

## What if I am at risk of abuse?

- If according to you or to the family member who you sponsor, collection of the sponsorship debt would cause a risk of abuse by a family member, MEIA might give you more time to make a payment.
- MEIA is very concerned about risks to your safety and health and will ask for the following evidence:
  - » Allegations of abuse must be backed up by proof, such as a police report, hospital or medical report, or court order.
  - » You will have to start repaying again when MEIA determines that the risk no longer exists.
  - » Your case will be reviewed at least once a year to see if the risk still exists.
  - » Temporarily stopping the collection does not cancel the debt or prevent more debt and interest from accumulating.

## Where can I get more information?

- **Sponsorship Program Information**

Citizenship and Immigration  
Canada

Phone: **1-888-242-2100**

[www.cic.gc.ca/English/sponsor/index.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/sponsor/index.html)

- **Sponsorship Default Information**

Ministry of Employment and  
Income Assistance

Phone: **1-877-815-2363**

[www.eia.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/2005/Sponsorship\\_Default.htm](http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/2005/Sponsorship_Default.htm)



# Family Class Sponsorship: Defaulting on an Undertaking



## What is family class sponsorship? What are my responsibilities as a sponsor?

- If you are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, you can sponsor your immediate family members (spouse, children, parents, grandparents) to immigrate to Canada. As a sponsor, you will sign a **family class sponsorship undertaking**. This undertaking makes you responsible for giving your sponsored family member basic support (medical, financial, etc.) for up to 10 years.
- If you do not meet the sponsorship income requirements but wish to sponsor your family member, the undertaking can also be signed by your spouse or common-law partner, who takes on the same responsibilities as you.
- By signing the undertaking, you also agree to repay any income assistance your sponsored family member requests and receives from the provincial government during the term of the undertaking (up to 10 years). This is called a **sponsorship default debt**.

- It is up to you, not your family member, to repay the debt to the provincial government. If you do not repay a sponsorship debt, you may not be able to sponsor more family members in the future.
- By signing the undertaking, you are stating that you understand what you have read, and that you have requested and received explanation about anything you did not understand.
- The family class sponsorship undertaking is legally binding and lasts for the entire sponsorship period (up to 10 years).
- As a sponsor, you are responsible for your family member, even if there is a change in circumstances or there are changes/problems within your family, such as a marriage breakdown.

## What if my sponsored family member applies for income assistance from the provincial government?

- The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA) will tell you that the family

member has requested provincial government assistance and will check to see if you can financially support your family member even if that person is not living with you. If you can provide support, you will be financially responsible for your family member and the provincial government will not provide financial assistance to the person. If your family member is approved for assistance, then you are in default of your undertaking and **the debt becomes your responsibility**. The British Columbia Ministry of Small Business and Revenue will collect the debt from you. Interest may begin to be added to the debt amount as soon as you receive a collection letter.

- Being a sponsor under a family class sponsorship or being in default of a sponsorship undertaking does not affect your own eligibility for provincial income assistance.