

Family sponsorship: obligations and duration

IMPORTANT: The legal information contained in this sheet is intended clarify the role, responsibilities and duration of the sponsor's undertaking in family sponsorship in Canada. **Elle ne vise pas à servir de conseils juridiques ou à remplacer l'avis juridique donné par une avocate ou un avocat. IMPORTANT: It is not intended to serve as legal advice or to replace the legal opinion provided by a lawyer.**

UNDERTAKING AS A SPONSOR

Definition

When you sponsor a family member, you sign a **sponsorship agreement** to the Canadian government to **ensure their financial support and integration into Canada.**

In other words: **you are legally committed to providing for their basic needs for a certain period.**

DURATION OF THE UNDERTAKING

Mandatory Support Period

The **table** below provides a clear and quick summary of the sponsor's undertaking duration according to their relationship with the sponsored person:

Sponsored person	Duration of the sponsor's undertaking
Spouse / Common-law Partner	3 years from the date of permanent residence
Dependent child (under 22 years of age)	Until the child reaches 22 years of age or becomes independent
Dependent child (over 22 years old, disabled)	Indefinite as long as the child remains dependent
Parent or grandparent	20 years from the date of permanent residence
Other family members (special cases)	Varies by type of sponsorship and age, often up to 10 years

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPONSOR

Essential points before you commit

For the duration of the **undertaking**, the **sponsor** must provide the **sponsored person with** housing, **food, clothing, medical care** and **essential services**, as well as all other **basic needs**. Even if the **sponsored person** is receiving **social assistance**, the **sponsor** may be required to **repay** that assistance.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPONSOR

Understanding your undertakings to IRCC

The sponsor must sign a **sponsorship agreement** with IRCC, meet all financial and moral obligations, or risk assuming financial responsibility and being barred from sponsorship in the future.

IMPORTANCE OF SPONSOR UNDERTAKING

Guarantee the support of the sponsored person and respect the law

The **undertaking** protects the **Canadian government** and ensures that the **sponsored person** will not be left without **support**. It clarifies the **sponsor's obligations** to prevent any **misunderstandings** or **disputes**. This undertaking is **legally binding**: failure to comply may result in **penalties**, including **repayment of social assistance**.

The Ontario Legal Information Centre provides free confidential legal information and referral services to persons whose legal issue is in Ontario. The Centre offers services in French and in English. Make an **appointment online** or call us at 1-844-343-7462 (toll-free).



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