



## Entry procedures for foreign seafarers requiring travel to Canada to join a vessel - latest information

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Following a discussion with colleagues at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), it was brought to my attention how critical it is that the step-by-step *Entry procedures for foreign seafarers requiring to travel to Canada to join vessels* must be followed exactly as shown below. **While IRCC has developed an expedited process for foreign seafarers, it is unable to facilitate it if the instructions are not followed exactly as shown below (such as indicating “Other” and ‘COVID-19’ in fields 1 a) and 1 b), when filling out a visa application).**

Therefore, it would be very important to remind your members of the following:

1. If you are from a **visa-required country** and need a **Temporary Resident Visa (TRV)** to travel to Canada, please refer to the following instructions.

**When applying for a TRV, and answering the questions on the online application form about the purpose of travel, clients are directed to enter the following information exactly as written to ensure their application is prioritized:**

- For question 1 a) purpose of travel, choose “other” from the drop-down menu.
- For question 1 b) description field, write “COVID-19” exactly like this (you must use capital letters).

DETAILS OF VISIT TO CANADA	
1 * a) Purpose of my visit	* b) Other
Other	COVID-19
2 Business	3 * Funds available for my stay (CAD)
Tourism	
Short-Term Studies	
4 Returning Student	
Returning Worker	
Super Visa: For Parents or Grandparents	
Other	
1 Family Visit	

Please refer to the following link for detailed instructions on how to apply for a TRV if you are eligible to travel to Canada during this time, [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Apply for a visitor visa](#).

You must also demonstrate how you meet the exemption criteria and why your travel is non-discretionary/non-optional by submitting supporting documentation. Supporting documentation should include a seafarer's identify document, supplemented by a valid passport or other seafarer documentation, including proof of employment on a vessel at a Canadian port.

Lastly, the following [instruction guide](#) provides a list of the documents required when submitting an application online for a TRV. It is also recommended that you first review the **IMM 5484**, which lists all the documents and IRCC forms that need to be completed, signed, dated and submitted with your application.

- 2. IRCC aims to process TRV applications within five business days of clients applying online, as long as you follow the instructions listed above and indicate "COVID-19" in the Purpose of Travel – Other description on the TRV application form, which will ensure that your application is flagged for expedited processing.**

It is important to remember that all required and supporting documentation must be provided. Should officers need to request documentation that was not included in your original submission, this will slow the application and approval processes (please note that any other irregularities, may also slow processing). You may also have to provide your biometrics with your application if you have not already done so, or if 10 years has passed since you last did so. In light of COVID-19, applicants are not required to enroll their biometrics until biometrics collection service points reopen. Where urgent processing may be required, officers are able to exempt the applicant from the requirement to give biometrics, where travel is both permissible and required before biometric collection points reopen. For additional information on biometrics, please refer to the following link, [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Biometrics](#). In addition, please refer to the following link for information on visa application centre (VAC) operations, and note that this page will be updated as the VACs begin to reopen and come back online, [find a visa application centre](#).

- 3. If you experience technical difficulties before or while applying for a TRV, for instance while filling out an online application or uploading documents, you should use the "Report a technical issue" button at the top of your account. If you experience technical problems after submitting an application, you should use the IRCC web form and select "Technical difficulties" as the type of inquiry. Just to note, it can take several days to answer an inquiry.** There is also some key information that you should provide with your inquiry, and that information can be found on the IRCC Help Centre.

4. For visa-required applicants, Authorized Paid Representatives (APRs) can use the **Authorized Paid Representatives Portal** (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/partners-service-providers/authorized-paid-representatives-portal.html>) to submit visa applications on behalf of multiple clients. However, all clients must still have their own individual TRV application, along with all the supporting, signed and dated documentation and forms.

If you are from a **visa-exempt country** and need an **electronic Travel Authorization (eTA)** to travel to Canada, please refer to the following instructions.

1. If you are from a visa-exempt country, you will need to [apply online](#) for an electronic Travel Authorization (eTA). After you apply for an eTA, you must self-identify for priority processing via a Web Form submission to tell us how you meet the eligibility requirements to travel to Canada at this time. Detailed instructions can be found at the following, [If you need to apply for an eTA](#). For eTA applicants, supporting documentation provided should include a seafarer's identify document, supplemented by a valid passport or other seafarer documentation, including proof of employment on a vessel at a Canadian port.
2. eTA applications are usually processed and approved in minutes; however, if an applicant has an inadmissibility, such as criminality, they will need to supply additional documentation. Instructions are always provided in a follow up email within 72 hours. eTA applicants are not required to give biometrics.
3. eTA applicants can reach out to IRCC using the online [webform](#) and indicate that they are having technical difficulties. **Just to note, it can take several days to answer an inquiry.** There is also some key information that you should provide with your inquiry, and that information can be found on the IRCC Help Centre.
4. It is important to note that the eTA application process is not designed for group applications and requires a separate application for each seafarer.

### **Itinerary Changes:**

**Given that IRCC's facilitative process involves issuing foil-less visas to seafarers, an itinerary is required as part of the application process so that IRCC can alert the appropriate officials to avoid travel delays at boarding or upon arrival in Canada. Upon approval for a visa, a detailed letter will be issued to the seafarer, which includes this itinerary. Should their itinerary change following issuance of this letter, please notify IRCC at least 48 to 72 hours in advance so that they can re-issue an updated letter with the correct travel details. Failure to do so could result in travel delays.**