

The Citizenship Handbook

A GUIDE TO DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CANADIANS



B.C. Civil Liberties Association

Murray Mollard

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This edition of the *Handbook* reflects a shift in focus that was made to reflect the opportunity to promote its use to a larger audience. Some references to new Canadians have been removed making this edition more accessible to all Canadians, native born or immigrant.

Murray Mollard
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Preface

This *Handbook* is designed to help young Canadians, people who have received their Canadian citizenship or those who hope to become citizens soon. Citizens of Canada have special rights and responsibilities which visitors to our country do not share.

This *Handbook* therefore does not discuss the specific rights and responsibilities of:

- ✓ landed immigrants
- ✓ refugee claimants, and
- ✓ those holding a temporary visitor or residence visa.

However, they still may find this *Handbook* useful if they want to understand citizenship in Canada. It may also be useful to native-born Canadians, who often take their democratic rights and responsibilities for granted.

We hope that the information and advice in this Handbook encourages you to participate fully in the democratic life of Canada.

Readers should know that *The Citizenship Handbook* is also available in Punjabi and Vietnamese.

- i** The English version is available on-line at www.bccla.org/05pubs.html.

If you have any suggestions on how the *Handbook* might be improved, please contact the B.C. Civil Liberties Association.

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association is a non-profit, non-partisan charitable organization that works to protect the civil liberties of Canadians. The BCCLA accepts complaints from the public, undertakes law reform and public education and occasionally goes to court to fight for our freedoms.

As you will discover, Canada encourages you to share your ideas and perspectives.

How This Book Works

We have divided this *Handbook* into six chapters:

- ☑ *Chapter 1 introduces the topic of citizenship.*
- ☑ *Chapter 2 discusses values Canadians share.*
- ☑ *Chapter 3 explains Canada's political systems.*
- ☑ *Chapter 4 talks about the protection of your rights and freedoms.*
- ☑ *Chapter 5 gives advice on making the political system work for you.*
- ☑ *Chapter 6 describes your rights and responsibilities in dealing with government agencies.*
- ☑ *Chapter 7 lists free legal resources.*