still apply for citizenship.

Finally, note that due to the changes in the citizenship program requirements, the forms needed to apply for Canadian citizenship have been updated and must be used for all future applications. These forms can be found here: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizenship/become-how.asp>.

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