



INTERVIEW PREPARATION



A GUIDE TO VISA OFFICE INTERVIEW PREPARATION

The interview is one of the most significant steps in your journey to Canada. It is the moment when your written application becomes a personal conversation. Typically, you will be invited to this meeting by a Canadian Visa Office via email or phone.

Why IRCC interview so important?

Because the visa officer's decision relies heavily on your conversation, preparation is key. The officer uses his time to understand three main things:

Goal	Key areas the officer is checking
Eligibility	Does your story align with the legal definition of a refugee?
Admissibility	Are there any health, security, or background concerns?
The Best Fit	Is resettlement to Canada the most effective solution for your future?

How this guide helps you

Think of this document as your roadmap. Since your interview performance is a deciding factor in your application, we have broken our recommendations into three clear phases to help you feel confident and organized:

- **Before the interview:** How to review your story, organize your original documents, and prepare yourself mentally.
- **During the Interview:** Tips for communicating clearly with an officer, using an interpreter, and the importance of being detailed and honest.
- **After the Interview:** What to expect regarding timelines and how to handle the next steps in the process.



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BEFORE INTERVIEW

Preparing for your interview is the most important step in your journey. Use this guide to make sure your information is ready and your story is clear.

Step 1: The Document Checklist

Review the application forms you sent to IRCC. If you are missing these copies, contact your sponsors immediately. Here are some strategic points to look at when checking your documents:

- **Family Updates:** Is the information about your family still correct? You must report any new marriages, births, or deaths.
- **The "Full List":** Check that every family member is listed—including your spouse and all children under 22. Even if a family member is missing or deceased, their name must be on the forms.
- **Contact Details:** Ensure your phone number and email address are correct. If these are wrong, you will not receive your interview invitation.
- **Fact-checking:** Double-check your history of addresses and jobs. If you find a mistake, tell your sponsor right away to update the Visa Office.

Step 2: Gather your proof

Collect these documents to support your application. Having these ready will make your case stronger.

Category	What to include?
Personal ID	Passports, ID cards, and refugee registration documents/papers.
Family Proof	Birth, marriage, and divorce certificates.
Your Story	News articles, police reports, or letters from friends.
Official Documents	Anything from the UNHCR or your current government.
Health Record	Medical records or reports from a doctor or psychologist.



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Step 3: Master your story

The visa officer will compare what you say in the interview to what you wrote in your application (specifically the Schedule 2 form).

- **Be accurate:** read your written story several times. Ensure all dates and locations are exactly as they happened.
- **Create a Memory Aid:** Write down a timeline of "Who, What, Where, and When." This helps you stay calm if you get nervous during the interview.
- **Practice Interview:** Exercise answering questions with someone you trust. Explain why you left your country and what challenges you face now.
- **Correcting Errors:** If you realize you forgot an important detail or made a mistake in your written story, you must notify the Visa Office and your sponsor in writing before the interview.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

The visa interview is one of the most significant steps in your journey toward a safe and stable future. While the process can feel intimidating, approaching it with a simple strategy will help you share your experiences effectively and authentically. Being well-prepared is the best way to stay calm and focused, ensuring that every detail of your story is communicated with the clarity it deserves.

The visa officer will ask about your refugee story, education, work experience, and why you cannot return home. Here are some strategic points that you need to keep in mind:

- **Be on time:** Arrive at the specified location before your scheduled time.
- **Bring your forms:** Carry the original versions of all your documents. If a document is not in English or French, you must bring a translated copy.
- **Be truthful:** Always tell the truth and do not exaggerate. Giving false information can lead to your application being rejected.
- **Speak Clearly:** Give answers that are direct and easy to understand. If you do not understand a question, ask the officer to repeat or rephrase it.
- **Explain Everything:** Do not assume the officer knows your culture or the specific dangers you face. Explain any traditions or risks that are important to your story.
- **Take care of yourself:** If you feel very nervous or upset, you are allowed to ask for a short break to compose yourself.



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Rights of Refugees during the Interview

If you do not speak English or French well, an interpreter will be provided.

- **Verify Understanding:** Ensure you and the interpreter understand each other clearly at the start.
- **Speak in Short Parts:** Give your answers in small pieces so the interpreter can translate every word accurately.
- **Correct Mistakes Immediately:** If the interpreter makes a mistake or forgets something you said, tell the Visa Officer right away.
- **Gender Preferences:** If you feel uncomfortable talking about your story with someone of a different gender, you can politely ask for an interpreter of your own gender.

AFTER INTERVIEW

The application process remains active even after your interview concludes. Taking the following professional steps will help ensure your file remains accurate and well-managed.

- **Anticipate Processing Timelines:** Immediate decisions are rare. Most officers require additional time to verify statements and conduct a final review of your documentation.
- **Submit Supplemental Information:** If you realize a significant fact was missing or you receive new supporting documents, submit this information in writing to the Visa Office and your sponsors immediately. Promptly correcting the record demonstrates transparency and diligence.
- **Maintain Detailed Records:** While the details are fresh, immediately document the following:
 - **Interview Summary:** The overall tone and key themes discussed.
 - **Q&A Log:** A precise list of the questions asked and the specific answers you provided. *(This record is essential if you need to clarify statements or address follow-up inquiries later.)*

