

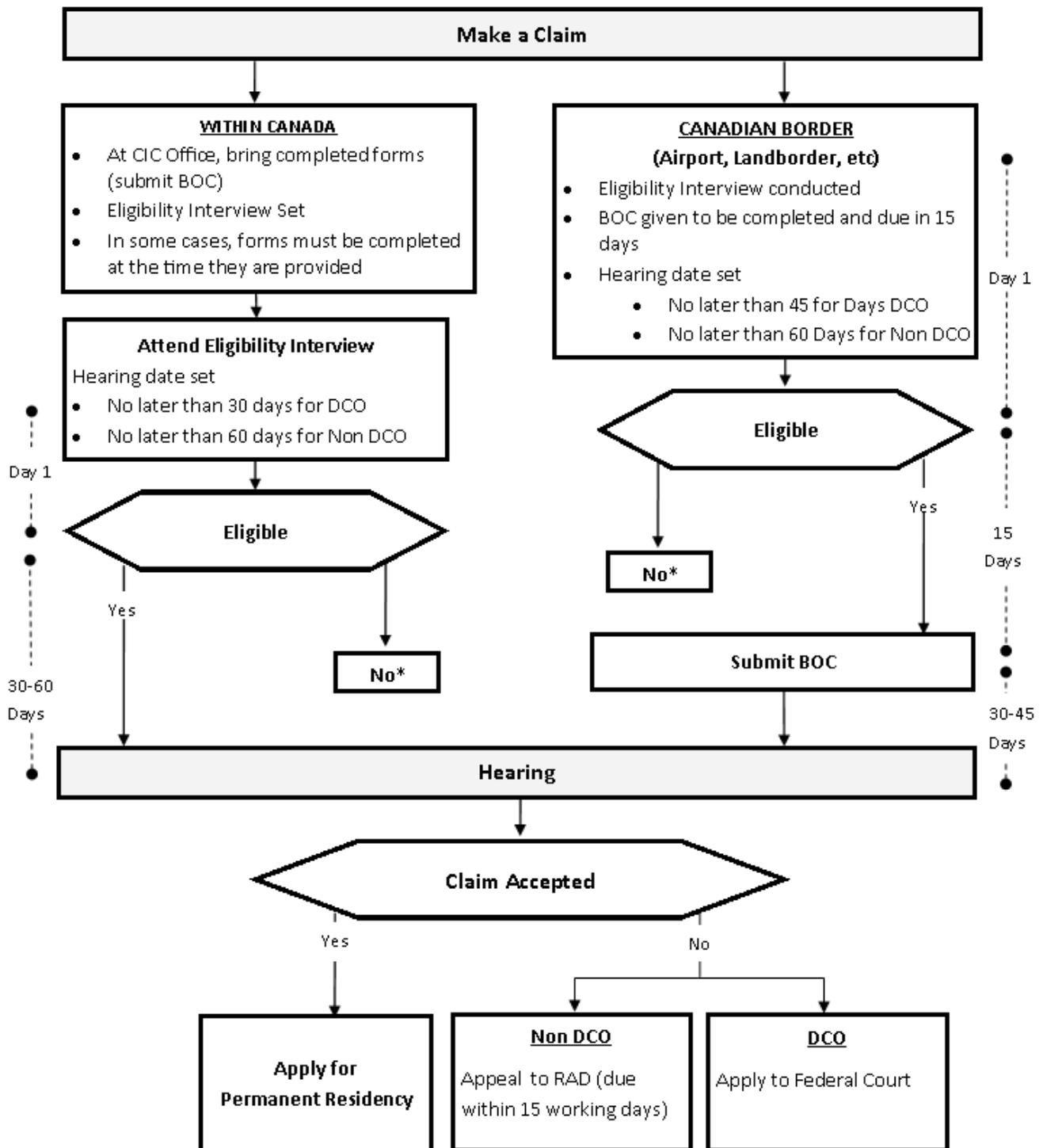
# The Refugee Claim Process in Canada

As of December 15, 2012

Under Canada's immigration laws, a person in Canada can claim status as a Convention Refugee or a Person in Need of Protection.

- Convention Refugees are people who are outside of their country who have a well-founded fear of persecution due to their race, religion, political opinion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group.
- Persons in Need of Protection are people who face torture, risk to life, or risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, if they return to their country of nationality or residence.

Every eligible refugee claimant receives a hearing at the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada-Refugee Protection Division (IRB-RPD). A claimant may be categorized as an individual from a **Designated Country of Origin** (DCO). Refugee claimants from DCO countries should be aware that timelines and appeal opportunities differ from claimants from non-DCO countries.



CIC—Citizenship & Immigration Canada  
 BOC—Basis of Claim Form  
 DCO—Designated Country of Origin  
 Non DCO—Non Designated Country of Origin  
 RAD—Refugee Appeal Division

**\*For more information call First Contact:**  
 Local: 604 787-8858  
 Toll Free: 1-866-771-8858



## Starting a Refugee Claim from within Canada

**Legal Support and Refugee Serving Agencies:** Before you start your refugee claim, you should contact a legal counsel and/or a settlement agency for assistance and information. If you cannot afford a lawyer you can apply for legal aid in Greater Vancouver call 604 601-6076, elsewhere in BC call 1-888-6016076

If you did not make a refugee claim when you entered Canada, you must complete the following steps.

1. Obtain the forms from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The forms must be completed in English or French and submitted to CIC.
2. Attend an intake appointment at CIC at 1148 Hornby Street in Vancouver. At the intake appointment your forms will be reviewed and an eligibility interview will be scheduled.
3. At the eligibility interview a CIC officer will give you a date for your refugee hearing at the Immigration and Refugee Board.  
If you are from a Designated Country of Origin (DCO) your hearing will be schedule within **30 days** from the date of your eligibility interview.  
If you are from a Non-Designated Country of Origin (Non DCO) your hearing will be schedule within 60 days from the date of your eligibility interview.

If you do not have a lawyer already you should contact one to assist you with your hearing. If you cannot afford a lawyer you can apply for legal aid in Greater Vancouver call 604 601-6076, elsewhere in BC call 1-888-6016076.

4. Submit evidence to the IRB-RPD no later than 10 days prior to your refugee hearing.
5. Attend your IRB-RPD hearing.

## Starting a Refugee Claim at the airport, land border or other point of entry (POE)

If you make a refugee claim when you entered Canada, you will need to complete the following steps once you have completed the eligibility interview with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA).

1. Fill out the Basis of the Claim form. This form is **due 15 days** after the eligibility interview with a CBSA officer. This is an important deadline. The form should be completed in French or English and submitted to the Immigration and Refugee Board in person, by fax or by courier. Do not send via regular mail.

**Legal Support and Refugee Serving Agencies:** Before you start your refugee claim, you should contact a legal counsel and/or a settlement agency for assistance and information. If you cannot afford a lawyer you can apply for legal aid in Greater Vancouver call 604 601-6076, elsewhere in BC call 1-888-6016076

2. Submit evidence to the IRB-RPD no later than 10 days prior to your refugee hearing.
3. Attend your hearing.
  - i. If you are from a Designated Country of Origin (DCO) your hearing will be scheduled for within **45 days** of your eligibility interview.
  - ii. If you are from a Non-Designated Country of Origin (Non DCO) your hearing will be schedule within 60 days of your eligibility interview.

For more information and/or inquiries on resources and services available to you, please contact the First Contact Program at the Canadian Red Cross.

**Local: 604-787-8858**  
**Toll Free: 1-866-771-8858**

The First Contact Program is a multilingual phone line available 24 hours a day.

