



# Sponsoring a Relative to **Canada**?

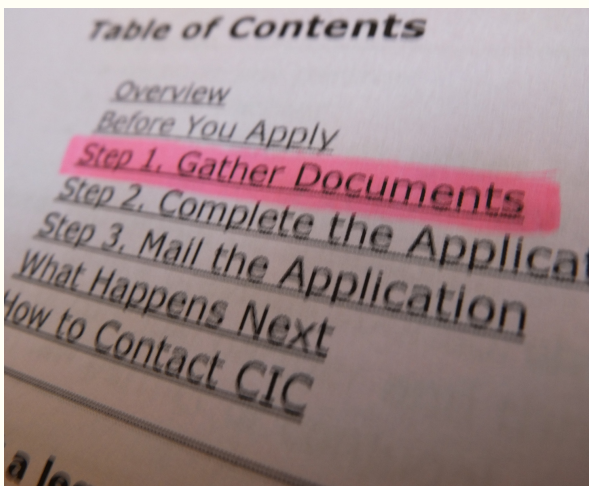
## 10 Things that can **Sink** your Application

by Har Amol Walia, RCIC

### 1. Difference Between Sponsor and Applicant:

Though it sounds obvious but people confuse this the most. The “Sponsor” is the person who is a Canadian citizen or permanent resident who is bringing their loved one to live in Canada; the “Applicant” is the person who is applying to come and live in Canada as a permanent resident.

For sponsorship applications, there are separate sets of forms for the Sponsor and for the applicant. Citizenship and Immigration Canada always processes the Sponsor’s forms and ensure eligibility before moving on to work on Applicants forms.



### 2. Eligibility Issues

Not everyone is eligible for sponsoring a family member to Canada. People get caught unaware of intricate laws governing sponsorship that leads to rejection. In brief, if a sponsor himself or herself was an applicant, he or she cannot sponsor an individual for FIVE years since they became a permanent resident themselves.

Conversely, under the new laws, if you have sponsored your spouse in the past, and if the relationship breaks, you are not illegible to sponsor a spouse again until THREE years from the time your previous spouse became a permanent resident.

### 3. Incorrectly answering questions on the Application Form

The most common mistake people make when applying to sponsor their spouse is not asking for help if they do not understand what a question means on the application. Frequently people mistake the meaning of a question and answer it with irrelevant or incorrect information.

### 5. Providing misinformation or not explaining missing information

Not providing correct information or not disclosing information is a misrepresentation – a major offense that can have grave implications for not only your application but your future.

The difficulty is that even errors that appear to be innocent can be considered a misrepresentation which will certainly sink your application immediately.

If you are missing information that was requested by CIC, it is important to explain why the information is missing and when it might be provided. Otherwise, your application will be sent back to you.

### 5. Incorrect Size Pictures

Application instructions require pictures with a very specific size (usually 35mm wide and 45mm tall, with the head image a maximum of 30mm tall, but check the CIC instructions for your specific application). Pictures have to be a certain size in order to fit on forms that CIC may send to you (such as medical forms for permanent resident applications, and as part of your visa documents).

Not paying attention to the correct size of the picture will have your application returned to you.



### 4. Providing only those documents listed on the checklist

Sounds counter-intuitive right? Why not just provide what CIC asks for on their checklists? Because sometimes that documentation is not enough, and CIC will never help make your case for you. Depending upon particular situation, you must supplement additional documents to bolster your application.

For example, for Common Law relationship you must support your application with enough proofs to prove your common law relationship. Mere joint bank accounts and rent agreements are not enough. I've found it is important to provide affidavits from friends and family attesting to the relationship and how it is exclusive, committed and marriage-like.

### 7. Leaving Questions Blank on the Application

It's very important to answer all questions on the application forms. Leaving a question blank not only omits important information, but it also looks suspicious to IRCC. If the information on a question does not apply to you, always write "N/A" or "Not Applicable" in the answer space.

Leaving questions blank is a sure-fire way to have your application returned to you.



## 8. Not signing the forms

Sounds simple right? But it happens all the time. A form is not signed where the individual is required to sign. Sponsorship application is a lot of paperwork with tons of signature to be put on and its easy to miss a mark. For example, the Additional Family Information form can require 3 signatures on one page. Often people will sign the bottom of this form, and miss the fact that 2 other signatures are also required depending on whether there is a spouse or children. Failing to sign this (or any other form) properly means a returned file weeks (or even months!) after it has been filed.



## 9. Advice from friends/family

We all value advice and recommendations received from friends and family. They are trying to help you through this stressful time and offer a valuable assistance. However, unless your friend/family member is a qualified practitioner on Immigration Law, I would recommend that you do your own review of the law/get an expert to at least review your application before submitting an application to CIC.

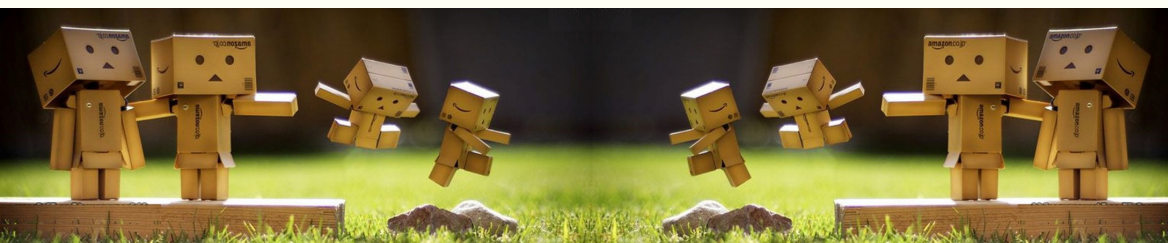
## 10 Self-filing or Not having professional representation

Immigration major law with grave implications of any decision at hand. Its not a civil law where question is about money, its about people, about relationships, about future. Any unwelcomed decision can have major repercussions on one's life.

The obvious benefit to completing and submitting your immigration forms to CIC, without the assistance of a paid immigration representative, is the decreased cost. However, while it may be financially appealing to go it on your own initially, overseeing your immigration file by yourself may pose certain risks that you may not be willing to take on.

**Remember, for immigration law, small details matter the most.**

A simple mistake on your immigration forms could lead to the rejection of your application, loss of status in Canada and even a removal order being issued against you. In these situations, many people stand to lose not only a positive decision on their immigration application, but also years of expended energy and money. On top of the lost fees, you may be forced to pay the expense of an immigration representative anyway if your application is eventually rejected.





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**Arshad Hussain**  
Ex-Visa Officer, CIC

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**Har Amol Walia**  
Immigration Counsel, RCIC

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