



# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

2022-090 | April 25, 2022



# Canada - New Immigration Measures to Address Labour Shortage

Canadian employers are actively looking to fill vacant positions in all sectors across the country.<sup>1</sup> Immigration is seen as an important part of meeting Canada's labour needs.

According to Immigration Minister Sean Fraser, "Immigration will be crucial to easing our labour shortage, and these measures aim to address pressing needs in all sectors across the country while providing more opportunities for recent graduates and other applicants to build their lives in Canada and continue contributing to our short-term recovery and long-term prosperity."<sup>2</sup>

Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced<sup>3</sup>:

- Express Entry Draws to resume in "early July",
- new eligibility criteria for extensions of post-graduate work permits,
- updates on the Temporary Residence to Permanent Residence Pathways program, and
- the extension of a pilot project for visitors in Canada seeking to work.

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## WHY THIS MATTERS

The policies announced are aimed at attracting talent to Canada to address labour shortage issues in the country. Practically speaking, the measures facilitate entry, speed up administration and processing, and provide certainty for foreign nationals seeking to obtain permanent residence status.

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## Permanent Residence – Express Entry Draws to Resume in “Early July”

The Canadian government announced on April 22, 2022, that it will resume the issuance of Express Entry - Invitations to Apply (ITAs) in “early July.” This applies to the Canadian Experience Class (CEC), Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), and Federal Skilled Traded Programs (FSTP).

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### KPMG NOTE

This is welcome news for the thousands of foreign nationals who have been waiting in limbo after IRCC implemented a pause on the issuance of ITAs for certain Express Entry candidates during the COVID-19 Pandemic. (For related coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2021-100](#), April 1, 2021.) The government further committed to processing the vast majority of these applications within a six-month service standard.

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## Permanent Residence – Policy Changes to the Temporary Resident (TR) to Permanent Resident (PR) Pathways Program

The minister’s announcement also includes a clarification and updates for applicants that have applied under the TR to PR pathways program. (For related coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2021-128](#), April 30, 2021.) These updates and clarifications include:

- Applicants will no longer be required to remain in Canada while their application is being processed.
- Applicants who apply for an open work permit while awaiting for their application to be processed will be able to obtain a work permit, valid until the end of 2024.
- Immediate family members, who were included in the principal applicant’s permanent residence application will be eligible for their own work permits.

## Temporary Residence – Extending Post-Graduate Work Permits

Beginning this summer, former international students who are in Canada with a post-graduate work permit expiring between January and December 2022 will qualify for an additional open work permit of up to 18 months. Details on how to take advantage of this policy will be announced in the coming weeks.

IRCC anticipates that as many as 50,000 international graduates could benefit from this temporary measure by allowing them to continue to gain valuable work experience and have a better chance at qualifying for permanent residency.<sup>4</sup>

## Temporary Residence – Visitors May Apply for Closed Work Permits

In August 2020, IRCC implemented another temporary policy that allows foreign nationals who entered Canada as visitors to apply for employer-specific work permits without having to leave Canada. This temporary public policy has been extended to February 28, 2023.

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## KPMG NOTES

### Key Considerations

- Foreign nationals holding post-graduate work permits which expire in 2022 – this announcement may grant an additional 18 months of work authorization in Canada. This could considerably impact how and when these individuals qualify for permanent residence in Canada. Employers should review their population of post-graduate work-permit holders to see who may be eligible under the new measures.
- This may be a timely opportunity for Canadian employers to review their mobility policies and discuss whether there are any viable strategies to support employees' paths to more permanent and secure status in Canada. Once Express Entry draws resume, the draw parameters will likely remain very competitive for at least the first few months. Employers may be able to boost their retention strategies by assisting with open work permit applications in the interim. Supporting employer-specific work permits may also allow candidates to access additional points for the "arranged employment" criteria under the Express Entry system.

Individuals who have questions or concerns about the new measures are encouraged to contact their qualified immigration counsel or a member of the immigration team with KPMG Law LLP in Canada (see Contact Us section).

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### FOOTNOTES:

- 1 See Statistics Canada (2022-03-22 ) at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410032501> .
- 2 IRCC, "New measures to address Canada's labour shortage," at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/04/new-measures-to-address-canadas-labour-shortage.html> .
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.

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## Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional\* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Canada:



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