



Untangling The Law

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Sponsoring your parents in 2014? Prepare now!

In 2011, Canada stopped accepting applications of Canadian and Canadian permanent residents looking to sponsor their parents and grandparents to Canada. On January 2, 2014, Citizenship and Immigration Canada will re-open this program. Because the new rules will only allow for 5,000 applications to be accepted nation-wide in 2014, families who want to sponsor their parents or grandparents to Canada should start planning now.

What will change in the new sponsorship program?

In addition to imposing a limit on the number of applications that will be accepted, the government has changed the financial tests sponsors will have to meet. Here are some of the more significant changes:

1. Sponsors will now have to show that they have earned more money

Beginning in 2014, sponsors will have to earn 30% over Statistics Canada's low-income cut-off. Before the changes, sponsors only had to meet the low-income cut-off number. Under current rules, a person in a family of four who is sponsoring his or her parents must make \$55,000 per year. In 2014, that number will be over \$71,000.

2. Sponsors will now have to prove they have earned more money over 3 years

In addition, the period which the sponsor must prove that they meet the minimum necessary income will be increased from one year to three years. This will require sponsors to provide sufficient proof of their income for three consecutive years. Because only income reported on Canadian income tax will be accepted, recent immigrants to Canada may not be eligible to sponsor. Please note that only official Canada Revenue Agency documentation will be accepted to prove that the sponsor

is financially stable and meets the requirements.

3. Sponsors will now be financially liable for the relatives for 20 years

Currently, the length of time that a sponsor is financially liable for their immigrant family members is 10 years (there are some exceptions). In 2014, this will be increased to 20 years. This means that sponsors and any co-signers will be required to reimburse the Canadian government for any social assistance benefits and other expenses used by their family members for double the amount of time that was previously required.

Can my brothers and sisters still immigrate to Canada with my parents?

Previously, brothers and sisters under 22 years could come under a parent's application. In 2014, the age will be lowered to 18 years. An exception to this rule is when the family member is over the age of 18, but is financially dependent on their parent/guardian due to a disability.

What do these changes mean for sponsors?

If you wish to sponsor your parents or grandparents, the time to prepare is now. It is important that applications be filled out completely and accurately.

Reuniting with relatives, whether permanently or temporarily, can be a long, painstaking process. The best way to ensure that your application is among the 5,000

accepted annually is to be accurate and consistent

This Article is prepared for general information purposes only and is intended to provide comments for readers and friends of the Filipino Journal. The contents should not be viewed as legal advice or opinion. If you have specific questions regarding immigration law, you should discuss them with a legal advisor of your choice.

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Erratum

We'd like to make an erratum for last issue's (August 20- September 5, 2013) in R. Reis Pagtakhan Untangling The Law column titled Asking Immigration for extension. Laura Sulymosi is also a credited author for this publication.



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