



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION NO.: **421-02028**

BY: **Ms. REMPEL (CALGARY NOSE HILL)**

DATE: **FEBRUARY 6, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **HONOURABLE AHMED HUSSEN**

Response by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Canadian citizenship

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

As part of the process of updating the Citizenship Study Guide, consultations are taking place with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure the revised content better represents Canadians and under-represented groups, including indigenous peoples, women, Black and racialized Canadians, LGBTQ2 Canadians, Francophones, and persons with disabilities.

Female Genital Mutilation is an abhorrent practice and it is against Canadian law. The Department would normally not comment on a product still under development, but given the interest in this specific issue, it is important to update Canadians on where we stand. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada can confirm that the new document will include information on Canada's laws against gender-based violence, including Female Genital Mutilation.

As consultations progress, the draft content of the guide continues to evolve to incorporate ongoing feedback. A launch date for the revised guide has not yet been determined. Until the revised guide is officially launched, *Discover Canada* remains the official study guide for the citizenship test.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship provides information and resources for newcomers at ports of entry and via service provider organizations. Immigrants receive IRCC's Welcome to Canada guide which includes information on gender equality, family violence and Canadian law, and states that harmful practices (honour killings, polygamy, female genital mutilation, forced marriages and other practices) are not tolerated in Canada.

The Department's Settlement Program provides funding to over 500 service provider organizations in communities across Canada to deliver settlement services to newcomers, of which more than half are women. Many of these organizations deliver settlement programming in the area of violence prevention and have strong community partnerships in place to ensure holistic programming for victims of abuse.

In addition, the Department has also developed a violence prevention resource for newcomers to Canada to get additional information into the hands of those who may need it. This discreet, small, multilingual resource card (business card size) contains key essential contact and emergency information and is intended for newcomer victims of abuse and settlement service provider organizations. The resource is available in English, French, Arabic, Punjabi, Mandarin, Chinese, Tagalog and Spanish.

Status of Women Canada is working with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to strengthen the intersectional gender lens used in the Citizenship Guide.

Through *It's time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence*, work will continue government wide to prevent and address this harmful practice, including pursuing research projects to better understand the scope of this issue.