

= Canadian Heraldic Authority =

The Canadian Heraldic Authority (CHA ; French : L'Autorité héraldique du Canada ) is part of the Canadian honours system under the Canadian monarch , whose authority is exercised by the Governor General of Canada . The authority is responsible for the creation and granting of new coats of arms ( armorial bearings ) , flags , and badges for Canadian citizens and corporate bodies . The authority also registers existing armorial bearings granted by other recognized heraldic authorities , approves military badges , flags , and other insignia of the Canadian Forces , and provides information on heraldic practices .

The CHA is the Canadian counterpart of the College of Arms in London , Court of the Lord Lyon in Scotland , and the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland in the Republic of Ireland and is well known for its innovative designs , many incorporating First Nations symbolism .

= = History = =

Prior to the creation of the Canadian Heraldic Authority , Canadians wishing to obtain a legally granted coat of arms had to apply to one of the two heraldic offices in the United Kingdom : either the College of Arms in London or the Court of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh . This process was quite lengthy ? and costly . In addition , the heralds of the College of Arms and the Court of the Lord Lyon could sometimes be unfamiliar with Canadian history and symbols . In time , many Canadians with an interest in heraldry began calling for an office which would offer armorial bearings designed by and for Canadians .

As early as 1967 , plans were reportedly in the works to transfer overview of heraldry from the College of Arms in the UK to Canada . The push for a wholly Canadian heraldic system came largely from the Heraldry Society of Canada ( now the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada ) almost from its inception , though it was not seen as a priority by successive national governments . In 1986 , Vicki Huntington , a politician from British Columbia , forwarded a brief written by the RHSC calling for the creation of the Canadian Heraldic Authority to a staff member in then @-@ Secretary of State David Crombie 's office . Mr. Crombie had his department organise a meeting in Ottawa the following year , to which many national and international heraldic experts were invited . The meeting concluded with " a strong recommendation to government that an Authority be created . "

Two years later , the Queen of Canada issued the 1988 letters patent authorising the governor general " to exercise or provide for the exercise of all powers and authorities lawfully belonging to Us as Queen of Canada in respect of the granting of armorial bearings in Canada " . These letters patent were presented by Prince Edward to the governor general on behalf of the Crown . Subsequently , the Governor General , Jeanne Sauv  , authorised the creation of the Canadian Heraldic Authority on 4 June 1988 . As a result , Canada became the first Commonwealth realm outside the United Kingdom to have its own heraldic authority . Canada also provides full equality to women in terms of inheriting and transmitting arms . Additionally , all armigers within Canada may file for trademark protection of their grant of arms under the Trade @-@ Marks Act .

= = Structure = =

The authority is located at Rideau Hall , the residence of the monarch and governor general . The governor general , as the personal representative of the Canadian sovereign , is the highest authority in Canadian heraldry . Below the governor general is the Herald Chancellor , a position held by the Secretary of the Governor General . The CHA is currently organized in an office called the Chancellery of Honours , the same office that issues Canadian orders and decorations , such as the Order of Canada . The deputy secretary that administers the Chancellery of Honours is also the Deputy Herald Chancellor .

The authority itself is headed by the Chief Herald of Canada , whose job is to oversee and direct all operations of the CHA , and bears the main responsibility of granting arms , though the governor general has the authority to grant arms directly . The position of chief herald was inaugurated by

Robert Watt at the inception of the CHA in 1988 and held by him until his retirement in 2007 . Since 26 June 2007 , the office of chief herald has been held by Claire Boudreau , formerly Saint @-@ Laurent Herald .

= = = Heralds of Arms = = =

Below the chief herald are the Heralds of Arms , full @-@ time workers at the CHA and considered part of the Public Service of Canada . The names of the various offices were taken from significant Canadian rivers . Though the titles are territorial designations , as per heraldic tradition , each herald serves the entire country . Each is assigned a badge of office . The Heralds of Arms are :

= = = Honorary positions = = =

The authority also allows for two types of honorary positions : Heralds Emeritus and Heralds Extraordinary . The emeritus title is reserved for Canadian heralds who have retired ; the title of extraordinary is an honorary position for those who have made notable contributions to heraldry . Honorary heralds can be enlisted by the CHA to perform work for them . Each honorary position grants the individual a badge and a title also based on a Canadian river .

Current holders of honorary positions

= = Obtaining arms = =

= = = Eligibility = = =

Any Canadian citizen or corporate body can petition for a grant of new arms or registration of existing arms . In general , eligibility for a grant of arms is based on an individual 's contributions to the community , although the exact criteria for grants or registrations have not been published . A number of grants have been made to people who have already been recognized with state honours for their notable achievements , such as through admission to the Order of Canada , and who are accordingly entitled to a grant of arms . Those who are Companions of the order may also request the chief herald to grant them supporters .

= = = Grant process = = =

In order to request either a coat of arms , flag , and / or badges , a letter must be addressed to the Chief Herald of Canada . The letter must clearly ask " to receive armorial bearings from the Canadian Crown under the powers exercised by the Governor General " and include proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence as well as a biography or curriculum vitae of the petitioner . Corporate petitions must include a brief history of the company , proof of incorporation in Canada , financial reports , and a copy of the corporation 's governing body resolution seeking a grant of arms .

The Chief Herald of Canada can approve or reject the petition . If the petition is approved , the authority to make the grant is given through a warrant signed by the Herald Chancellor or the Deputy Herald Chancellor . The authorisation is then sent to one of the heralds , and the process begins . The granting of arms is regarded as an honour from the monarch , via the governor general , and thus are bestowed only on those whom the Chief Herald has deemed individuals worthy of receiving a grant of arms .

First , the assigned herald develops a written description based on consultation with the petitioner . The petitioner then signs a contract with an artist at the authority to create the design . The Fraser Herald , serving as the CHA 's principal artist , must review the design . At all stages the documents must be approved by both the petitioner and the Chief Herald . The final step is to prepare the letters patent , the official notice of an award of arms , which includes a drawing of the armorial

bearings and the accompanying legal text and explanation of the symbolism of the bearings . Under Canadian bilingualism laws , letters patent are written in both English and French , though the petitioner may choose which language will be placed in the left column of the document .

Completed grant documents are recorded in the Public Register of Arms , Flags and Badges of Canada and the notice of the grant is published in the Canada Gazette , Part I , under the section " Government House " .

The Government of Canada requires that the above processes be financed by the petitioner ; that is the person requesting the grant or registration of arms , who pays the fees associated with the request and grant / registration . The processing fee for all petitioners is CAD \$ 435 ( plus GST ) , with the cost of one preliminary design ranging from \$ 200 to \$ 1 @, @ 000 . The cost of the final design , as illustrated on the letters patent , ranges from \$ 900 to \$ 3 @, @ 500 . In Canada , the petitioner does not " buy " a coat of arms , the arms themselves are freely given to qualified individuals , but fees must be paid to the heralds and artists for the services rendered . The average time needed to complete a grant is about 12 to 14 months , though it can take longer for particularly detailed or intricate arms .

= = = Registration of existing arms = = =

Those individuals and institutions who already possess legitimate awards of arms may apply to the Canadian Heraldic Authority to have their arms registered . There is no cost associated with application for registration and it takes less time , approximately three months , than application for a new award of arms .

= = The Authority 's armorial bearings = =

= = = Blazon = = =

The blazon , or technical description in heraldic language , of the full armorial bearings is below , along with its plain English description :

Crest

Upon a helmet mantled Gules doubled Argent within a wreath of these colours a lion passant guardant Or Royally Crowned Proper its dexter forepaw resting on an escutcheon Argent charged with a maple leaf Gules .

On top of a helmet with red and white mantling ( stylised cloth streamers , here further stylised to look like maple leaves , as in the national coat of arms ) stands a golden lion wearing a crown , holding in his paw a white shield with a red maple leaf .

Shield

Argent on a maple leaf Gules an escutcheon Argent .

On a white shield is a red maple leaf , upon which is another white shield .

Supporters

On a representation of an outcrop of the Canadian Shield proper strewn with maple leaves Gules and maple seeds Or two raven @-@ bears Gules over Argent wings elevated Gules beaked and armed Or .

A portion of the Canadian Shield is shown covered with red maple leaves and gold maple seeds . Standing upon this on either side are two red @-@ and @-@ white raven @-@ bears with golden beaks and claws .

Motto

HONORENTUR PATRIAM HONORANTES .

Let us honour those who honour our country .

= = = Symbolism and use = = =

The current arms of the authority were confirmed in a warrant by the Governor General on 15 January 1994 , in honour of the authority 's fifth anniversary , which was celebrated the previous year . The full armorial bearings of the Canadian Heraldic Authority incorporate aboriginal symbolism , as seen in the mythical raven @-@ bears , as well as the national symbol of the maple leaf and the traditional Canadian colours of red and white , which were made official by King George V in 1921 .

The crest is a modification of the Royal Crest of Canada : a lion wearing a crown and bearing a maple leaf . The crest of the authority features the same lion , instead holding a white shield containing a red maple leaf , symbolising the governor general 's authority under the Crown to grant armorial bearings to Canadians .

The shield itself is white with a red maple leaf , similar to the middle portion of the Canadian flag . The white shield upon the leaf represents " a sign of heraldry to be created and recorded for Canadians . "

The raven @-@ bears , a new heraldic beast which combined several creatures that are important to aboriginal symbolism , were proposed by the heralds in honour of the United Nations ' International Year of the World 's Indigenous Peoples , also occurring in 1993 . The raven @-@ bears are standing on an outcrop of what is known as the Canadian Shield , a geological formation which the authority foundation is based on . The Canadian Shield is formed by rocks , which are covered in red coloured maple leaves and by golden maple seeds . The motto that was chosen is Latin for Let us honour those who honour our country .

The shield and crest alone comprise the Badge of the CHA , which is used on the seal of the Authority and on the letters patent that grant and register armorial bearings . A wreath behind the arms is composed of red maple leaves bound with gold straps .