

# Strategic Recruitment Stream - U.S. Visa Holder Category

## Frequently asked questions

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### ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

If you are a holder of a **current and valid** H1-B, H1-B1, H1-C or E-3 visa, you may be eligible to qualify for Canadian Permanent Residence through the Strategic Recruitment Stream - U.S. Visa Holder Category.

#### 1. Will program be scaled back or cancelled given current economic situation? Are there any quotas?

There is no doubt that the economy continues to slow down, in Alberta and around the world. Alberta is in a better position than most places to ride out the storm. The Strategic Recruitment Stream - U.S. Visa Holder Category is part of the Government of Alberta's long-term immigration strategy to keep the Alberta economy strong well into the future.

#### 2. What is the work experience requirement? I have over one year of experience when I finished my education. I just got my H1B visa. Do I have to wait for a year?

The requirement is that you have one year's experience working on an H1-B U.S. Visa (or other approved categories – H1-B1, H1-C or E-3).

#### 3. I heard that Government of Canada is going to cancel the Regional Occupations Under Pressure list, will this impact the Strategic Recruitment Stream – U.S. Visa Holder Category?

The Alberta Immigration Nominee Program (AINP) has developed an AINP Occupations Under Pressure List for the Strategic Recruitment Stream – U.S. Visa Holder Category. Your current occupation in the U.S. must be on this list. To view this list visit: [www.albertacanada.com/immigration/media/h1b\\_AINP\\_Occupations\\_Under\\_Pressure\\_List.pdf](http://www.albertacanada.com/immigration/media/h1b_AINP_Occupations_Under_Pressure_List.pdf)

#### 4. I don't see my job title on the Regional Occupations Under Pressure list, am I eligible?

We do not assess your application by your job title, but rather by your job description. To determine whether a Candidate's occupation is under pressure in Alberta, a Candidate should first reference the **National Occupational Classification (NOC)** website to determine the four digit NOC code that best matches their current job description. The Candidate should then consult the **AINP Occupations Under Pressure List for the Strategic Recruitment Stream – U.S. Visa Holder Category** to find out if their four digit NOC code is on the list. Please provide all of the supporting documentation requested on the application form to assist us in determining if you are on the above mentioned list.

<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC>

[www.albertacanada.com/immigration/media/h1b\\_AINP\\_Occupations\\_Under\\_Pressure\\_List.pdf](http://www.albertacanada.com/immigration/media/h1b_AINP_Occupations_Under_Pressure_List.pdf)

#### 5. Do I need a job offer in Alberta to Qualify?

**No**, you do not require a job offer from an Alberta employer to qualify for the Strategic Recruitment Stream - U.S. Visa Holder Category.

#### 6. What happens if I am laid off? Change jobs? My H1B visa expires? Or I leave the USA before I obtain permanent resident status?

Your H1-B visa needs to be current and valid and you need to be legally working at the time of final decision by the AINP. You are always required to notify the AINP of any changes of employment conditions or change of address if your situation changes following nomination by the AINP.

#### 7. What happens if I have already applied under the Federal Skilled Worker Program?

They are two separate processes and will not conflict with one another. Once you receive a nomination certificate from the AINP, you are required to submit the application for permanent residence as a provincial nominee along with the processing fees to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). CIC will advise you of your options regarding other applications that may be pending.

#### 8. If my current employer files my Green Card in USA, then would that process be affected by the AINP processing or would AINP be affected by it?

No

## 9. I am not eligible for the H1B strategic stream. Do I have other options? (HI-B expired, wrong type of visa, occupation not eligible...)

If you are not eligible for the Strategic Recruitment Stream - U.S. Visa Holder Category, you may consider coming to Alberta as a **Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW)**. For more information on the TFW Program and searching for a job in Alberta visit: [www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration)

For information on applying for permanent residence through the **Federal Skilled Worker Program**, please visit: [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

## PROCESSING TIMES

### 10. How long will it take to assess my application?

#### Normal Processing Times

Strategic Recruitment Stream -U.S. Visa Holder Category	Processing time
Notification (pre-assessment)	Up to four months
Candidate assessment	Up to four months
Total AINP processing time	Up to eight months

Please note, processing times may vary due to the volume of applications in the system.

Once the nomination is issued by the AINP, you will be advised on how to submit your permanent resident application to CIC. This final processing stage may take up to **4 months** to complete.

### 11. When will I get my File Reference Number?

Once your application is entered into the system, the AINP Office will send you an email confirmation with your file reference number. It may take up to two months to receive the confirmation email. **If you want to ensure that the AINP has received your application, you may wish to send your application by registered mail or by courier.**

### 12. Who do I contact for a status update?

We do not confirm delivery of applications. We recommend applications be sent through methods where the delivery status can be checked, i.e. courier or registered mail. Please **do not call or email** to check on the status of your application, as this will increase processing times of applications. Furthermore, we do not provide status updates during normal processing times.

You will **only** receive a confirmation email and file reference number after your application has been pre-assessed and entered into our system for processing. (Pre-assessments can take up to 4 months provided the application submitted is complete; it may take up to 4 months to receive a file reference number).

### 13. Will it be faster if I hire a lawyer?

No. It is unnecessary to use an immigration consultant or lawyer to complete your application. The AINP application forms were designed for applicants to complete on their own. If you do hire a representative, your application will not receive special attention or be handled differently from other applications.

If you decide to hire an immigration consultant or lawyer, you can verify that the representative is authorized by CIC. The AINP will only release information to someone who is an authorized immigration representative, please visit: [www.albertacanada.com/immigration/immigrate/immigrationrepresentatives.html](http://www.albertacanada.com/immigration/immigrate/immigrationrepresentatives.html)

## PROCESSING QUESTIONS

### 14. What is the process for applying to the AINP?

Applications must now be complete and mailed to the following address:

#### **Strategic Recruitment Stream – U.S. Visa Holder Category**

Alberta Employment and Immigration  
4th Floor, Commerce Place, 10155 – 102 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 4L6

For information regarding the new process, and to obtain application forms, please visit: [www.albertacanada.com/immigration/immigrate/srsvisaholder.html](http://www.albertacanada.com/immigration/immigrate/srsvisaholder.html)

## 15. What are the fees?

There are no fees required to apply to the AINP. If you are issued a nomination, you will be required to submit your federal application forms to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). You must pay processing fees to (CIC) when you apply for permanent residence. You must also pay a “Right of Permanent Residence” fee to gain final permanent resident status. Please visit: <https://services3.cic.gc.ca/efee/efee.do?lang=en>

## 16. Do I need to include photos, police certificates and medical clearances?

We do not require these documents for the AINP portion of the application process. They will be required once you apply for permanent residence with Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

## 17. What are certified copies?

Certified copies are notarized copies. In Canada, documents can be certified (notarized) by a lawyer, commissioner of oaths or notary public and they will copy the documents, stamp and sign the document indicating that it is a true copy of the original. We are aware that there may be additional persons/associations in the USA that are authorized to notarize documents.

## 18. Do I need to have a language assessment?

A language assessment is not required under the Strategic Recruitment Stream – U.S. Visa Holder Category.

## 19. Will you be contacting my current employer?

The AINP may contact your current employer in the United States if further explanation regarding your current job duties or confirmation of your current employment is required.

If you include all requested supporting documents, including a job description from your current U.S. employer on company letterhead, as well as your most current pay stubs, the AINP will be less likely to contact your current U.S. employer.

Your employer will be contacted if clarification is needed. In cases that are unclear or uncertain, you should provide an explanatory note to the AINP. You could also include a note for them to contact you first prior to contacting your employer.

## 20. If I submit my CIC application under the Provincial Nominee Class at the same time as I submit my AINP application will it speed up the process?

No. You must wait until the nomination certificate is issued to apply to CIC as a provincial nominee. If you apply to CIC before being nominated by the AINP, your application could be delayed, refused, or returned if the CIC visa office has not received your nomination.

## 21. What do I do if I move?

You must notify the AINP if you plan to move to another address, city or country. If you have submitted an application to CIC, you must notify them too.

## 22. How do I complete the federal immigration forms? I have questions on the photo specifications? I have questions on obtaining police certificates? What funds are required to settle in Canada?

Please refer to the federal application guide at: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/EP770C.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/EP770C.asp)

## 23. Can I work in Alberta while waiting for permanent residence?

If you want to work in Alberta while your application with the AINP is pending, you would need to meet the requirements of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. Information on job search and working in Alberta can be found at: [www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration)

If the Candidate is approved as a Provincial Nominee and they find employment in their field in Alberta, the AINP may be able to issue a letter of support that would help the Candidate start working in Alberta right away, prior to their application for permanent residence with CIC being finalized. More information would be provided about this in the nomination letter from the AINP

## BECOMING A PERMANENT RESIDENT

### 24. When the immigrant visa is issued, how long do I have to take up residency?

Citizenship and Immigration Canada will issue a permanent residence visa which has an expiry date. You and your dependents must arrive in Canada before this expiry date.

## 25. Do I have to live / work in Alberta?

A candidate must demonstrate a clear ability and intention to establish permanently in Alberta in order to be nominated through the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) process. You are expected to complete the landing process in Alberta. For more information regarding permanent residence, visit: [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

## 26. Does permanent resident status expire?

Citizenship and Immigration Canada is responsible for issuing permanent residence. For information related to becoming a permanent resident and maintain permanent residence status in Canada, please visit: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/about-pr.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/about-pr.asp)

## 27. How long does it take to become a Canadian Citizen? How do I become a Canadian Citizen? How long does it take?

Citizenship and Immigration Canada is responsible for issuing Canadian citizenship. For information on applying for Canadian citizenship, please visit: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizenship/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizenship/index.asp)

## OTHER QUESTIONS

### 28. Can I start my own business once I get my permanent resident status?

A permanent resident of Canada can own and operate a business. We would encourage you to contact the Business Link for additional information on operating a business in Alberta. Find more information at: [www.canadabusiness.ca/alberta](http://www.canadabusiness.ca/alberta)

### 29. Is AINP a multiple entry visa? If I want to go to my home country do I need to have any special permission or what documents do I need to show while entering back in Canada?

The AINP nomination is not a visa. The AINP nomination allows you to submit an application for permanent residence to CIC under the Provincial Nominee Class. If you are planning to enter Canada prior to obtaining permanent residence, you must always ensure you have the documents that CIC requires. This may include a Temporary Resident Visa, a work permit, or other documents. Please visit: [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

If you have obtained permanent resident status and are re-entering Canada, you would need to show your permanent resident card.

### 30. Can my wife and children come with me?

Yes. You can include your spouse or common-law partner and any dependent children on your application for permanent residence.

### 31. Can I sponsor my parents?

As a permanent resident of Canada, you may be able to sponsor eligible family members for permanent residence. You would need to meet the requirements of a sponsor.

For more information on the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program – Family stream, visit: [www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/immigrate/familystream.html](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/immigrate/familystream.html)

For more information on the Federal Family Class, visit: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/famcls.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/famcls.asp)

### 32. Is my spouse eligible to work under this program?

Your spouse would be included in your permanent residence application. If you come to work in Alberta on a temporary work permit prior to receiving permanent residence your spouse/common law partner can accompany you and may be eligible for an open work permit. For more information, visit: [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

### 33. If I am nominated by AINP, when I come to Alberta, does my son or daughter need any different visa to attend school?

No. For information regarding studying in Alberta, visit: [www.StudyinAlberta.ca](http://www.StudyinAlberta.ca)

### 34. Where should I live? What is the weather like? I want to know about the Alberta economy.

Information on living in Alberta can be found at: [www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/about/albertaeconomy.html](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/about/albertaeconomy.html)