

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] in the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, MAKE OATH AND SAY AS FOLLOWS:

1. I have personal knowledge of the matters included in this affidavit except where statements are made based on information and belief, in which case I verily believe them to be true.
2. I am 31 years old. I came to Canada from [REDACTED] in 2008 as a visitor to live with my ex-common law spouse, who is a Canadian citizen.
3. I have two children, a six year old daughter and a daughter who is almost two. Both of my children were born in Canada and are Canadian citizens. They reside with me and I am their primary caregiver as a single mother. I do not have any other family in Canada to help me with caregiving.
4. When I initially came to Canada, I obtained a work permit, which I held from approximately 2008 to 2010, when I went on maternity leave with my oldest daughter. After my work permit expired, I applied for permanent resident status through the Provincial Nominee Program, but my application was rejected.
5. In 2013, I applied for permanent resident status on the basis of humanitarian and compassionate grounds, but my application was again rejected. At that time, I was told to leave Canada and either leave my children here or take them without legal permission.
6. In late 2013, I re-applied for permanent resident status on the basis of humanitarian and compassionate grounds. That application was approved and I became a permanent resident of Canada in February 2016.

7. After I came to Canada in 2008, I resided with my now ex-spouse. When I had my children, I stayed at home to care for them. I was financially dependent on my spouse.
8. I left my ex-spouse because of physical abuse. After I left, I initially lived with my children in a transition house and then in second stage housing. When I left my ex-spouse, I did not know how difficult things would be.
9. When I had no legal status in Canada, I was not eligible for many public services and benefits because I did not meet the required immigration status criteria. For example, although I did have a work permit for part of the time, I did not qualify for a child care subsidy. Without a subsidy, I could not afford to pay for child care in addition to food and rent.
10. I could not afford child care which meant that I could not work more than sporadically, so after I applied for permanent resident status I began receiving and I still receive income assistance benefits. That was very stressful because I was told by immigration officials that, in order to improve my chances of getting permanent resident status, I needed show that I can support myself. I felt caught because relying on income assistance hurt my chance of getting status in Canada, but I could not work to support myself because I could not afford child care. The prospect of not being able to stay in Canada was incredibly stressful for me.
11. I receive approximately \$375 per month in income assistance after my subsidized rent is paid. I also receive approximately \$400 per month from my ex-spouse for child support. On that income, I need to pay for food, basic necessities, utilities, and transit.
12. Surviving on such a low income has been challenging. I visit the food bank or low cost stores when I can, although it requires a public transit trip to get there and sometimes I do not have transit fare. In the past, I sometimes rode the sky train without paying; I knew that it was illegal, but sometimes we needed the food.

13. I am currently still receiving income assistance, but I am now able to work a bit more. I work on an informal on-call basis as a cleaner and I take my youngest daughter with me when I clean houses. This reduces the amount of work I can secure because many people do not want my daughter present while I clean or think I will work slower, which will cost them more because I get paid by the hour.
14. My employment earnings vary depending on how many times in a month I am able to get work, but they range from about \$120 per month to over \$300 per month. Sometimes I work only a couple of times and my earnings are within the allowed earnings exemptions for income assistance, and sometimes I work more so some of my earnings are deducted off my next income assistance cheque.
15. I have not applied for a child care subsidy since I got permanent resident status because my youngest daughter is on the waitlist for a child care facility near our home. There are other child care options, but they are further from our house and it would be very difficult for me to drop off and pick up my older daughter from school, drop off and pick up my youngest daughter from child care, and work in a day, especially while relying on public transit.
- ~~16. When my daughter gets into to the child care facility she is waitlisted for, I think that I will qualify for a child care subsidy, but I know even the maximum subsidy will not cover the full cost, which will be approximately \$875 per month. I hope to be able to cover the addition cost, which will be at least \$245 per month, by working more.~~
17. I am currently waitlisted for English classes. Ideally, I would like to be able to go to school full time, but if I get into the classes, I hope to be able to work as well in order to cover basic necessities and the additional cost of child care.
18. Prior to getting legal status in Canada, I often felt very stressed and overwhelmed. It was incredibly difficult to not know whether I could stay in Canada with my children. At times I felt very angry.

