

## About the College

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For many newcomers to Canada, working with a professional immigration or citizenship consultant is a step toward a better future.

Belonging to a self-regulated profession that helps so many people is a privilege. With that privilege comes the responsibility to know and meet the professional and ethical obligations demanded of an immigration and citizenship consultant.

### Who we are

The College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (the College) licenses and regulates Canadian immigration and citizenship consultants in the public interest.

There are 2 types of immigration and citizenship consultants we regulate:

- Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs), and
- Regulated International Student Immigration Advisors (RISIAs).

The College's role, its statutory authority, and its powers are set out in:

- The *College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act*,
- The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, and
- The *Citizenship Act*.

Our statutory authority applies to immigration and citizenship consultants whether they practise in Canada or abroad.

**NOTE:** The College regulates Canadian immigration and citizenship consultants. We do not provide immigration advice, process immigration applications, or influence any decision related to immigration.

Anyone who wants to provide Canadian immigration or citizenship advice or representation for a fee (or for any other benefit) must be one of the following:

- A licensee in good standing with the College,
- A member of a Canadian law society, or
- A member of the Chambre des notaires du Québec.

In other words, if someone is not already a lawyer or a *notaire*, they must have a licence from the College to work as a Regulated Canadian immigration consultant.

## What we do

The College regulates immigration and citizenship consultants in the public interest and protects the public by:

- Establishing and administering qualification standards, standards of practice, and continuing education requirements for licensees;
- Ensuring compliance with the Code of Professional Conduct; and
- Undertaking public awareness activities.

### **Licensing**

We license RCICs and RISIAs, ensuring they meet and follow high standards of education, competence and professional ethics.

### **Ongoing education**

We support the lifelong learning needs of licensees. All RCICs and RISIAs must participate in ongoing learning opportunities every year to maintain their licence.

### **Complaints and Discipline**

Licensees must comply with the College's Code of Professional Conduct (the Code).

We investigate complaints about RCICs and RISIAs whose conduct fails to meet the standards of the profession.

We also maintain a professional discipline process to sanction licensees (when appropriate to do so) who do not comply with the Code.

### **Compensation Fund**

The Federal Government will set out regulations for the establishment of a Compensation Fund that will be operated by the College. The purpose of the fund is to help people who have been adversely affected by the activities of a licensee.

Once the Fund is operational, we will release more details about who will be eligible to apply and how they can make a claim.

## What is a regulatory college?

In Canada, a regulatory college is a self-regulatory organization (SRO) that regulates its own profession in the public interest.

SROs are already common in healthcare, education, and professional services.

SROs are granted specific powers and responsibilities by acts of Parliament. They are charged with:

- Setting standards for who can become a member or licensee of the regulated profession,
- Protecting the public by investigating incidents of misconduct by licensees,
- Sanctioning licensees who engage in misconduct, and
- Improving their licensees' skills and competencies.

Self-regulation is a privilege granted to professions that show they can put the interests of the public ahead of their own.

### **The College's role as a regulator**

The College was created as an SRO because it is understood that:

- Immigration and citizenship consultants have specialized knowledge and expertise, and
- Immigration and citizenship consulting can be trusted as a regulated profession.

As a regulator, the College sets standards of education, professional practice and ethics for its licensees. By doing so, we can

- Ensure the fairest outcomes for people who want to immigrate to Canada, and
- Demonstrate that licensed immigration and citizenship consultants are trustworthy and ethical.

We achieve this by:

- Providing resources, education, training, professional development and licensing for RCICs, RISIAs, and people who want to become licensed.
- Requiring that anyone who wants to provide immigration and citizenship consultant services must be licensed.
- Ensuring that people worldwide can easily find an RCIC or a RISIA using our up-to-date Public Register of licensees.
- Disciplining RCICs and RISIAs who breach the Code of Professional Conduct.
- Talking about our role as an SRO with the public, the media, and stakeholder organizations.
- Working with the federal government to continually strengthen regulation in the public interest.

## Why trust a licensed immigration and citizenship consultant?

RCICs and RISIAs are licensed professionals who meet educational, professional and ethical standards. As professionals who help people come to Canada, they understand the responsibility they have to their clients.

As a regulator, we mandate and enforce the standards that RCICs and RISIAs must meet and hold licensees accountable for meeting them.

If a member of the public or the College has concerns about a licensee's conduct or competency, we have the full legal authority to launch an investigation. If we find an RCIC or a RISIA has breached the Code, they will be subject to rehabilitation or discipline. At our discretion, we may also involve law enforcement, where necessary.

This oversight and enforcement help build trust and confidence in the profession and its role as part of Canada's immigration system.

## Why regulation matters to the public

Regulation protects the interests of Canadians and newcomers to Canada by ensuring that Canadian immigration and citizenship consultants operate ethically and competently.

Regulation also helps Canada facilitate immigration and provide protection to refugees. This, in turn, enhances the country's reputation around the world.

## Why regulation matters to newcomers

For people looking to immigrate to Canada or become Canadian citizens, we mandate competent and ethical behaviour by RCICs and RISIAs.

Our licensees must adhere to the College's strict Code of Professional Conduct and maintain high standards of education.

We also work with offshore partners to ensure that people around the world know how to use our up-to-date online Public Register of licensed RCICs and RISIAs as well as the dangers of using unauthorized practitioners.

These measures help people gain access to quality Canadian immigration and citizenship advice.

## Why regulation matters to licensees (RCICs and RISIAs)

Effective regulation builds public trust. It also strengthens the profession by ensuring that licensees meet the educational, ethical and professional standards required of trusted, regulated professionals.

Finally, our authority to discipline sub-standard licensees protects the reputation of other RCICs and RISIAs.

## The College's transition from ICCRC

The College was created by an act of the Canadian Parliament: *The College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act* (Canada) ("the College Act").

The College Act was passed by Parliament in June 2019.

Pursuant to an order of the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC) was continued as the College on November 23, 2021.

"The Government of Canada works to protect the integrity of our immigration system. Part of this means ensuring consultants are properly licensed, so that applicants who use their services can count on high quality advice," said the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. "The opening of this College is an important milestone, and I look forward to its success in supporting the renewal of Canada's population and workforce."

The College Act gives the College investigation and enforcement powers like other professional regulatory bodies (for example, provincial law societies, accounting regulators and professional colleges in the healthcare sector).

The College is governed by a Board of Directors comprising 4 licensees of the College and 5 public representatives appointed by the Minister.

## Q. What is the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants?

A. The College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants, known as the College, is a statutory regulator with enhanced powers for licensing, oversight, investigation and enforcement for Canadian immigration and citizenship consultants in Canada and abroad.

Its federal mandate stems from the [College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act](#), which came into force on December 9, 2020. This federal statute provides the College with substantial powers to set standards and regulate immigration and citizenship consultants along with international student advisors. Its mandate includes:

- Licensing immigration and citizenship consultants providing services for immigration to Canada or for Canadian citizenship.
- Providing resources, ongoing education and development for Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs) and Regulated International Student Immigration Advisors (RISIAs).
- Ensuring simple access for immigrants and citizenship applicants to RCICs and RISIAs around the world, through an up-to-date Public Register of licensees.
- Disciplining RCICs and RISIAs who breach the Code of Professional Conduct.
- Undertaking public awareness to promote its role and the regulation of the profession to the public, the media and to stakeholder organizations across Canada and abroad.
- Working with the federal government to continually strengthen regulation in the public interest.

## Q. What was ICCRC?

A. ICCRC was established in 2011 as Canada's national regulatory body overseeing regulated immigration and citizenship consultants and international student advisors. On November 23, 2021, ICCRC transitioned to the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants.

**Q. Why was the transition to the College necessary?**

A. Established under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*, ICCRC lacked certain statutory powers necessary to effectively regulate the broad-ranging immigration consultant industry. It was hampered by the lack of legal authority to conduct full investigations, enforce disciplinary orders through the courts, compel testimony, and pursue unauthorized practitioners.

This was recognized by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, and in 2017, it recommended the creation of an independent, public interest regulator with full statutory authority to regulate in the public interest.

**Q. What is an immigration consultant?**

A. An immigration consultant provides immigration advice and services and can submit visa applications on behalf of a client for a fee or other consideration. Under Canadian law, only Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs) are authorized to provide immigration and citizenship consulting services to potential immigrants with their journey to Canada. RCICs must meet the College's licensing requirements, including the completion of entry-to-practice education, a licensing exam, ongoing education, and continuing professional development.

**Q. What is an international student advisor?**

A. A Regulated International Student Immigration Advisor (RISIA) provides immigration advice only in relation to authorizations to study in Canada and to enter and remain in Canada as a student. RISIAs must complete the International Students and Immigration Education Program (ISIEP) offered through the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE). They are only employed in the education sector by a Designated Learning Institution. They are not authorized to represent any person in connection with submissions of an expression of interest under subsection 10.1(3) of the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#), proceedings or applications under that Act or proceedings or applications under the [Citizenship Act](#). For more information on the scope of practice of a RISIA, please refer to the *College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act*.

**Q. How can I trust that an immigration consultant has the required skills and expertise?**

A. RCICs and RISIAs are licensed professionals, required to adhere to educational, professional and ethical standards. These standards are mandated and enforced through the College's Code of Professional Conduct.

Each RCIC and RISIA is held accountable by the College. The College is a professional regulatory organization - a government-sanctioned oversight body with full legal authority to launch an investigation on any concerns related to the conduct or competence of its licensees. Any RCIC or RISIA will be subject to disciplinary or remedial measures if they breach the College's Code of Professional Conduct. The College has the power, at its discretion, to involve other law enforcement agencies.

The College's oversight and enforcement authority is intended to build trust and confidence in the profession and the role it plays as part of Canada's immigration system. As professionals helping people come to Canada, our licensees understand the responsibility they share, holding the future of so many in their hands.

**Q. What are Immigration Practitioner Programs?**

A. Immigration Practitioner Programs (IPPs) were the entry-to-practice education programs for RCICs required by ICCRC. The last enrolment of students was July 31, 2020, and learners have until December 2022 to complete the program.

As of August 1, 2020, the new competency-based Graduate Diploma Program replaced the IPPs and is the only pathway to sit the Entry-to-Practice Exam (EPE). Enrollment in the English program is through the Queen's University Faculty of Law and, for the French program, enrollment is through the Université de Montréal Faculté de droit.

**Q. What qualifications do you need to become a licensed immigration consultant?**

- A. To qualify to become a licensed immigration consultant, you must
- Be at least 18 years of age.
  - Be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada, or a person registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act*, R.S.C., 1985, c. 1-5, as amended.
  - Be a graduate from an accredited Immigration Practitioner Program or from a Graduate Diploma Program.
  - Achieve at least the minimum required score on an approved English or French language ability test.
  - Satisfy the Registrar of good character and good conduct
  - Successfully pass the EPE
  - Provide satisfactory police certificates
  - Not be insolvent or an undischarged bankrupt
  - Apply to become a licensee in accordance with the By-laws and pay the prescribed fee

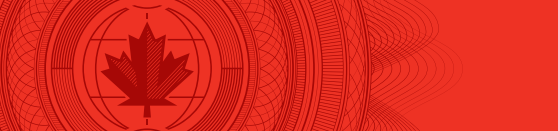
**Q. Will RCICs who qualified under ICCRC be transitioned to the College?**

A. Yes, all RCICs were transitioned into the College as of the date of continuance. All RCICs, regardless of which entry-to-practice education stream they completed, must meet continuing standards of professional competence.

**Q. Will RISIAs who qualified under ICCRC be transitioned to the College?**

A. Yes, RISIAs became a class of licensee, rather than registrants, under the College.





**Q. How many people immigrate to Canada annually?**

A. According to Statistics Canada, annual immigration to Canada amounts to about 300,000 people - one of the highest rates per population of any country in the world.

**Q. How many international students are studying in Canada?**

A. On average, Canada's post-secondary institutions welcome approximately 100,000 international students each year according to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

**Q. How many immigration consultants are licensed by the College?**

A. There are approximately 8,000 RCICs and 300 RISIAs licensed by the College.

**Q. Are immigration consultants operating outside the country subject to the College's regulation?**

A. Individuals providing Canadian immigration/citizenship services abroad are subject to Canadian law even if they reside outside of Canada. There are approximately 200 RCICs who provide services abroad who are subject to regulation by the College.

## Spokesperson Bios

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### John Murray

John W. Murray, BA, LLB, LLM, FELLOW of the FPSC™, is President & CEO of the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants. Prior to joining the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (now the College) in November of 2018, Mr. Murray served as Registrar (2015–2017); Vice-President, Professional Standards (2014–2015); and Vice-President of Standards Enforcement (2008–2014) with CPA Ontario (formerly, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario); and Senior Vice-President, Policy and Corporate Affairs at The Investment Funds Institute of Canada (IFIC) (1993–2007). Mr. Murray brings detailed knowledge of the regulated professions, professional discipline, government relations and professional education.

During his time at CPA Ontario and IFIC, Mr. Murray served on many national and provincial committees and working groups, including the Minister of Finance (Ontario) Advisory Group on securities regulation (2004–2007); the International Standards Organization, Canadian Advisory Committee ISO TC 222 – *Personal Financial Planning Services* (Chair, 2002–2007); the Ontario Securities Commission, Financial Planning Working Group (1998–2004); and the International CFP Council (Canadian Representative, Committee Chair, 1997–1999).

Mr. Murray has served as an officer and director of the Financial Planners Standards Council (1995–2001); as a director of Credit Canada (formerly Credit Counselling Service of Toronto) (1999–2010), the Ontario Association of Credit Counselling Services (2009–2013) and the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (2009 – 2018). Mr. Murray was President & Chair of the Board of Credit Canada (2005–2007), and chair of the Board of the Ontario Association of Credit Counselling Services (OACCS) (2011–2013). Mr. Murray is currently a Director and Vice-Chair of the Board of Stevenson Memorial Hospital.

Mr. Murray holds a Bachelor of Arts from University College, University of Toronto; a Bachelor of Laws from the Faculty of Law, University of Windsor; and a Master of Laws from Osgoode Hall Law School.

In October of 2011, Mr. Murray was made an inaugural FELLOW OF THE FPSC™ by the Financial Planning Standards Council. In 2002, he received the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal, and also holds the Canadian Forces Decoration.

## Michael Huynh

Michael Huynh, MSc, BCL, LLB, is Director, Professional Conduct of the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (formerly the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council). Mr. Huynh is a Canadian lawyer with an interest in how government and public institutions share and use data to further the public interest. After completing his graduate research in medical genetics at the University of Toronto, he moved to Montreal to study law at McGill University and work at a medico-legal policy centre. He returned to Toronto and has held litigation, advisory and adjudicative positions with the federal Department of Justice, the Ontario Legislature, the University Health Network, an immigration law firm, and a federal immigration tribunal (IRB). Mr. Huynh has also worked with an organization that sought legal redress for victims of international atrocities (Canadian Centre for International Justice).

He served on the Board of Directors of the Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic and of Access Alliance, two community organizations that served newcomers facing challenges accessing legal services and health care services respectively. Prior to joining the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (now the College), he served as the Director of Professional Conduct of a health regulator.

Upon joining the Council, Mr. Huynh committed his efforts to transforming its complaints process to ensure concerns about both licensed consultants and unauthorized practitioners are handled fairly and effectively.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **NEW BEGINNING IN REGULATION OF CANADA'S IMMIGRATION CONSULTING PROFESSION**

*Canada's new Regulatory College has Enhanced Powers for  
Licensing, Oversight, Investigation and Enforcement in the  
Immigration Consulting Profession*

**BURLINGTON, Ontario, Nov. 23, 2021**  
(GLOBE NEWSWIRE)

Regulation of Canada's immigration consulting profession is changing significantly with the launch of the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (the College). This new regulatory college has enhanced powers for licensing, oversight, investigation and enforcement of immigration and citizenship consultants in Canada and abroad.

"It is the dawn of a new era in regulation of the immigration consulting profession," said John Murray, President & CEO of the College. "This is the culmination of months of research, consultation and preparation in addition to an Act of Parliament."

The College's federal mandate stems from the [College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act](#) (S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 292). As a regulatory college, it sets educational, professional practice and ethical standards for its licensees. This ensures competent, ethical advice and service for immigrants and citizenship applicants to Canada and demonstrates that licensed immigration consultants are worthy of their trust.

The regulator will uphold their mandate by:

- Licensing immigration and citizenship consultants providing services for immigration to Canada or for Canadian citizenship.
- Providing resources, ongoing education and development for Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs) and Regulated International Student Immigration Advisors (RISIAs).

- Ensuring simple access for immigrants and citizenship applicants to RCICs and RISIAs around the world, through an up-to-date Public Register of licensees.
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- Undertaking public awareness to promote our role and the regulation of the profession to the public, the media and to stakeholder organizations across Canada and abroad.
- Working with the federal government to continually strengthen regulation in the public interest.

Existing RCICs and RISIAs will immediately become licensees of the new College. College licensees will be required to complete annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements and an annual practice assessment.

College entry-to-practice requirements include the successful completion of a new Graduate Diploma Program being offered by the Faculties of Law at Queen's University and the Université de Montréal.

In addition, anyone wishing to represent clients at the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) tribunals will be required to have the RCIC-IRB class of licence, as of July 2022.

"The Government of Canada works to protect the integrity of our immigration system. Part of this means ensuring consultants are properly licensed, so that applicants who use their services can count on high quality advice," said the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. "The opening of this College is an important milestone, and I look forward to its success in supporting the renewal of Canada's population and workforce."

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## **About the College**

The College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (the College) licenses and regulates the practice of Canadian immigration consultants – Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs) and Regulated International Student Immigration Advisors (RISIAs) – in the public interest. The role of the College, its statutory authority and powers are set out in the *College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act*, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and the *Citizenship Act*.

Any immigration consultant who provides Canadian immigration/citizenship services, whether domestically or abroad, must adhere to strict educational, professional and ethical standards.



The College ensures that these licensees comply with a Code of Professional Conduct by holding them accountable for breaches of the Code.

Learn more at [www.college-ic.ca](http://www.college-ic.ca)

**Press Contact**

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