



## Spot the Scammers: Red Flags When Choosing a Representative

Immigrating to Canada is a life-changing decision. The journey can be filled with complexities, so many seek help from a representative. Unfortunately, many hopeful immigrants fall victim to unauthorized practitioners (UAPs) who take advantage of their dreams. To protect yourself, it's essential to recognize the warning signs of scammers. Here are some key red flags to watch out for when choosing a representative.

### 1. They Are Not Allowed to Represent You

If someone claims to be an immigration consultant, he/she must be licensed by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants ([CICC](#)). If a consultant is not listed on the CICC [Public Register](#), they are NOT an immigration consultant. If they charge you, then they operate illegally. Be wary of individuals who claim they don't need a license or who refuse to provide proof of their credentials.

### 2. They Guarantee a Visa or Result of an Application

Immigration consultants are not allowed to guarantee a visa, permanent residency, or any successful immigration results. Immigration applications are reviewed by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada ([IRCC](#)), and decisions are made based on eligibility and admissibility criteria by IRCC officers. If someone promises a "100% success rate," it's a scam.

### 3. They Fail to Issue You Receipts for Payments and Invoices for Services Rendered

Immigration consultants must issue you a receipt upon receiving funds from you. They must also issue you an invoice when charging you for the services rendered by them. Ignoring the issuance of receipts or invoices is a red flag.

### 4. They Pressure You to Act Quickly

Scammers often create a false sense of urgency, saying that a special program is closing soon or that immediate payment is required to secure a spot. Genuine immigration processes take time, and there is no need to rush into decisions without proper verification.

### 7. They Offer Fake Job Offers or LMIA Approvals



Some scammers promise jobs in Canada and provide fake Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIA), or fraudulent job offers in exchange for payment. Always verify job offers by directly contacting the employer or reaching out to the government's employment service offices to inquire about the employment standards. Note, that workers are to be paid for their work and not supposed to pay employers or any third parties for a job arrangement.

### **8. Check if Your Representative Includes the IMM5476 Form**

The [IMM5476 form](#) is required for authorized representatives. Unauthorized practitioners (UAPs) often avoid using this form because they cannot claim to be uncompensated representatives, nor can they list themselves as compensated without a valid RCIC or lawyer identification number.

### **How to Protect Yourself**

- ✓ Verify the immigration consultant's license on the CICC public register before engaging their services.
- ✓ Report suspicious activity to the CICC, IRCC, or the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.
- ✓ Read your contract carefully and ensure it meets the requirements of the Code of Professional Conduct (which is mandatory for the immigration consultant to provide you with a copy), including outlining services, fees, and responsibilities.
- ✓ Do your research and seek advice from trustworthy sources, such as the Government of Canada's official web page, "[Learn about representatives.](#)"

### **Final Thoughts**

Immigration fraud can have devastating consequences, including financial loss, legal troubles, and so on. By recognizing these red flags and avoiding working with UAPs, you can protect yourself from scams and ensure a safe and legitimate immigration process.

If you suspect immigration fraud, report it immediately to the [Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre \(1-888-495-8501\)](#) or visit [www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca](http://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca).