Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
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Archived: June 3, 2025 9:29:03 AM
From: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC)
Sent: Thu, 10 Apr 2025 14:22:40
To:
Cc: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC)
Subject: FW: Wet Ink Signatures - REP-B-2025-0290 - Due 7-May-25
Importance: Normal
Sensitivity: None

Good day,

[redacted] **Immigration Representatives Mailbox.**

Please note that this mailbox is intended for general guidance and does not provide responses to case-specific inquiries but have provided the following information as guidance. If you have case specific questions about a file, you are encouraged to submit the IRCC Web form.

Please see our response to your question.

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Changes to acceptable signatures on the Use of a Representative Form (IMM 5476) are aligned with the new version of the form (01-2025). Changes are impacted by technical formatting restrictions and risks of fraudulent signatures. Guidance on acceptable signatures for the IMM 5476 can be found at this link. You can find a table outlining what signatures are acceptable based on the method of submission of the IMM 5476. These scenarios are specific to a new IMM 5476 being submitted. To find this table, scroll to the bottom of the page, selecting "show instructions" and "Section E – Your Declaration". A screenshot of the table is also included here, for your convenience:

The form is **signed** by the applicant and representative **submitted through a portal or secure account**	**Hand signature (also called a wet signature)**: Print and sign the form by hand. **E-Signature**: Any type of insert on PDF forms: • Typed name • Adobe's Fill & Sign or DocuSign (or other 3rd party app/software) • Scan or an image of a signature • Check box as indicated **Thumbprint**: acceptable if a person is illiterate or cannot make a mark (e.g., an X) for a physical reason.
The form is **signed** by the applicant and representative **submitted outside a portal or secure account**	**Hand signature (also called a wet signature)**: Print and sign the form by hand. • Note: This can be submitted via a scanned document. **Thumbprint**: acceptable if a person is illiterate or cannot make a mark (e.g., an X) for a physical reason.

IRCC continues to encourage digital submissions. IRCC continues to accept a variety of e-signatures on the IMM 5476 when the form is submitted through a portal or secure account, as outlined in the table. Currently, no type of e-signature is accepted on the IMM 5476 when it is submitted to IRCC outside of a portal or secure account, to mitigate risks of fraudulent e-signatures. Portal and secure accounts offer an additional layer of identity authentication to allow for this wider variety of signatures (including e-signatures) to be accepted, which does not exist outside of these accounts (e.g. webform).

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[redacted]

The Immigration Representatives Mailbox

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From:
Sent: [redacted] 3, 2025 12:44 PM
To: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC) <IRCC.ImmigrationRepresentatives-Representantsimmigration.[redacted] Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC)
[redacted]
Subject: Wet Ink Signatures

> **CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the Government of Canada. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.
> **ATTENTION:** Ce courriel provient de l'extérieur du gouvernement du Canada. Ne cliquez pas sur les liens et n'ouvrez pas les pièces jointes sauf si vous reconnaissez l'expéditeur et sachez que le contenu est sûr.

[redacted]

My Party ID is and my RCIC number is

I am seeking clarification regarding the IRCC requirements for submitting Use of Representative forms via webforms, particularly regarding the necessity of wet ink signatures. The current instructions available online (https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/imm5476.html) are confusing, non-specific, and appear to contain grammatical errors, and incomplete sentences.

Previously, I have successfully utilized digitally signed representative forms, which offer enhanced security, efficiency, and environmental advantages over wet ink signatures. Recently, however, I received several responses requiring a wet ink signature without clearly explaining why this is necessary.

Security:

Wet ink signatures pose substantial security risks as they are easily replicated or misused, potentially exposing representatives to identity fraud. This is an issue I've already experienced professionally. Digital signatures provide significantly greater security, incorporating authentication measures, secure PDFs, and domain-linked verification with two-factor authentication.

Accessibility and Environmental Impact:

Mandating wet ink signatures requires unnecessary printing and scanning, resulting in wasted resources, increased costs, and inefficiency. This requirement seems contradictory to IRCC's broader promotion of encouraging digital submission and environmental responsibility.

Inconsistency and Unclear Guidance:

The instructions provided on the IRCC website lack clarity and consistency. The delineation of when digital signatures are accepted (e.g., application submissions via portals) and when wet ink signatures are mandated it appears in some cases (e.g., webform submissions) is ambiguous and unexplained.

Given these concerns, and the possibility that ambiguous and inexplicable procedural hurdles may prevent clear and effective communication with IRCC officers, especially when time of the essence which could prejudice applicants, could you please clarify:

1. 1. Where I can find explicit and definitive guidance regarding circumstances in which wet ink signatures are strictly necessary?

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2. 2. Whether an Access to Information request would provide insight into the rationale behind this policy?

3. 3. IRCC accommodates applicants who cannot submit electronically by allowing mail submissions; similarly, can accommodations be made for applicants and representatives who prioritize digital submissions, maintaining paper-free offices? Specifically, is there room to consistently accept digital signatures, considering their proven advantages in security, convenience, and sustainability and acceptability on some submissions but not on other types of submissions?

[redacted] addressing these concerns. I appreciate your clarification and guidance.

Sincerely,