

Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program

What changes were made to the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program on June 14, 2018?

- We made changes to the application, eligibility and processing aspects of AINP to better serve workers who want to put roots down in Alberta and help build our economy.
- Through these changes we will have a simpler, speedier, and fairer AINP, which will lead Canada in serving newcomers and employers.

With our new changes, we will:

- Simplify the application process by creating a new stream for applicants called the Alberta Opportunity Stream (AOS);
- Open up the program to virtually all skills and professions in Alberta with more flexibility for trade skills; and
- Ensure that workers with professional, personal and community ties to Alberta are first in line to become permanent residents with a pathway to citizenship.

- The program has a new application stream, the Alberta Opportunity Stream. It replaces the Employer-Driven Stream and Strategic Recruitment Stream. This means there are two streams for applicants: The Alberta Opportunity Stream and the Self-Employed Farmer Stream.
- The program has expanded to accept most occupations and all skill levels. Previously, it only accepted skilled and some semi-skilled workers.
- In response to the program's expansion to include most occupations and all skill levels, the federal government requires minimum criteria for language, education and income.

Why were these changes necessary?

- The new Alberta Opportunity Stream will simplify processes, reduce wait times, and provide fair access for applicants across all sectors and industries in Alberta. It will also provide greater opportunities for candidates with ties to the province.
- The Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program must follow federal direction on economic immigration programs. In response to the program's expansion to include most occupations and all skill levels, the federal government requires minimum criteria for language, education and income. These requirements will help ensure Alberta's nominees can integrate successfully in the workforce, communities and support their families over the longer term. In particular, the federal government has insisted that Alberta increase language requirements.

Did you consult with anyone before making these changes?

- The Alberta government met with post-secondary institutions, the meat-processing industry, labour organizations and advocacy groups to discuss the changes.
- Stakeholders expressed concerns that some temporary foreign workers would have difficulty meeting the language, education and income requirements, and asked to have time to adjust to the changes. They also raised concerns that these changes would make it more difficult to attract international students, and that there would be fewer opportunities for international students to get permanent residency.
- In response, the Government of Alberta worked with the federal government to phase in the language, education and income requirements so people have time to adjust.

Why did you increase the language requirements? Won't these changes hurt workers and employers?

- The federal government has insisted that Alberta increase language requirements. Because Alberta's program now accepts nominees from most occupations and all skill levels, these minimum language requirements will help ensure Alberta's nominees can integrate successfully in the workforce, communities and support their families over the longer term.
- Nominees with a higher level of language skills are better able to support themselves in Alberta and succeed in the workplace. They also help make sure Alberta's workplaces are safe and healthy because everyone can communicate with one another in an official language at a level that can ensure safety at all times.
- The language requirements are being phased in so program applicants and industry have time to adjust.

Why are changes to education levels being phased in?

- Because Alberta's program now accepts nominees from most occupations and all skill levels, these minimum education requirements will help ensure Alberta's nominees can integrate successfully in the workforce, communities and support their families over the longer term.
- These education requirements are being phased in so program applicants and industry have time to adjust.

Won't these changes make it harder for people who want to stay to get permanent residency?

- The program changes include expanding the program to accept most occupations and all skill levels. Previously, only skilled and some semi-skilled workers were accepted. This means the program is open to more people than previously.
- In response to this expansion, the federal government requires minimum criteria for language, education and income. These requirements will mean some people are not able to get permanent residency. The requirements are in place to help ensure Alberta's nominees can integrate successfully in the workforce, communities and support their families over the longer term. In particular, the federal government has insisted that Alberta increase language requirements.

How will these changes impact my current application?

- If you applied to the program under the Employer-Driven or Strategic Recruitment Stream, your application will be assessed using the eligibility criteria that was in place at the time your application was received.
- Do not reapply to the program if you have an application in process.

- Applicants can request that the program withdraw their previous application. They must submit a written request, send by registered mail or courier, and the program must confirm an application has been withdrawn before a new application can be submitted.

I'm a student who wants to stay in Alberta. How will these changes impact me?

- International graduates can apply to the program through the Alberta Opportunity Stream if they graduated from an approved Alberta post-secondary institution and are working on a Post-Graduation Work Permit. Applicants will need to:
 - Show that they have at least six months of work experience in Alberta in an occupation related to their field of study (this is less than the requirement for other applicants).
 - Meet the same language and income requirements as other applicants.
- International graduates must have education and skills that are well matched with skills shortages in Alberta in order to be eligible for the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program.
- To help international students find out whether their education and work experience is well matched with current skills shortages in Alberta, the province keeps a list of post-secondary programs called the Alberta Opportunity Stream List of Alberta Advanced Education Approved Post-Secondary Credentials and a list of ineligible occupations, called the Refusal to Process List. These lists change on a regular basis.
- An international graduate whose occupation is on the Refusal to Process list of occupations will not be eligible to apply to the program for as long as that occupation stays on the list. Students will also need to review a list of ineligible occupations called the Alberta Opportunity Stream Ineligible Occupations list that can be found with the other criteria for the Alberta Opportunity Stream.
- Students who complete a post-secondary program on the Alberta Opportunity Stream List of Alberta Advanced Education Approved Post-Secondary Credentials are eligible for the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program if their education program is on the list at the same time they are admitted and enrolled in their post-secondary program.
- Government has implemented a temporary transition period for the Alberta Opportunity Stream List of Alberta Advanced Education Approved Post-Secondary Credentials to allow students and post-secondary institutions time to adapt to this change. International students who are admitted and enrolled before October 1, 2018 in one-year entry-level certificate programs, and post-graduate certificate and diploma programs that are not on the Alberta Opportunity Stream List of Alberta Advanced Education Approved Post-Secondary Credentials will still be considered for the AINP as long as they meet all other requirements. Students who are admitted and enrolled on or after October 1, 2018 in one of the programs not on the Alberta Opportunity Stream List of Alberta Advanced Education Approved Post-Secondary Credentials will **not** be eligible to apply to the AINP with a Post-Graduation Work Permit.

These income requirements seem unfair, why are you bringing these in? How will they impact my family?

- Because Alberta's program now accepts nominees from most occupations and all skill levels, minimum income requirements will help ensure Alberta's nominees can integrate successfully in the workforce, communities and support their families over the longer term.
- The minimum income requirement helps ensure newcomers can take care of their families by making sure their income will be higher than living costs in most Alberta communities. They also help make sure newcomers' income is in line with Alberta's minimum wage.

You brought in similar changes in 2017 before rolling them back. What's different between those changes and the changes made on June 14, 2018?

- After announcing changes to the program in October 2017, the Alberta government met with post-secondary institutions, the meat-processing industry, labour organizations and advocacy groups to discuss the changes. Based on these discussions, Alberta made some further changes:
 - Alberta negotiated with the federal government to phase in the language, education and income requirements so program applicants and industry have time to adjust.
 - International graduates who have finished their education in an eligible program in Alberta may apply with a post-graduation work permit.

If I have questions who do I talk to?

- People needing more information can call or email the Immigrate to Alberta Information Service at 1-877-427-6419 or submit an email using the email form at www.AlbertaCanada.com/contact-us.