



International Student Guide: Bringing Family to Canada

It may be possible for your family members to live with you in Canada while you study. Usually, “family” includes spouses, common-law/conjugal partners, and dependent children. If your family members enter Canada without you, they may be admitted on visitor status for up to six months. They may need to complete a medical examination in advance. Each family member requires an [Electronic Travel Authorization](#) (eTA) or [Visitor Visa](#) (also known as a Temporary Resident Visa – TRV) –depending on their situation.

If you are accompanied by family members while attending NSCC you must ensure your dependents and/or spouse have all the required immigration documents. It is recommended that your dependents request a [Visitor Record](#) upon entering Canada. This document will allow your dependents and/or spouse to renew their visitor status online. To ensure that family members traveling without you are admitted to Canada as visitors for the same length as your study permit, send them copies of your study permit, visitor visa (if you have one), and passport. They can present these to the authorities at the Canadian port of entry (airport or border crossing).

Spousal open work permit:

As of March 19, 2024, partners and spouses of international students in undergraduate and college programs will **no longer be eligible** for spousal open work permits. The [IRCC website](#) has more information about this policy change.

Please visit the IRCC website to determine the eligibility for open work permits for spouses of international students.

Who may apply for a work permit:

- *Spouses and common-law partners of full-time students in graduate programs (master’s and doctorate) in a university or polytechnic institution*
- *Spouses and common-law partners of full-time students in professional degree programs in a university (e.g., medicine, dentistry, law)*
- *Spouses and common-law partners who hold a valid open work permit and who are extending their work permit as spouses of full-time students **in a post-graduation work permit (PGWP) eligible program of study at a PGWP-eligible designated learning institution.***

Applicants extending their current open work permit are eligible for an open work permit under this stream. In such cases, the principal applicant must meet the requirements that were in place before March 19, 2024.

[Spouses and common-law partners of study permit holders – \[R205\(c\)\(ii\) – C42\]– Canadian interest – International Mobility Program](#)

So, if your spouse holds a work permit issued before March 19, 2024, they may apply to extend it while you are still enrolled as a student.

Spouses and partners of international students who are no longer eligible for a spousal open work permit can apply for another type of [work permit](#) or a [visitor visa](#) (TRV). However, visitors to Canada are not permitted to work.

Spouses of students can apply for an open work permit once the students receives their Post Graduation Work permit (PGWP) and meet certain requirements. View [Open work permits for family members of foreign workers: Who can apply](#)

Minor Children in Canada:

(Under the age of 19 in Nova Scotia)

Children who will be attending preschool or Grade Primary (under six years of age) do not need a study permit. If your children will accompany you to Canada with the intent to study at a Canadian school, they must apply for a study permit before coming to Canada. They do not require a letter of acceptance for this application as long as one or both parents hold a study or work permit.

Please view further information provided by IRCC on studying in Canada as a minor:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/prepare/minor-children.html>

Traveling with Minor Children

“Border services officers are on alert for children who need protection and check very carefully for missing or runaway children. They may question you about children who come with you to Canada or question a child who travels alone. Make sure you have the proper documents with you.”

If you are traveling with your minor children without your spouse, you must present the following documents:

- A copy of the child’s birth certificate
- A letter of authorization signed by the parent who is not traveling, containing their address and telephone number in English or French, if possible
- A photocopy of the non-accompanying parent’s signed passport or national identity card

Please view further information provided by IRCC on traveling with minor children:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/minor-children-travelling-canada.html>