

# Working in Alberta

Information for foreign workers





## Alberta's opportunities, your future

Welcome to Alberta, one of Canada's beautiful western provinces. Covering 661,000 square kilometres of spectacular natural beauty, the province is dotted with quaint rural towns and modern centres of commerce and urban chic. Alberta is a vibrant home to more than 3.7 million people. For a closer look at Alberta's geography, weather, regions and cities see our interactive map. ▼

Albertans from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds have worked together to build a strong, diverse province with an exceptionally high standard of living. Alberta's stable economy and innovative business spirit make it an ideal place to work. If you would like to work temporarily or immigrate permanently to Alberta, you can apply through a federal immigration program or the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP).

Sign up for the Alberta Newcomer Information subscription tool ▼ to get the specific, up-to-date information you want to receive via email. The official Immigrate to Alberta website ▼ has detailed information on immigrating to, living and working in Alberta for you to explore.



### **Interactive map**

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/map](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/map)

### **Alberta Newcomer Information subscription tool**

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/subscribe](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/subscribe)

### **Immigrate to Alberta website**

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration)



## About Recruiters and Immigration Consultants

### Don't be a victim of immigration fraud ▼

You do not need to use an employment agency or immigration consultant to work in Canada. If you do choose to use these services to help you find a job in Alberta or immigrate, protect yourself from fraud by learning the facts and laws about recruiters and consultants.

Employment or recruitment agencies and immigration consultants or lawyers offer different services.

#### Employment or Recruitment Agencies

You do not have to use the services of an employment agency to find employment. If you choose to use an agency:

- Make sure it is registered and licensed by the Government of Alberta
- Request to see an employment agency's licence and business registration to verify that it is a legitimate business
- Confirm their business licence with Service Alberta ▼

An employment agency cannot charge you a fee for finding you a job in Alberta – that is illegal! Alberta employers who want to hire you must pay for all recruitment fees. The employer cannot make you re-pay these costs (for example, through deductions from your pay). If an employment agency

provides you with services such as resumé preparation and interview skills coaching, they can charge you reasonable fees. Be aware that paying those fees does not guarantee you employment.

#### Immigration Consultants or Lawyers

You do not need to hire an immigration representative to apply for a work permit or to immigrate. Immigration representatives do not have special connections with Canadian government officials and cannot guarantee you a visa. Beware of Internet scams and false websites.

The only representatives who may charge a fee to represent or advise you on immigration matters with the Government of Canada are:

- Lawyers who are members in good standing with a Canadian provincial or territorial law society;
- Immigration consultants who are members in good standing with the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC), and
- Notaries who are members in good standing with the Chambre des notaires du Québec.



#### Immigration fraud

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/immigrate/immigrationrepresentatives.html](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/immigrate/immigrationrepresentatives.html)  
[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/immigrating/recruitment-employment-agencies.aspx](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/immigrating/recruitment-employment-agencies.aspx)  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/protection/antifraud.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/protection/antifraud.asp)

#### Business licence

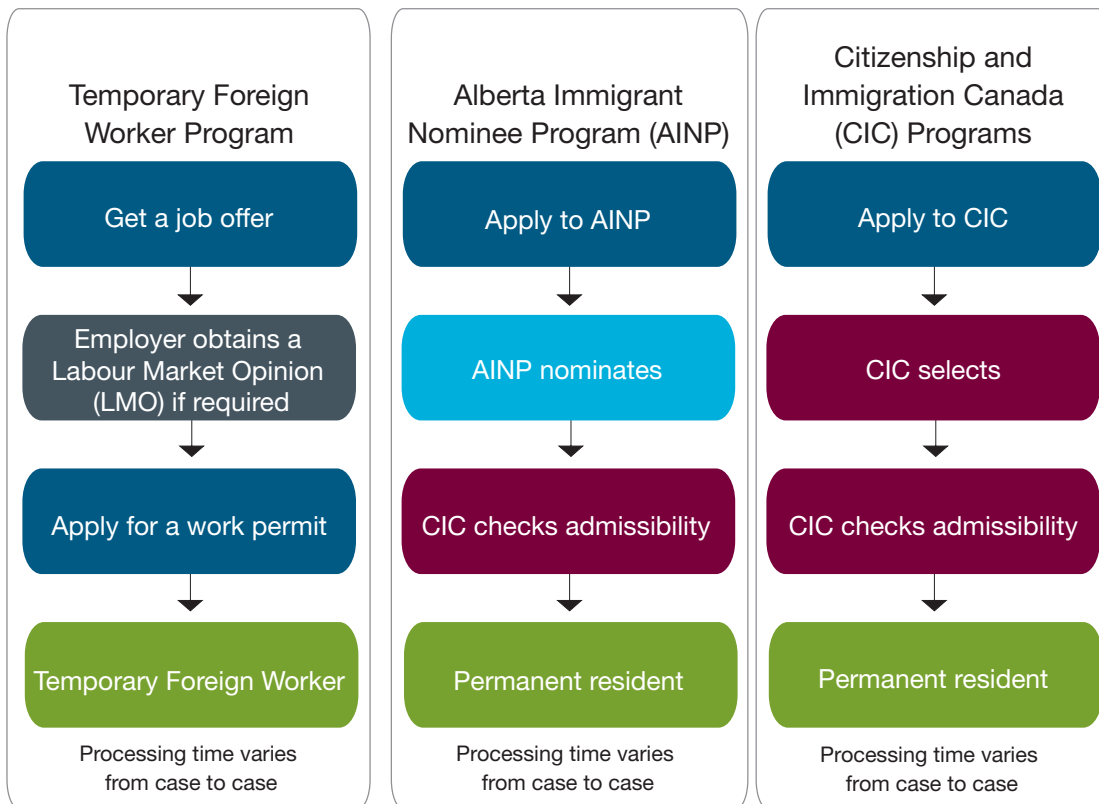
[www.servicealberta.ca/183.cfm](http://www.servicealberta.ca/183.cfm)



There are different ways you can come to Alberta. Below is an outline of programs available to come as a temporary foreign worker or become a permanent resident.

## Work Temporarily

## Live Permanently

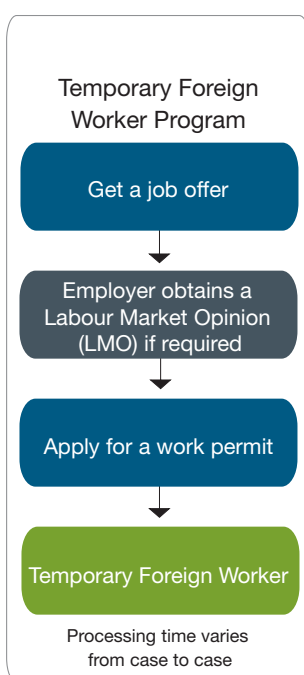


■ Action taken by you   
 ■ Action taken by your employer   
 ■ Action taken by AINP   
 ■ Action taken by CIC   
 ■ Resulting Immigration Status





## Work Temporarily ▼



Foreign workers can work in Canada on a temporary basis through the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP). ▼ This program allows Canadian employers to hire foreign workers when they are unable to find Canadian citizens and permanent residents to fill the positions. If you want to come to Alberta as a temporary foreign worker, you must meet all criteria.

### STEP 1

#### Research your occupation ▼

To work in Alberta in a specific occupation, profession or trade you will need to find out if:

- There are jobs available in your occupation in Alberta
- The occupation is regulated or unregulated (you must meet the legal requirements to work in that occupation)
- Any training or education is required to work in your occupation
- Your training or education meets
- Alberta's required standards



#### Work Temporarily

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/work](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work)

#### Temporary Foreign Worker Program

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign\\_workers](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign_workers)

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/tfw.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/tfw.asp)

#### Research your occupation

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/working/occupations.aspx](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/working/occupations.aspx)

#### Does the job require licensing?

[www.alis.alberta.ca/certinfo](http://www.alis.alberta.ca/certinfo)

[www.employment.alberta.ca/iqas](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/iqas)

### STEP 2

#### Find out if the job requires licensing ▼

To work in a regulated occupation you must obtain the appropriate licence or certificate. This includes health care professions, engineering and trade occupations. The Alberta Learning Information Services (ALIS) lists occupations requiring licensing or certification.

Find out if your training and experience in your occupation will be recognized in Alberta. You may need to have your internationally earned qualifications assessed or pass an examination to work in Alberta. Many professional regulatory organizations have their own qualification assessments. The International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) evaluates international educational documents and issues certificates on the results.

### STEP 3

#### Look for a job ▼

The Immigrate to Alberta website is an excellent place to learn about career planning, resumés, finding a job and preparing for a job interview.

The Working in Alberta Tool ▼ is a valuable job search resource that provides a report with available jobs in Alberta, information on wages, job descriptions and education or licensing needed for your occupation.



### STEP 4

#### Get a job offer from an employer with an LMO ▼

Once you find a job that interests you, check to see if the employer has a Labour Market Opinion (LMO).

LMOs are given to employers who can prove that hiring a foreign worker will not have a negative effect on the Canadian labour market. An LMO contains the job location, job description, wages and hours of work.

If you are applying for a skilled occupation that falls within the National Occupation Classification (NOC) A, O or B, your employer may qualify for the Accelerated LMO initiative (A-LMO). If the employer meets all the eligibility criteria to participate in the A-LMO ▼ initiative, HRSDC may issue a positive A-LMO within 10 business days.



#### Look for a job

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/working](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/working)

#### Working in Alberta Tool

[www.workingincanada.gc.ca/alberta](http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca/alberta)

#### LMO / A-LMO

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign\\_workers/ei\\_tfw/lmi\\_tfw.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign_workers/ei_tfw/lmi_tfw.shtml)

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign\\_workers/communications/a-lmo.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign_workers/communications/a-lmo.shtml)

#### Obtain a work permit

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/work](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work)

#### Come to Alberta and start working

[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/living](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration/living)

#### Temporary Foreign Worker Guide

[www.employment.alberta.ca/immigration/145.html](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/immigration/145.html)

#### Alberta Occupation-Specific pilot

[www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/tfw-annexb-occ-sp-steam-pipe.pdf](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/tfw-annexb-occ-sp-steam-pipe.pdf)

### STEP 5

#### Obtain a work permit ▼

Most foreign workers need a valid work permit to work in Canada. You need an LMO and a written job offer from an Alberta employer to apply for a work permit. If the job is in a semi-skilled occupation, you will also need an employment contract. In most cases, work permit applications must be submitted to a CIC visa office outside of Canada.

When applying for a work permit, you must prove you are qualified for the job and meet CIC's requirements, which include health and security checks. An immigration medical examination may be required. CIC makes the final decision to issue a work permit.

### STEP 6

#### Come to Alberta and start working ▼

When you receive a letter from the CIC visa office approving your work permit application, you are ready to pack your bags and come to work in Alberta.

Check the Immigrate to Alberta website for information on housing, settlement and support services, banking, weather, health care and other things to consider when moving to Alberta.

The Temporary Foreign Worker Guide for Employees provides useful information about working in Alberta. It is available in 11 languages online. ▼ Topics include Alberta employment standards, workplace safety and support for temporary foreign workers.

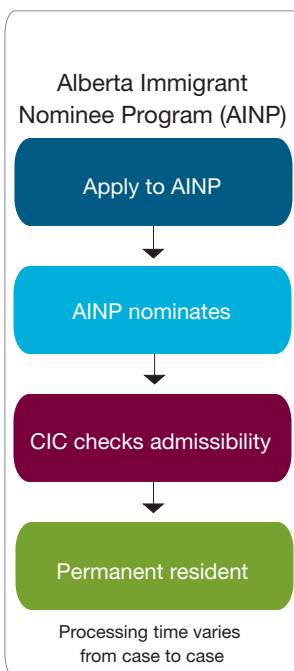
#### The Alberta Occupation-Specific Pilot

allows employers to hire foreign workers certified in the following occupations without needing a Labour Market Opinion (LMO) or Accelerated LMO (A-LMO); steamfitter/pipefitter, carpenter, estimator, heavy-duty equipment mechanic, ironworker, millwright and industrial mechanic, and welder. Employers who do not require a journeyman level carpenter or millwright can hire workers under the regular LMO or A-LMO process.

Foreign workers hired under the pilot may move between employers as long as they continue to work in the same occupation. Both certified and uncertified workers are eligible to apply to the pilot. This pilot will operate until July 31, 2016, however applicants must apply to the pilot by July 31, 2013. Learn more online. ▼



## Live Permanently



### Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) ▼

The Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) is an immigration program run by the Government of Alberta with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The program is designed to support Alberta's economic growth by attracting work-ready immigrants to the province. Some temporary workers may be eligible to apply for permanent residence through this program.

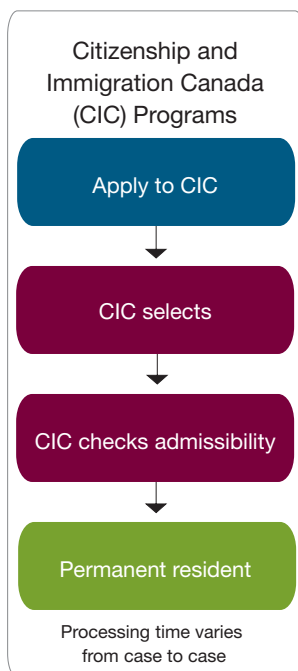
**Not all temporary foreign workers are eligible to apply for permanent residence. You, not your representative, must find out if you are eligible to apply for permanent residence.**

Foreign workers, along with their spouse/common-law partner and dependent children, who clearly intend to live in Alberta, are nominated by the province and are eligible to apply for permanent residence through CIC. If you have been working in Alberta and want to become a permanent resident there are several different ways you can apply through the AINP. See the *Immigrate to Alberta* website for AINP categories, eligibility criteria and application instructions.



AINP  
[www.AlbertaCanada.com/ainp](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/ainp)





### Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Immigration Programs

The Government of Canada (through CIC) offers immigration programs for skilled workers, business immigrants and family members of permanent residents. If you are interested in CIC's immigration programs, you must apply directly to CIC. ▼

#### Skilled workers and professionals ▼

Skilled workers are selected as permanent residents based on their education, work experience, knowledge of English and/or French, and other criteria that have been shown to help them become economically established in Canada.

#### Canadian Experience Class ▼

If you are a temporary foreign worker or a foreign student who graduated in Canada, you often have the qualities to make a successful transition from temporary to permanent residence. You are familiar with Canadian society and can contribute to the Canadian economy. You should have knowledge of English or French and qualifying work experience.

#### Investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed people ▼

The Business Immigration Program seeks to attract experienced business people to Canada who will support the development of a strong and prosperous Canadian economy.

#### Sponsoring your family ▼

If you are a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada, you can sponsor your spouse, common-law partner, conjugal partner, dependent child (including adopted child) or other eligible relative (such as a parent or grandparent) to become a permanent resident.



CIC

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate)

Skilled workers and professionals

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled)

Canadian Experience Class

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/cec](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/cec)

Investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed people

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/business](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/business)

Sponsoring your family

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/sponsor](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/sponsor)



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is a work permit?

A work permit is written authorization to work in Canada. It is issued by a CIC officer to a person who is not a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. A work permit is required whether or not the employer is in Canada. Usually, it is valid only for a specified job and length of time. A work permit may be issued based on a Labour Market Opinion (LMO) or may be issued on the basis of other requirements. Most foreign workers require a permit to allow them to work in Canada. All work permits have terms and conditions a foreign worker must follow, including:

- You must work for the employer whose name is on the work permit
- You must work at the location indicated on the work permit
- You cannot stay in Canada longer than the time stated on the work permit
- Breaking any of these terms and conditions is against the law



CIC -Processing times (Q2)  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/work](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work)

CIC -Change conditions or extend your work permit (Q5)  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/extend-worker.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/extend-worker.asp)

CIC -Change employers (Q6)  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/extend-worker.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/extend-worker.asp)

TFW helpline (Q7)  
[www.employment.alberta.ca/immigration/4548.html](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/immigration/4548.html)

CIC -LMO eligible occupations (Q9)  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/special-business.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/special-business.asp)

International youth programs (Q9)  
[www.international.gc.ca/iyp-pij](http://www.international.gc.ca/iyp-pij)

Categories of workers that require a work permit but not an LMO (Q9)  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who-permit.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who-permit.asp)

Alberta Occupation-Specific pilot (Q6, Q9)  
[www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/tfw-annexb-occ-sp-steam-pipe.pdf](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/tfw-annexb-occ-sp-steam-pipe.pdf)

### 2. How long does it take to process my work permit application?

Each Canadian visa office has different processing times for issuing work permits. ▼

### 3. How long can I work in Canada?

A temporary foreign worker usually gets a work permit that is valid for the same length of time as their Labour Market Opinion (LMO). As of April 1, 2011 a temporary foreign worker can work in Canada for a maximum of four years. After that they must wait four years before applying for a work permit to work in Canada. This four-year limit does not apply to managerial (NOC 0) or professional occupations (NOC A).

### 4. What is the employer responsible for when hiring semi-skilled (NOC C&D) workers?

Employers hiring foreign workers for semi-skilled occupations must provide an employment contract agreeing to the following:

- To pay for the foreign worker's transportation costs from and back to the country of residence. These fees cannot be recovered from the foreign worker.
- To provide medical coverage until the foreign worker has provincial health insurance coverage.
- To help the foreign worker find accommodation that is suitable and affordable.



### 5. Can I extend my work permit?

If you currently hold a valid work permit and you want to extend or change your work permit, your employer needs to:

- Obtain a new LMO
- Provide you with a copy of the approved LMO and job offer

It is the foreign worker's responsibility to send a new work permit application to CIC. For more information on extending or changing your work permit, application forms and guides, visit CIC's website. ▼

### 6. If I come to Alberta as a temporary foreign worker, can I change employers?

You can change employers provided you apply to CIC to change your work permit. In most cases, your new employer will have to provide you with an LMO before you can apply for a new work permit. You cannot start working for your new employer until you receive your new work permit from CIC. ▼

Under the Alberta Occupation- Specific Pilot, eligible workers in seven select occupations will be issued a work permit that allows them to move freely between employers and projects, providing they are certified and continue to work in the same occupation. Go online to see a list of occupations and eligibility criteria. ▼

### 7. What can I do if my employer does not follow the employment contract or job offer or if I am being mistreated?

As a temporary foreign worker you have the same rights and responsibilities as every other employee in the workplace. If your employer does not follow the employment contract or job offer, you can contact the Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline toll-free at 1-877-944-9955. Staff will advise you of your rights and help find solutions for situations involving unfair, unsafe or unhealthy working conditions. ▼

### 8. As a temporary foreign worker, can my spouse also work?

A spouse of a skilled worker may be eligible to apply for and work on an open work permit that allows them to work for any employer for a defined period of time. When applying for an open work permit, an LMO and job offer are not required. However, the applicant must prove they are the spouse of a skilled worker who holds a valid work permit in Canada.

The spouse of a semi-skilled worker will require an LMO and job offer to submit a work permit application to CIC. If your spouse would like to accompany you to Alberta, they may need to apply for a temporary resident visa.

### 9. Are there jobs that do not require a Labour Market Opinion (LMO exempt)?

Some categories of workers may not need an LMO from the employer in order to apply for their work permit. Common exemptions include:

#### North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

NAFTA removes the need for an LMO for certain professional occupations to citizens of the United States and Mexico. For a list of eligible occupations, visit CIC's website. ▼

#### International Student and Young Worker Employment Program

Under this program, several countries have agreements with Canada to allow the mobility and exchange of young workers and students. Those eligible do not require an LMO. In addition, young workers or students from abroad are not required to find a job in Canada in advance. ▼

#### Alberta Occupation- Specific Pilot

This pilot has removed the need for an LMO in seven occupations in shortage. Check online ▼ for information about the pilot, eligibility requirements and time restrictions.

For all categories of workers that require a work permit but not an LMO, visit CIC's website. ▼



[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration)

**Email form:** [www.AlbertaCanada.com/info](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/info)

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