



# New Immigrant Information Guide

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**Developed by:**  
The Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce – Toronto  
[www.icccto.com](http://www.icccto.com)

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This document has been compiled by Brian Cooney and Marie McSweeney, and while the Chamber is honored to be associated with this great initiative to assist new arrivals, the views herein are solely those of the authors.

## Introduction

Moving to a new country can be a daunting experience, “ Am I going to get work?” ‘Where will I live? How am I going to find my way around this new city?’ These are some of the many questions that can run through ones head. Well with this e-zine we are going to help ease some of your worries and concerns by answering these questions. These questions will be answered by people who have been there, done it all and bought the Leafs jersey!!

We hope you find answers to your questions and enjoy your time in Toronto.

## Employment in TO

TO is hiring in comparison to other parts of the world, however, it does take time to find employment and you need to put a dedicated strategy in place in order to be progressive towards your job hunt. Here is a list of recruitment agencies who have assisted Irish people find work in the past.

- ❖ Adecco Canada
- ❖ Altis HR
- ❖ Appleone Canada
- ❖ Bruce R. Duncan and Associates
- ❖ Chad Management
- ❖ David Aplin Recruiting
- ❖ Fetch Recruiting
- ❖ Hays recruitment
- ❖ IBT Recruitment
- ❖ Infotek Direct
- ❖ Manpower Services
- ❖ myjobsite.ca
- ❖ Options Personnel
- ❖ Quantum
- ❖ Robert Half
- ❖ Spherion Workforce
- ❖ The Employment Solution
- ❖ The People Bank

You should also consider posting your resume on [www.irishjobs.ca](http://www.irishjobs.ca)

If you are a member of a registered profession (accountant, engineer etc) you may need to join the local Ontario association when you arrive (some professions require you to be a registered member).

Furthermore, vacation allowance is generally two weeks per year which is quite low by Irish standards, which offers 20 days per year for someone working full time. Nevertheless, if you work for a multinational firm they may offer three weeks. It can sometimes be useful to negotiate a higher vacation allowance when a firm offers you a job!

Toronto generally has 9 paid public holidays in a year which are as follows:

## Ontario Public Holidays

<b>New Years Day</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January
<b>Family Day</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday of February
<b>Good Friday</b>	March / April
<b>Victoria Day</b>	Monday before 25 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Canada Day</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> July
<b>Labour Day</b>	First Monday in September
<b>Thanksgiving Day</b>	Second Monday in October
<b>Christmas Day</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> December
<b>Boxing day</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> December

Finally, if you are claiming back Income Tax you must ask your for a T4 Form. This form should be sent to you between January and March. Go to [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca) to download the appropriate tax return forms and fill them out accordingly. Send the completed forms, along with the original T4 slip to International Tax Services Office, 102A 2204 Walkley Rd, Ottawa, ON, K1A 1A8, Canada. If you are filing for your tax returns outside Canada you must include a letter stating what currency you would like your tax return back in. Alternatively, if you are having trouble filling out the forms you can pay an accountant to do it for you at a cost of \$40 - \$60 and find them at [www.canada411.com](http://www.canada411.com) or [www.taxback.com](http://www.taxback.com). Don't forget you can also claim tax back on your monthly transportation card, so keep all your used cards until the end of the year.

## Public Transport

Public transport in Toronto, Bus, Streetcar and Subway all falls under the one umbrella, The Toronto Transit Commission. The TTC runs 4 Subway routes. The Bloor-Danforth Line that runs across the city from Kipling in the West to Kennedy in the East. The Yonge-University-Spadina line runs in a u-shape from Downsview in North Toronto down through the city and back up to Finch, also in North Toronto. 2 other lines also run. The Scarborough RT runs from Kennedy in the East to McCowan in Scarborough. The Sheppard Line connects with the Kipling stretch of the Yonge-University-Spadina line at the Sheppard station and goes in an eastward direction to Don Mills.

Buses and streetcars run all over the city and serve all major thoroughfares. Subways and street cars will have stops and terminate at subway stations making it easy to transfer onto the next mode of transport.

All fares on the TTC, be it if you are going one stop on the subway or across the whole city on subways and buses costs only \$3. When you get on a bus or street car or pay your fare at a subway station you can obtain a transfer ticket that ensures you can transfer from subway on to bus or street car or vice versa.

While you can pay a \$3 cash fare, one can also purchase TTC tokens. Tokens can be bought in bulk for instance 10 tokens for \$25. A one month metro pass which can be used on all services can be purchased for \$121.

When you arrive in Toronto and wonder how to get to an interview or to that bar or restaurant to meet the gang, check out the TTC website and the "journey planner" will point you in the correct direction.

## **Banking**

The major banks in Canada are; Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), Scotiabank, TD Canada Trust, Bank Of Montreal and CIBC.

Coming from Ireland you will be in for a rude awakening in that you will be charged for everything to do with your bank account and even just for having a bank account. Banks here will charge you a base fee for having the account normally between \$3-5 per month and for this you will get a certain amount of ATM and in branch teller transactions. Once you reach your limit you will be charged for each additional transaction i.e. up to \$1.50. If you are coming from a student account background where you don't get charged for anything or had an account back home where once you kept your balance at a certain amount you would be exempt from charges, this will be a shock for you. Having said that, certain banks offer Welcome To Canada packages where they waive certain fees or all fees.

**Royal Bank of Canada** offers the following:

With the RBC Welcome to Canada package you can get:

- ❖ Free all-inclusive banking account for six months.
- ❖ RBC Royal Bank credit card, no credit history required
- ❖ 1 year free safe deposit box
- ❖ Free personalized cheques
- ❖ Preferred interest rates on guaranteed investment certificates (GICs)

Credit Card is only for Landed Immigrants.

**Scotiabank** offers the following:

Scotia Powerchequing bank account with a ScotiaCard bank card.

- ❖ No fees for transactions like withdrawals, writing cheques, paying bills and pre-authorized payments, for an unlimited number of transactions.
- ❖ Scotiabank Money Master Savings Account.
- ❖ Western Union Money Transfers directly from your account.

Before you leave Ireland, check out all the major bank websites and see which one suits you best.

To open your account all you need is your Passport and your SIN number. Your SIN number can be obtained from any Service Canada Centre, on the spot, once you show your visa/work permit.

## Cell Phone Providers

Canada's phone market is dominated by three major players; Rogers, Bell and Telus. In Toronto there are also smaller new networks who are fighting for market share from the big three, these networks include; Wind, Mobilicity, Virgin Mobile, Fido, Koodo and Public Mobile.

The big three networks like to get you tied into 3 year contracts. Coming from Ireland you will probably only be used to 12-18 month contracts and this might come as a shock. Handsets are also more expensive than Ireland. On a 1 or 2 year contract the handset will still be full price, upwards of \$500 depending on the phone. If you are thinking I'll just bring an unlocked phone and go prepay, don't bother. USIT will furnish you with a Rogers prepaid SIM as a part of your pack. Use it while you get settled in over the first week or two then get rid of it. Prepay, once you start following up calls for jobs and apartments and start having phone interviews, will cost you a fortune as you are charged to receive calls in Canada!

It is possible to go through \$80 plus dollars a month using prepay while interviewing and calling about jobs and apts.

As an alternative to this, the newer networks that are grappling for market share from the big three networks are offering some great deals. This additional competition is also making the big three a lot more competitive, so be prepared to wheel and deal.

Networks like Wind, Fido and Mobilicity offer unlimited packages for between \$30-50 a month that include unlimited incoming and outgoing calls, voice mail, text messages and in some cases either free international calls or texts ( Wind offer free unlimited global texts while Fido include international calls in their plans).

Another advantage with the newer networks is that they don't tie you into contracts like the big three networks. They operate month to month or on a "TAB" basis. The "TAB" is where you get an amount, say \$150, off your phone. Then every month along with your bill you pay 5% off what you owe. If you are leaving the country or want to switch network you just pay off your "TAB". These month by month plans mean you have to buy a new handset from the network but they can be purchased for reasonable prices.

Some things to know about using mobile phones in Canada;

You will be charged for incoming calls unless you are on a plan that states otherwise.

Everyone gets charged a fee/tax for using 911.

Voicemail is charged per minute unless your plan covers it.

Long distance charges apply when calling some parts of the Greater Toronto Area.

## Must See & Do

Toronto is home to many ethnic and historic neighborhoods and there is always plenty to see and do. Here are some of the general places you should incorporate into your sight seeing:

- ❖ Visit the CN Tower (Great to get your bearings, seeing the city from a birds eye view!)
- ❖ Kensington Market
- ❖ Toronto Islands (during the summer)
- ❖ Hockey Hall of Fame
- ❖ Niagara Falls and Niagara on the Lake approximately 1 hour 20 minutes bus drive (Niagara also known for its fun casino's)
- ❖ Blue Mountain or Horseshoe skiing slopes approximately 90 minute drive from TO
- ❖ Yonge and Dundas Square (resembles Time Square NY)
- ❖ Nathan Phillips outdoor ice-skating rink near City Hall (skate rentals available)
- ❖ Go shopping in Chinatown
- ❖ Take a train ride through High Park
- ❖ Window shop in Yorkville
- ❖ Walk the entire underground pathways (connecting Toronto's downtown core and business district, there are 27 kilometres of stores, food courts and places to hang out!). Follow the PATH signs.
- ❖ Check out what St. Lawrence Market has to offer
- ❖ Visit the Danforth (Toronto's Greek Town)
- ❖ Have dinner in Little Italy
- ❖ Visit the Medieval Times (10 Dufferin St, Exhibition Place, Toronto)

Week end trips to Montreal, Nova Scotia, New York, Chicago and Boston by plane can be fun, however, travelling by air can be expensive. The best way around this is to travel by bus, the Greyhound ([www.greyhound.ca/home](http://www.greyhound.ca/home)) and Mega Bus (Type megabus Canada into google) have super deals in comparison to the cost of flying so it's definitely worth keeping an eye out for them on their websites!

## Socialising in TO

TO is home to an abundance of Irish pubs and restaurants

Here are some popular pubs at a glance:

### IRISH

- ❖ Ceili Cottage – 1301 Queen Street East
- ❖ Dora Keogh's - 141 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Fionn MacCools Bloor St East
- ❖ Galway Arms – 838 840 Queensway
- ❖ Grace O'Malleys - 14 Duncan St
- ❖ Irish Embassy Bar & Grill – 49 Yonge St
- ❖ James Joyce – 386 Bloor St West

- ❖ McVeigh's – 124 Church Street
- ❖ Murphy's Law – 1702 Queen St East
- ❖ Overdraught – 156 Front St West
- ❖ PJ O Briens – 39 Colborne St
- ❖ Pogue Mahone's – 777 Bay St
- ❖ Pour House – 182 Dupont St
- ❖ Quinns Steakhouse and Irish Bar – 96 Richmond St West
- ❖ Rose & Crown – 2335 Yonge Street
- ❖ Seanachai - 1160 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Fox and Fiddle - 535 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Friar & Firkin – 160 Johns St
- ❖ Gabbys - 729 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Hot House Café – 35 Church St
- ❖ Oh Boy Burger – 571 Queen St West
- ❖ Scally Wags 11 Saint Clair West
- ❖ Tattoo Rock Parlour
- ❖ The Auld Spot - 347 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ The Champions Den - 397 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ The Court Jester - 609 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ The hideout Hideout- 484 Queen St West
- ❖ The Old Nick - 123 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Wild Wings - 630 Danforth Avenue

### **Other cool pubs**

- ❖ Allens - 141 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Brass Taps - 493 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Cafe 521 - 521 Danforth Avenue
- ❖ Crocodile Rock – 240 Adelaide St West

Also, don't forget that Toronto has a big tipping culture and it is expected of one to tip the bartender or waitstaff every time a drink is purchased. Furthermore, the HST (Government tax) is typically not included and displayed on price lists or menus within majority of these establishments. Other, interesting websites which list Irish -Toronto Clubs and Societies is [www.torontoirishassociation.com](http://www.torontoirishassociation.com) and [www.irishcanadamag.com](http://www.irishcanadamag.com) and the Chamber website, [www.icccto.com](http://www.icccto.com)

### **Getting connected with Toronto's Irish community:**

Listen to community radio:

Frankie Benson – Radio Erin Show - AM 740 - Sundays: 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Colm O'Brien – The Long Note - CKLN 88.1 FM - Sundays: 8:00pm – 9:00pm

Eamonn O'Loughlin – Ceol agus Craic - CHKT 1430 AM - Saturdays: 11:00am – 12:00 noon

Hugo Straney – Songs from Home - CHIN 1540 AM - Sundays: 10:00 am – 11:00 am

Publications: Irish Connections Canada: Three times annually. Online at [www.irishcanadamag.com](http://www.irishcanadamag.com)

Guinness Community Calendar of Events: [www.icccto.com](http://www.icccto.com). Click on Guinness Community Calendar of Events.

## Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP)

You maybe eligible to an OHIP Card if “you are a foreign worker who holds a work permit valid for at least six months which allows you to work in Canada. It must also be proven that you have a formal agreement in place, to work full-time for an employer situated in Ontario. An employment letter can be ascertained from your employer which should include the details as follows:

- ❖ Employer’s name
- ❖ Your Job Title
- ❖ Salary
- ❖ States that you will be working for no less than six consecutive months. If they can use the word ‘permanent’ great!

Bring along your passport and proof of address (lease, bill, etc) to the nearest office, where they will process your details. It is recommended to book an appointment before going down to the office, as this allows you to go straight in without queuing. It usually takes a few

weeks to receive the card via post. A picture of an OHIP Card can be viewed directly below.



**More info can be found here:**

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ohip/eligibility.html>

## Finding a Place to Live

When you arrive in Toronto, many are likely going to use a hostel in the downtown core for the first few weeks. People here rarely advertise to share a house, they live alone or join up with a few friends. So if there are a few of you, you can try to rent a whole house or an apartment in a house or in a condominium building. Toronto has the largest condo market in North America, so you will find every shape and size of unit in every part of the city. It all depends on how much you want to pay. A one bedroom apartment downtown will be about \$1200-1500/month and a 2 bedroom place is about \$1700 - 2000/month. When you are looking at prices, some will include electricity and heating whilst others will ask you to pay those separately. These are downtown prices to get better value, look beyond the downtown core along the subway lines, there are lots of options just a few subway stops east or west of Yonge & Bloor.

## **Renting, you have a few options:**

- ❖ Rent an apartment in a house – basement apartments are the cheapest, however, ceilings can be quite low if you are six foot in height. So check it out first before committing to rent it!
- ❖ Rent a condominium – high rise buildings with hundreds of units in them
- ❖ Get together with a few friends and rent a 2 bedroom apt or whole house if there are more of you.

Most neighbourhoods in Toronto are pretty safe but take a look around you at the kind of people who live on the street you have chosen to rent on. Ask around the Irish community or research it on line if you're not sure.

Note: For the most part, all accommodation is unfurnished

Where to find accommodation. – Check out these websites

[www.viewit.ca](http://www.viewit.ca)

[www.kijiji.ca](http://www.kijiji.ca)

[www.thestar.ca](http://www.thestar.ca)

[www.craigslist.ca](http://www.craigslist.ca)

[www.realtor.ca](http://www.realtor.ca) ( this one involves using a real estate agent to help you find a place.

The service is free but often the places they will show you might be a bit more expensive than those available on the other sites. The benefit is that you have someone in front of you to guide you)

Ontario law favours the tenant and so landlords are very choosy.

They will want :

- ❖ A one year lease
- ❖ First and last month's rent up front – so be sure to bring enough cash with you to cover this.
- ❖ They also will require references, so if you have ever had a landlord or if you have employment in Toronto, bring a letter from them if at all possible.
- ❖ If you don't have any references a landlord might agree to let you rent their property if you offer to pay a few extra months rent up front. This is not a security fee, all this money will go towards your rent over the year.
- ❖ The majority of apartments are non-smoking.

If a landlord requires you to sign a lease - ask to take it home and read it before you sign or hand over any money. Most landlords are honest but you should know what you're signing. It's best not to hand over the money until you get a key in return.

## **Interesting Canadian Websites**

The following websites offer daily discounts on amazing deals on the coolest events, restaurants, fashion finds, activities and adventures in Toronto. It would be worth checking them out or even sign up for free daily alerts about the offers!

- ❖ <http://dealoftheday.redflagdeals.com/deal/toronto>
- ❖ <http://www.groupon.com/toronto/>
- ❖ <http://www.wagjag.com/>

- ❖ <http://news.cnet.com/cheap skate/>
- ❖ <http://www.cowboom.com/deal-of-the-day.cfm>
- ❖ <http://dealnews.com/>

## **Immigration**

### **Plan to Immigrate to Canada from Ireland: A Stitch in Time Saves Nine**

Making plans to live or work in Canada can be very exciting and overwhelming at the same time. Some of the different options available are the Skilled Worker Class for qualified professionals and trade-workers with experience, Canadian Experience Class for international students or foreign workers already in Canada, Working Holiday Programs, Foreign Worker Visas and Sponsorships for family members, among others.

You will need to decide which is for you. Your research and qualified professional guidance will save you time and money as well as help you avoid problems along the way. Please ensure to keep all your paperwork in order.

#### **Skilled Workers**

The main category for most immigration to Canada is the Federal Skilled Worker Class (FSW). Under the FSW, applicants qualify based on their education, work experience, knowledge of English and/or French, and other criteria. In addition, the applicants must have either Arranged Employment in Canada or at least one year of work experience in one of the occupations considered to be in high demand in Canada which you can see on the Eligible Occupations list below. The FSW application process can take about one year to complete. The applicant and his or her family members will be issued Permanent Resident visas. During the processing time, the application process in itself does not entitle the applicant to live or work in Canada.

The province of Quebec offers the Quebec Skilled Worker program for those wishing to immigrate to this province. One of the main differences is that applicants must have knowledge of the French language.

Other provinces in Canada offer variations of the Skilled Worker called Provincial Nominations Programs (PNP). Most PNP Skilled Workers require a job offer from an employer from the province.

#### **Canadian Experience Class (CEC)**

The CEC is one of the newer immigration programs. This program is available for those who have completed a diploma or post-graduate program of 2 years or more in Canada or those who have completed 2 years of skilled work experience in Canada already.

#### **Working Holiday Programs (WHP) - International Experience Canada**

For many coming to Canada from Ireland, between the ages of 18 and 35, the Working Holiday Programs (WHP), also known as the International Experience Canada, is an excellent option. Participants come to Canada and work for 1 or 2 years. Some of the advantages for the that while in Canada, with a qualifying job offer, participants can apply for additional work permits and extend their stays and employment and with a permanent offer of employment, they can also meet the Arranged Employment qualification for the Federal Skilled Worker Program. As well, if they completed 2 years

of skilled work, they can qualify under the Canadian Experience Class. In many cases, WHP participants can obtain Canadian Permanent Residence while they live and work in Canada.

On January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) modified the International Experience Canada program. One of the big changes is that applications can be made directly to the government of Canada.

### **Foreign Worker Visas**

A work permit is needed for most temporary employment in Canada. To apply for a work permit, you must have an offer of employment from a Canadian employer which, in most cases must be confirmed by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

### **Family Sponsorships**

A Canadian citizens or permanent resident can sponsor a spouse, common-law partner, conjugal partner, dependent child or other eligible family member such as a parent or grandparent for permanent residence in Canada. In sponsorship applications, there are different options available. Getting your application done correctly can save you time and money as well as avoid errors that could jeopardize your future in Canada.

### **General Tips**

Misrepresentation is the term used in Canadian immigration law for misleading or false information presented in applications or interviews. A simple error or omission can also bring serious consequences. Remember that everything you present to immigration will be kept on record.

For those coming to Canada on Working Holiday Programs, keep in mind your future plans when job searching. Will the position fulfill the requirements of your long term plans? In the job interview, you may wish to ask if the employer would support your application for permanent residence or extension of your visa later on.

### **What is skilled work?**

It is very important to know the difference. Work is categorized into Skilled and Unskilled Work by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. In most cases, unskilled work is not taken into consideration for purposes of permanent immigration. Generally speaking, most skilled work occupations require formal training such as a university or college education, technical degree, or apprenticeship. Most clerical occupations are not considered skilled work while most trades are.

Note: You can read more about Skilled Work, the National Occupation Classification (NOC), and the matrix at the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada website. See the link below.

### **Common-law partners**

In order to be considered common-law partners by CIC, the couple must be living together in a conjugal relationship and cohabitated for at least one year.

A stitch in time saves nine.

Many immigration consultants and lawyers will give affordable or free initial consultations. Far too many people look for help after the damage is done or when it is

already too late. Remember that only Members of the Canadian Society of Immigration Consultants, Canadian Lawyers and Public Notaries of Quebec are authorized by the Canadian government to represent you.

## Some Useful Links

- ❖ Citizenship and Immigration Canada - [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)
- ❖ Human Resources and Skills Development Canada – National Occupations Classifications (NOC) - <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/noc/2006/welcome.aspx>
- ❖ Working Holiday Program / International Experience Canada – Ireland - [http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/ireland-irlande/experience\\_canada\\_experience/index.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/ireland-irlande/experience_canada_experience/index.aspx?lang=eng)
- ❖ Eligible Occupations for Federal Skilled Workers without Arranged Employment - <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/complete-applications.asp>
- ❖ Certified Immigration Consultants – Click on the Green Pages (Immigration Services) tab on the Chamber website: [www.icccto.com](http://www.icccto.com) to access some certified immigration consultants who will be happy to provide initial consultations for free.

(Special thanks to John Harrington of Fast Track Immigration Services for his assistance in compiling this information).

## Driving Licence Process in Ontario

If you are coming to Toronto/Ontario and hoping to drive, there are some things you should be aware of prior to arriving for example:

- ❖ Irish drivers cannot swap their drivers licence straight over for a Canadian license.
- ❖ You can drive in Ontario using your Irish Licence for the first 90 days. However, you must apply for a licence after 60 days if a resident.
- ❖ As opposed to the Irish system of provisional and full licence, Ontario offers 3 licences. G1 being a learners permit, G2 being a probationary licence and G which is the full licence.

Due to Canada's Commonwealth status, UK citizens can trade in their British driving license for a Canadian one. Unfortunately, the Irish cannot do the same, so here are the steps you must undertake to obtain an Ontario licence:

- ❖ Go to your local motor tax office or county council and get printed, headed paper, a document that states that you have a licence in Ireland, what type you have and for how long you have had it.
- ❖ Once in Ontario take this document, your Irish licence and passport to a Motor Office and they will issue you a G2 licence, upon completing a Ontario Theory Test and passing an eye examination you can obtain a full G licence.

If you have not driven or cannot prove that you have driven for 2 out of the last 3 years on a full licence you will have to start from scratch and go through testing for a G1 licence.

Further information can be obtained on this page; <http://www.drivetest.ca/en/license/ExchangeOutProv.aspx>

## Embassy of Ireland

Embassy of Ireland  
1105 -130 Albert St  
Ottawa, ON  
K1P 5G4  
Phone: 613-233-6281  
Fax: 613-233-5835  
Email: [embassyofireland@rogers.com](mailto:embassyofireland@rogers.com)  
Website: [www.embassyofireland.ca](http://www.embassyofireland.ca)

The Embassy of Ireland provides a range of services to Irish citizens in Canada, including:

### Passport Service

Contact the Embassy to obtain a passport renewal application form. Please make sure to apply for your new passport at least 6 months before your current passport expires. If you are considering applying for Canadian permanent residence, or for a Canadian visa of any kind, make sure you have the necessary validity on your current passport, and apply for a new one promptly if you need to. Please note that processing times for passport applications submitted at the Embassy can be 4 to 6 weeks. In cases of genuine emergency, special arrangements can be made including a temporary passport of limited validity may be issued, but cannot be used for travel to or through the US.

### Consular Services

The Embassy can provide consular assistance to Irish citizens in difficulty in Canada. For example, you can contact the Embassy if you are ill or hospitalised; if you are the victim of a crime; if you are arrested or in detention; or if there is a death abroad. The Embassy can:

- ❖ Help you liaise with your travel or medical insurance company
- ❖ Contact your family and friends in Canada and in Ireland
- ❖ Assist with the transfer of funds from family or friends at home
- ❖ Put you in touch with relevant support services and NGOs
- ❖ Provide a replacement or temporary passport
- ❖ In serious cases, assist with repatriation to Ireland, subject to a number of conditions

### The Embassy cannot:

- ❖ Offer legal or medical advice, or formally recommend or pay for doctors or lawyers
- ❖ Lend you money or pay for hotel or other expenses incurred
- ❖ Get you out of prison, pay fines, or interfere with legal proceedings
- ❖ Initiate court proceedings or conduct criminal investigations on your behalf

### **Authentication of Documents**

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin can authenticate documents issued in Ireland which are required for official purposes in Canada (for example, educational certificates, birth and marriage certificates, court documents and medical reports).

The Embassy in Ottawa can legalise Canadian documents which are required for official purposes in Ireland. For more information please contact the Embassy directly.

### **Emergency Assistance**

If you need genuine emergency assistance from the Embassy outside normal office hours, call the main Embassy number at 613-233-6281 and leave a message on the emergency answering machine. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

For further information on the services provided and work done by the Embassy, please consult the Embassy website [www.embassyofireland.ca](http://www.embassyofireland.ca) and do not hesitate to contact the Embassy with any queries.

### **Conclusion**

This E - Booklet set out to ease many of the initial concerns and worries you may have when you first arrive in Toronto. The Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce, provides a good support mechanism for Irish people who are immigrating to Toronto, by organizing numerous networking and informative events. They can be found at [www.icccto.com](http://www.icccto.com). Good luck with your new move to TO!!