

If you have a pre-existing medical condition that could present a problem while you are outside Canada, it is wise to wear a MedicAlert® bracelet. Through the MedicAlert® Foundation, your vital medical facts become part of a database that can be accessed 24 hours a day from anywhere in the world.

Documentation

Once you have decided to leave Canada and have chosen a destination, make sure your passport, any visas you require and other travel documents are in order, including those concerning your status in your new country.

A valid passport is essential. It will expedite immigration procedures and is useful for other purposes, such as opening bank accounts and cashing traveller's cheques. If your passport will expire while you are abroad, make plans to renew it on time.

Be sure that, when you leave, you have copies of all essential records. You may need these later to clarify your tax status. And keep in mind that you may come home sooner than you planned.

Make sure that you know how to contact the nearest Canadian government office in the country you have chosen for retirement in case you run into difficulties.

Travel Arrangements

Canadians are generally familiar with the relatively low cost of travel to popular vacation destinations. However, these rates usually involve charter flights that originate in Canada and are available only on a seasonal basis. In addition, direct flights to Canada are not available from many popular destinations on a year-round basis.

Many countries require foreign visitors to have a valid return ticket. This means a paid ticket with a return date within the time limits allowed by immigration authorities. A full-fare return ticket with an open travel date is generally acceptable, but an unused return portion of a charter flight ticket is not. You may need to purchase expensive one-way open tickets connecting through other countries to satisfy immigration authorities, even if your application for residency is pending. If you have to make an unplanned trip home for family or personal reasons, be prepared to pay