

## Part Four - Identity Certification

### Purpose:

The **Identity Certification** process certifies the applicant's identity. It allows a homeless or recently housed person to work with a Certifier **to verify their identity** and obtain acceptable supporting documents in order to apply for an Alberta Identification Card. To assist with verifying identity, alternate channels may be utilized. Alternate channels are options for fact-checking someone's identity through a trusted record or authority figure.

The Identity Certification process was developed because some homeless have difficulty getting government-issued photo identification through the regular process.

### So what is new with the Identity Certification process?

- 1) Expired or photo-copied documents can be accepted as part of identity verification.
- 2) A broadening of what documents can be used to verify identity (e.g. hospital records, records of incarceration) and the use of verified personal numbers (e.g. Indian Status Number, Alberta Health Care Number.)
- 3) To assist with verifying identity, alternative channels may be utilized.
  - Alternative channels are options for fact-checking someone's identity through a trusted record or authority figure.

The Identity Verification Document has instructions for using Alternative Channels.

### So what is identity verification?

Identity verification means confirming a person's legal name and date of birth.

### Once you've done that, you've verified a person's identity.

Certifiers are also required to verify their legal entitlement to be in Canada.

### Who can use the Identity Certification Policy?

#### Eligible Applicants

- **Eligibility for the Identity Certification Form is limited to applicants who are: 1) residents of Alberta, 2) 18 years or older and 3) currently or recently homeless and 4) who have resided in Alberta for at least 90 days.**
- The applicant must not have documentary proof of their identity and must have permission to receive mail and legal notices at the agency certifying the form.

A resident of Alberta is a person who: is lawfully entitled to be or to remain in Canada; and makes his or her home in, and is ordinarily present in Alberta.

For the purposes of the Identity Certification Form a person is considered recently homeless if he or she was homeless at some time within the past six months.

## Tips:

- It is not required that the applicant has resided at the same shelter or address for 90 consecutive days – only that they have remained primarily in Alberta.
- Applicants can leave the province temporarily (e.g. take a two week holiday in BC) and still be considered a resident of Alberta if the applicant is ordinarily present in Alberta.

## Eligible Agencies

- **All HUA funded homeless serving agencies that are approved as 'Certifying Agencies.'**

## How it works:

1. The applicant and the Certifier work together to complete the verification of the applicant's identity.
  - An Identity Verification Document, which includes detailed instructions for using some alternative channels and on how to verify the applicant's identity, has been developed by HUA to assist service providers in completing identity verification of their client.
2. After the applicant's identity has been verified, the applicant, the Certifier and the agency's CEO or designate complete and signs the Identity Certification Form.
  - **If the Certifier is not confident that the applicant's identity has been verified, then the Certifier should refuse to certify their application.**
3. The applicant brings the completed Identity Certification Form to a Registry Agent when applying for an Alberta Identification Card. **It will serve as the proof of Alberta residence, proof of legal entitlement to be in Canada and proof of identity.**
  - To get ID, the applicant is still required to pay for the card.

The Certifier **must accompany the applicant to the Registry Agent** and must bring proof of employment and a piece of their own government-issued photo identification. The Registry Agent will check for the Certifier's proof of employment and will record their identification on the applicant's application for an Alberta Identification Card.

4. The Registry Agent may go to: [http://www.housing.alberta.ca/documents/Certified\\_Agency\\_List.pdf](http://www.housing.alberta.ca/documents/Certified_Agency_List.pdf) to verify that the agency is a Certifying Agency.
5. The ID may be mailed to the address of the agency that certifies the Identity Certification form or to the applicant's home. Either the agency's address or the applicant's address can be listed on the Alberta Identification Card.

## Legal implication for the applicant and the agency:

- For the applicant: It is a criminal offense to falsify information when applying for an Alberta Identification Card.
- For the Certifier and the agency's CEO or designate: It is a criminal offense to knowingly assist an individual with fraudulently obtaining an Alberta Identification Card.

## Agency Record-keeping:

- The agency must keep the Identity Certification Form, Steps 1, 2, and 5 of the Identity Verification Document and any accompanying documentation on file.
- All records must be kept for 7 years.

## Example of accompanying documentation:

- Email from a case manager from social services agency in Toronto who helped verify the applicant's identity;

**Example of what isn't accompanying documentation:**

- A photocopy of the applicant's birth certificate or any other personal records (which is unnecessary to keep on file for the purpose of this program.)

**FOIP:**

**Getting Permission to start**

Step 2 of the Identity Verification Document has a FOIP clause your client must sign to give you permission to begin working with their personal information.

**Verifying Identity**

For 'Trusted Records or Sources' without a program specific FOIP instructions and consent form, the Certifier must use the Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information Form to get their client's permission to contact that source.

This Form allows the Certifier to list ALL the 'Trusted Records or Sources' the Certifier may pursue while doing identity verification work and for the applicant to authorize the Certifier to work with the listed organizations or individuals on the form.

The applicant's authorization will expire one year after the client leaves the program.

**Q & A on the Identity Certification Process**

**1) Is there a minimum due diligence in verifying identity?**

Due to the enormous variation in clients and in the means of doing identity verification, HUA is not specifying exactly what constitutes 'identity verification.' Before certifying someone's identity, you should feel:

- Confident you know the person's true identity; and
- Confident you would be able to defend the process you used to confirm their identity, if necessary in a court of law.

The CEO or designate signing off on the application should also feel confident that the Certifier has done sufficient due diligence to verify the applicant's identity and legal entitlement to be in Canada.

**2) Please provide an example where enough secondary documentation constituted identity verification without obtaining a primary (photo) document?**

Example #1:

1. Photocopy of birth certificate, stamped by the BC government, saying it was taken from the original
2. Photocopy of SIN card, stamped by the BC government, saying it was taken from the original
3. Letter from Alberta Health and Wellness that confirms the client's health care number, name and address
4. Community Identification
5. Insurance papers with the client's name and birth date

Example #2:

1. Birth Certificate obtained by the Certifier (proof of legal entitlement to be in Canada);
2. Social Insurance Number;
3. Pay Stubbs; and
4. Court Documents and Custody Papers.

### 3) What happens in case that an agency is helping an applicant complete the Identity Certification process, but the applicant actually primarily resides at a different shelter?

The agency helping the applicant complete the Identity Certification process should get proof from the shelter that the applicant primarily resides there. The best practice is for the agency to use an Address Authorization Form completed by the shelter and the applicant as proof of the applicant's residence in Alberta. Then the agency should list the shelter's address on the Identity Certification Form.

The Alberta Identification card issued will list the shelter's address as the applicant's address.

### 4) What documents constitute legal entitlement to be in Canada?

All the documents that constitute legal entitlement to be in Canada are listed in the Identity Verification Document in Step 3.

For Canadian born citizens support documents that show legal entitlement to be in Canada include birth certificates, Operator's License or Identification cards, an Indian Status Card, a Metis Nation Card, or a Canadian passport.

For immigrants to Canada, support documents that show legal entitlement to be in Canada include a record or landing, an Immigration, Naturalization, or Permanent Resident card, a visitor record, a Canadian citizenship card or certificate, and Student or Employment authorization.

For the purposes of the Identity Certification process, photocopies and expired versions of the above documents can be used.

Since the ways of the Certifier completing identity verification, including verifying legal entitlement to be in Canada, are non-exhaustive, the Certifier may come across other ways of proving legal entitlement to be in Canada.

### 5) If I am contacting an Alternate Channel not included in the Identity Verification Document and which is not aware of the Identity Certification policy, how can I demonstrate that I am following a legitimate process to help my client get ID?

You can direct the organization to HUA's webpage here, <http://www.housing.alberta.ca/Obtaining%20Identification.cfm> which has information on the Identity Certification and Address Authorization processes.

### 6) If one agency has started the identity verification work and the client goes to another agency, is there a way the work can be transferred to the new agency?

Yes. To do so, the new agency (Agency #2) working with the client must fill out and have the client sign the Consent to Client File Transfer Form and send it to the agency (Agency #1) that was previously working with the client on identity verification. Upon receipt of this form, Agency #1 can release the client's file to Agency #2. **However, the person signing off on the final Identity Certification Form must take full responsibility for certifying the client's identity.**

This form can be found as a separate document on the sharepoint site.