

To recognize the courage and exemplary conduct of individuals who come to the assistance of people whose lives are in danger, the Québec government adopted the Act to promote good citizenship on December 19, 1977.

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Tribute to Good Citizenship



Heroic Acts

Courageous individuals come from all walks of life and all share a deep-seated humanity.

Québec 

► **Québec Charter of human rights and freedoms**

Under section 2 of the Charter of human rights and freedoms, "Every human being whose life is in peril has a right to assistance. Every person must come to the aid of anyone whose life is in peril [...] unless it involves danger to himself [...]." To provide assistance to a person whose life is in danger is a civic duty. However, the Charter does not require citizens to do so at the risk of their own life.

► **The Good Samaritan rule**

People occasionally hesitate to help others for fear of aggravating an injured person's condition and exposing themselves to a damage suit. Under a special provision in the Civil Code of Québec (art. 1471), anyone who in good faith helps a person in danger is protected from legal proceedings. An individual may not be found liable for injury caused while assisting a person in danger unless the injury is a result of intentional or gross fault.

► **An Act to promote good citizenship**

When an intervention involves significant danger to the rescuer, it may, under the Act to promote good citizenship (R.S.Q., c. C-20), be recognized as an exceptional act of good citizenship and earn the rescuer a decoration or distinction from the Québec government. The act must have been performed in hazardous or difficult circumstances that put the rescuer's life in danger.

The Act also makes provision to compensate individuals who sustain bodily injury or property damage while performing an act of good citizenship.

► **Background**

The adoption of the Act to promote good citizenship was a direct consequence of an act of courage performed in 1973 when to avoid a tragedy, a Montréal taxi driver jumped from his taxi and grabbed the wheel of a runaway tractor semi-trailer on Saint-Urbain Street in Montréal. The driver was badly injured as a result of his courageous action.

► **Who may be recommended**

Can anyone be nominated for a good citizenship award? You may recommend anyone who, in dangerous or difficult circumstances, sometimes at the risk of his or her life, performed an act of good citizenship to help a person whose life was in danger.

► **How to nominate a person**

To nominate a person, simply complete the form and send it to the secretariat of the Comité sur le civisme (Committee on Good Citizenship). A person may not nominate himself or herself for recognition.

Please provide the following information:

- 1 Name, address and telephone number of the person
- 2 If the person is deceased, name of a relative or friend
- 3 Description of the act of good citizenship, including date and place of the event (use an extra sheet, if necessary)
- 4 Name, address and telephone number of witnesses
- 5 Name of any police (or other) service that made a report on the event
- 6 Name, address and telephone number of the person making the nomination

N.B. If necessary, this personal information will be given to an investigator assigned by the Ministère de la Justice.

► **Deadline**

Nominations must reach the secretariat of the Committee no later than May 1 of the current year and must concern courageous deeds performed between January 1 and December 31 of the preceding year.

► **Comité sur le civisme**

Composed of five members appointed by the Québec government, the Committee advises the Minister of Justice on the awarding of medals and honourable citations for good citizenship.

► **Medals and honourable citations**

The **médaille du civisme** (medal for good citizenship), accompanied by a gold lapel pin, may be awarded by the government to a person who performed an act of good citizenship in dangerous circumstances. Cast in bronze and engraved with the recipient's name, the medal symbolizes a person risking his life to save the life of another.

The term "dangerous circumstances" refers to circumstances in which the rescuer risks his or her life to save another.

The **mention d'honneur du civisme** (honourable citation for good citizenship), accompanied by a silver lapel pin, may be awarded by the government to an individual who performed an act of courage or dedication in difficult circumstances. The honourable citation is a parchment certificate bearing the recipient's name.

The term "difficult circumstances" refers to circumstances in which the rescuer faces significant danger.

The lapel pin is a miniature replica of the medal.

► **Public tribute**

Public tribute is paid annually to recipients at an official ceremony presided over by the Minister of Justice of Québec.



Nomination of a candidate

1 Information on the person nominated:

Name: _____
 Date of birth: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

If the person is deceased, information on a relative or friend:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

2 Detailed description of the act of good citizenship, efforts made by the rescuer and the dangerous or difficult circumstances of the event (attach an additional sheet if necessary):

Date of the event (day, month, year): _____

Location of the event: _____

3 Information on the witnesses:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

4 Where applicable, name of the police (or other) service that made a report on the event (Sûreté du Québec, municipal police, fire department, etc.):

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Event file No.: _____

5 Information on the person making the nomination:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

