

Latest Immigration Updates

Summarized below are a few more changes which have recently been implemented by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) that may be of interest to those who have pending applications or are planning to submit one for themselves or their family members.

Parent-Grandparent Sponsorship Applications

Since IRCC did not receive 10,000 complete applications by 4 August 2017, it has decided to issue a second round of invitations to potential sponsors for permanent residence applications of their parents or grandparents. Please note however that these additional invitations will be taken from the same randomized list that was opened early this year. Hence, if you did not register in that list, then you will not be invited at this most recent round.

The new potential sponsors will receive an email inviting them to submit an application to sponsor their parents and grandparents and will have until 8 December 2017 to submit their complete sponsorship applications to IRCC. Sponsors who were invited in the first round, but did not submit applications, will not have another chance to apply in 2017.

If they did not receive an email, potential sponsors can also confirm whether or not they have been selected by looking up their unique confirmation number to compare it with the list of numbers that were randomly selected. If you are not sure what your unique confirmation number is, you can complete the web form for this purpose at the IRCC website and you will receive a response within 10 business days to confirm whether or not you have been invited.

Those who were not invited to submit applications in 2017 will be given the opportunity to express their interest once again in sponsoring their parents and grandparents when the program reopens in early 2018.

Global Skills Strategy

The new policy under the temporary foreign worker (TFW) program was introduced in June 2017 to help Canadian employers bring highly qualified TFWs to Canada much more quickly.

According to IRCC, the Global Skills Strategy aims to provide:

- a two-week processing time for 80% of work permit applications
- work permit exemptions for highly-skilled workers on short-term work assignments (i.e. a 15 day-period every six months or a 30-day period every twelve months); and for researchers involved in a short-duration research project (i.e. 120 day-period, once a year) at the invitation of a publicly-funded degree granting Canadian post-secondary institution or affiliated research institution in Canada
- a dedicated service channel for companies looking to make large, job-creating investments in Canada

There are two ways that a worker can qualify for two-week processing of work permits.

1. If they are Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) exempt and:
 - they are applying from outside Canada;

- the job is employer-specific and either skill type 0 (managerial) **or** skill level A (professional) of the National Occupation Classification; and
 - the employer submitted an offer of employment using the employer portal and paid the employer compliance fee **or**
2. If they have a positive LMIA for an employer-specific job which is eligible under one of two categories under the Global Talent Stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.
- a. Category A - innovative firms referred by one of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)'s designated referral partners and seeking to hire unique and specialized talent. indicated by:
- Advanced knowledge of the industry;
 - Advanced degree in an area of specialization of interest to the employer; and/or
 - Minimum of five years of experience in the field of specialized experience; and
 - A highly paid position with a salary of usually \$80,000 or more.
- b. Category B
- Employers seeking to hire employees in occupations listed on the Global Talent Occupations List, which may be updated periodically to respond to labour market needs. The current occupation list is as follows: NOC code Occupation (Minimum salary)
- 0213 Computer and information systems managers
 2147 Computer engineers (except software engineers and designers)
 2171 Information systems analysts and consultants
 2172 Database analysts and data administrators
 2173 Software engineers and designers
 2174 Computer programmers and interactive media developers
 2175 Web designers and developers
 2241 Electrical and electronics engineering technologists and technicians (\$38.94/hr; \$81,000/yr.)
 2283 Information systems testing technicians (\$37.50/hr; \$78,000/yr.)
 5241 Digital Media and Design (\$38.46/hr; \$80,000/yr.)

Express Entry Changes and Recent Rounds of Invitations

The IRCC introduced three substantial changes to the Express Entry system effective 6 June 2017:

- additional 15 or 30 points if the candidate has good French Language skills (NCLC 7 or higher)
- additional 15 points if the candidate or his/her spouse has an adult sibling who is a permanent resident or Canadian citizen living in Canada and
- the Job Bank registration is now voluntary and not required to be eligible for being placed in the Express Entry pool. However, candidates may still create a Job Match account if they want to find work in Canada through the Job Bank

The most recent rounds of invitations had a minimum score ranging from 433 to 440. The last round was issued to 2,772 candidates with a minimum CRS score of 435. So far, the lowest score of those invited had been 413 (and 199 for the Federal Skilled Trades class) which occurred in May 2017.

As always, the above are meant for information purposes only and not as legal advice. To seek legal advice about your particular situation, please consult a trusted immigration legal professional.

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