

IF YOUR STATUS HAS LAPSED

Restoration of Status: What To Do, Step by Step

FREE GUIDE

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If your study permit, work permit, or visitor status has ended and you are still in Canada, you may be able to restore it, but only for a short window and only if you handle it correctly. This guide explains the deadline, what restoration actually restores, what you pay, and what to do if things go wrong. Read it fully, then use the checklist at the end.

1. The 90-day clock, and exactly when it runs out

You have **90 days from the day you lost status** to apply to restore it from inside Canada. The day you lost status is **Day 0**, and you count 90 days from there.

WHEN STATUS IS LOST ON A REFUSAL

If you were on maintained (implied) status while an application was being processed, for example you applied for a work permit after your study permit and it was refused, your status ends on the **date of that refusal decision**. That refusal date is your Day 0.

READ THIS TWICE

The deadline is measured in **UTC time**, and it ends at **00:00 UTC** at the close of your 90th day. In plain terms, treat your absolute cut-off as **8:00 pm Toronto time in summer** and **7:00 pm Toronto time in winter**. After that moment the ability to restore is gone for good. Do not aim for the last hour, submit at least a full day early.

2. What restoration actually restores

Restoration puts you back into the **status you last held**, barring some exceptions. You cannot use restoration to jump into a brand new status you never had. You also must still meet all the requirements of that status, and show you stopped the activity you were no longer allowed to do.

Example: if you lost your **study permit** status (or your post-study work permit application was refused and your maintained status ended), restoration is about restoring your **student** status. If you have a valid Letter of Acceptance, and a Provincial Attestation Letter where one is required, you can restore and keep studying.

3. What you actually pay (this surprises people)

Because restoration runs **through the status you last held**, the fees can stack. What you pay depends on the path you take. These are illustrative, so confirm the current amounts on IRCC before you pay:

Restore and keep studying	Restoration fee (\$246.25) + study permit fee
Restore, then get a PGWP	Restoration fee (\$246.25) + study permit fee + PGWP fee (work permit \$155 + open work permit holder \$100). You pay the study permit fee because your path to the PGWP runs through restoring the study permit you last held .
Switch to a visitor record	The least expensive route. A visitor record carries no separate work or study permit fee, so you are not stacking a permit fee on top.

CONFIRM THE NUMBERS

The restoration fee is currently **\$246.25 CAD**. The other permit fees change from time to time, so confirm the current amounts, and the exact combination for your path, on the official IRCC fee pages before you submit.

4. You may be able to get a work permit while you restore, not just your old status

Most people assume restoration only puts them back exactly where they were. In my practice that is not the full picture. If you independently qualify for a work permit, you can often apply to restore your status and apply for that work permit in the same package. You still pay the restoration fee, you still have to be inside the 90 day window, and you still have to qualify. Here are the situations I see most often.

You already submitted a PR application: Bridging Open Work Permit (BOWP)

If you received an Invitation to Apply and submitted your permanent residence application, for example through Express Entry, but lost status along the way, you may be able to restore and apply for a Bridging Open Work Permit at the same time. You come out of it with an open work permit that lets you keep working for almost any employer while your PR is processed.

What it needs	An eligible PR application already submitted, and you meet the BOWP conditions.
Fees (illustrative)	Restoration \$246.25 + work permit processing \$155 + open work permit holder \$100 = \$501.25 CAD . You restore and get the work permit in one package.

Your spouse studies or works here: Spousal Open Work Permit (SOWP)

If you are married to, or the common law partner of, someone who holds a study permit at the master's or professional degree level, or who holds an eligible work permit, and you yourself have an eligible job, you may be able to restore and apply for a spousal open work permit at the same time.

RULES TIGHTENED IN 2025

SOWP eligibility narrowed in 2025. The principal person's program level or occupation, and the requirements on your own job, both matter. Confirm you both still qualify before you file.

You have a job offer: a closed work permit

If you have an employer and a specific role, you may be able to restore and apply for a closed (employer specific) work permit:

- **Francophone Mobility.** If you have at least CLB 5 in French in listening and speaking and the job qualifies (outside Quebec, in an eligible skill level), you may be able to get a closed work permit without an LMIA.



- **LMIA based.** If your employer holds a positive Labour Market Impact Assessment for the role, you can apply for the tied work permit that goes with it.

THE COMMON THREAD

All of these still run through restoration, so you pay the \$246.25 restoration fee, you must file inside your 90 day window, and you must actually qualify for the new permit. Do not assume one of these fits you until it has been checked. If you are not sure which path is yours, book the free call at the end and I will tell you honestly.

5. Your first moves

1. **Pin down your Day 0** (last day of status, or the refusal date) and count your 90 days. Give yourself a buffer.
2. **Stop working or studying immediately.** Once your status ended you are not authorized to continue until you are restored. Continuing makes things worse.
3. **Decide your path:** restore your previous status, or switch to a visitor record to buy time.
4. **Apply online before Day 90**, through your IRCC account, with the right fees for your path.
5. **Keep proof of everything:** your exact submission date and time, receipts, and confirmation.

6. If your application was refused and you think it was wrong

If a decision looks improper, you can ask the officer to look again through a **request for reconsideration**. Do it **immediately**, and do it through the IRCC **web form**.

- Keep the tone **explanatory, convincing, and respectful**. Never aggressive. You are giving the officer a clean reason to revisit the file, not fighting them.
- In most cases you will get an acknowledgment that your reconsideration request has been **forwarded to the concerned officer** for review.
- The officer **may or may not** respond, and is not required to change the decision. Either way, it costs you little and it is worth doing.

7. If your restoration itself is refused

If the restoration application is refused, restoration is over. The right move is to **leave Canada** and look at applying again from outside through another route.

DO NOT OVERSTAY

Staying in Canada after a refusal, with no status, can make you **inadmissible for non-compliance under section 41 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act**, and can lead to a removal order. That is serious and hard to undo. If you are refused, get advice quickly and do not simply wait it out.

8. Quick self-check: are you on the right track?

Tick each box. If you can tick them all, you are likely on solid ground. If even one is unchecked, that is your signal to talk to a licensed consultant before you file.

- ☐ I know my exact Day 0, and I am still inside the 90-day window (with a buffer).
- ☐ I stopped working or studying the moment my status ended.
- ☐ I still meet the requirements of the status I am restoring (for study: valid LOA, and PAL if required).
- ☐ I know which path I am taking (restore previous status, or visitor record) and the fees for it.
- ☐ My situation has no added complications: no misrepresentation concern, no prior refusals I have not addressed, no enforcement history.
- ☐ If I was refused, I have filed a respectful reconsideration through the web form.

IF ANY BOX IS BLANK

Do not guess your way through it. A short call now is far cheaper than a wrong filing or a missed deadline.

Common questions

Can I stay while it processes? Generally yes, you can remain while a timely restoration application is being processed, but you must not work or study until it is approved.

What if it has been more than 90 days? Restoration from inside Canada is no longer available. You would look at leaving and applying from outside, and that is a situation to get advice on first.

Is restoration guaranteed if I apply in time? No. Applying in time keeps the door open, but the officer still decides, and you must meet every requirement.

Deadline close, or any wrinkle at all?

Restoration is unforgiving on timing and detail. If you are not sure, book a call and we will map the safest path before you file. Our full Restoration guide is coming soon.

[Book a consultation](#)

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