
FACTSHEET

[July 30, 2009]

Ministry of Housing and Social Development

SPONSORSHIP DEFAULT RECOVERY PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

- Canadian citizens and permanent residents who sponsor family members to come and live permanently in Canada sign a sponsorship undertaking (undertaking) with the federal government in which they promise to provide medical, financial and other basic supports to their relatives for a period of three to 10 years to help them settle into Canada.
- The undertaking is a legal document and a condition for sponsoring family members into Canada.
- The undertaking specifically states that a sponsored relative will not require provincial social assistance and that any assistance paid to their sponsored relative is a debt owed by their sponsor to the province.
- The undertaking period begins when the sponsored relative:
 - enters Canada with a temporary resident permit (when outside Canada);
 - obtains a temporary resident permit (when in Canada); or
 - becomes a permanent resident.
- The undertaking remains in effect for the period consented, even if there is a change in circumstances or problems within the family (e.g. divorce, job change, unemployment, relationship breakdown, and/or attending school, etc.).
- The undertaking does not end if the sponsored relative is granted Canadian citizenship.
- The federal-provincial agreement allows the BC government to recover income assistance payments from sponsors who have defaulted on their sponsorship obligation.
- Where there is substantiated allegation of abuse by a sponsored relative or a sponsor, the government suspends collection of the sponsorship debt until circumstances change and it is safe to proceed with collection. The sponsorship debt will remain in default until assistance payments are repaid to the satisfaction of BC.

SPONSORSHIP DEFAULT RECOVERY

- The collection of all debts owing to the government is guided by the [Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code](#).
- Collection is based on the individuals' ability to pay, which is determined by reviewing the individual's income and expenses as well as assets and liabilities.
- The provincial government, through the Ministry of Finance (FIN), actively collects on sponsorship default debt.
- Sponsors are encouraged to contact FIN to discuss their debt and payment options available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The Ministry of Housing and Social Development, SDRP:

1-877-815-2363 – Option #6

Ministry of Finance, Debt Collection:

1-877-405-4911

Citizenship Immigration Canada:

1-888-242-2100