

Biometrics

Who – Where – When – Cost?



1. Who needs to give biometrics (fingerprints and photo)?

All foreign nationals who are:

- applying for a visitor visa;
- applying for a work permit or a study permit, (excluding U.S. nationals);
- applying for permanent residence; or
- claiming refugee or asylum status.

Some people are exempt from giving biometrics, such as:

- persons under 14 years old and over 79 years old (there is no upper age limit for asylum claimants);
- accredited diplomats of other countries and the United Nations, coming to Canada on official business
- visa-exempt nationals coming to Canada as tourists; and
- heads of state and heads of government.

2. Where do applicants go to provide their biometrics?

Applicants must go **in person** to a biometrics collection service location to provide their fingerprints and have a photograph taken.

- Outside Canada and the U.S.: At one of Canada's [Visa Application Centre \(VAC\)](#) locations around the world.
- In the United States: At one of many [Application Support Centers](#) across the U.S. if already legally in the country. There are also 2 VACs in the U.S. (Los Angeles and New York City).
- At the port of entry: Asylum claimants, and visa-exempt travellers eligible to apply for a work or study permit at the port of entry. See our [Study in Canada](#) web page ([Study permit – how to apply](#)) or [Work in Canada](#) web page ([Get a work permit – find out if you are eligible](#)) to see if you are eligible to apply when you enter Canada.
- In Canada: At select Service Canada locations when they open in 2019 for those eligible to make an in-Canada application.

If applicants need to give biometrics, it is best that they **apply online** or **in person at a VAC** for their visitor visa, study or work permit.



3. Validity period for temporary resident biometrics

- If you are applying for a visitor visa, a study permit, or a work permit, you only need to give your biometrics **once every 10 years**.
- If you are a temporary resident or hold a study or work permit and you have provided your biometrics in the past, your biometrics are valid from the time you gave your biometrics for a period of 10 years. You do not need to provide your biometrics until the 10-year period expires. Applicants can go to the biometrics web page, Canada.ca/biometrics, to confirm the validity of their biometrics.

4. In-Canada public policy

- Foreign nationals who are eligible to make an in-Canada application, such as an extension to their visitor status, a work permit or study permit renewal, a temporary resident permit renewal, or for permanent resident status, will not have to provide their biometrics until the biometrics collection service locations open in Canada in 2019. Until then, these applicants are exempt from giving their biometrics.

5. What is the cost?

- Individual applicants will pay CAD \$85 to provide their biometrics.
- Families applying together at the same time will pay a maximum total fee of CAD \$170.
- A maximum fee of CAD \$255 applies for groups of 3 or more performing artists and their staff who apply for work permits at the same time.

Biometrics

Collection, Verification,
Information Sharing and Privacy



1. Who collects biometrics?

- The Government of Canada collects biometrics as a part of its immigration program.
- More than 70 countries around the world are using biometrics in their immigration programs.

2. Why does the Government of Canada collect biometrics?

- Biometrics collection is recognized globally as a reliable, accurate tool for establishing identity.
- Biometrics collection allows the Government of Canada to effectively manage identity, facilitate application processing and simplify entry for travellers with legitimate identities. It aids in deterring, detecting and stopping the entry of those who pose a risk to the health, safety and security of Canadians.

3. Who verifies biometrics? What happens when applicants arrive in Canada?

- At the border, the Canada Border Services Agency will be able to quickly and accurately confirm whether a traveller's identity is legitimate. This will contribute to more efficient and timely entry for travellers.
- At 8 major Canadian airports, fingerprint verification will be automatically conducted at a primary inspection kiosk.
- At other airports and land ports of entry, discretionary fingerprint verification will be conducted by a border services officer upon referral to secondary inspection, where the traveller's identity will be verified to ensure that the person seeking entry to Canada is the same person who was approved overseas.

For more information, visit:
Canada.ca/biometrics



4. How will the Government of Canada use the collected biometrics?

- Biometrics collection will help the Government of Canada to establish and confirm a person's identity – including identifying known criminals and those who may pose a threat to Canada – at the earliest opportunity. Doing so will ensure that these individuals do not fraudulently obtain temporary or permanent residence.
- The fingerprints will be stored by the RCMP on the National Repository and checked against its immigration and criminal records holdings. The biometric verification will confirm if someone previously applied to enter Canada using the same or a different identity, has a previous Canadian criminal record, or has previously been removed from Canada.
- Biometrics-based information sharing with the U.S., the UK, Australia and New Zealand will further support the integrity of Canada's immigration system by providing immigration officers with additional information to help make decisions on a person's admissibility and by simplifying the travel of low-risk individuals.

5. How will the Government of Canada protect the security and privacy of individuals giving biometrics?

- The Government of Canada takes its privacy and security obligations very seriously, and safeguards have been built into policies, procedures and technical systems. Technical safeguards are also in place to ensure that client information is collected, stored and transmitted securely using encryption.
- The Government of Canada works in collaboration with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada to ensure appropriate protection for applicants' personal information when collecting, using and sharing biometric information.
- Information will only be shared with partner countries in a manner that respects privacy laws, civil liberties and human rights.