

STUDENT GUIDE



WORKING IN ALBERTA

A GUIDE FOR TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

WELCOME TO CANADA!

Now that you are working here as a temporary foreign worker, you should know that Canadian laws called Employment Standards protect all workers, including you.

This Guide Booklet will give you some important job information.

Check the last page for some helpful phone numbers, addresses and websites.

This Guide Booklet can be used together with the video – Working in Alberta – A Guide for Temporary Foreign Workers, or by itself.

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1 DOCUMENTS AND PRIVACY

Social Insurance Number

If you already have worked in Canada, you must have applied for and received a Social Insurance Number (SIN). You must provide this 9-digit number to your Employer for their records. Keep your SIN card in a safe place.

If you are going to drive in Alberta, you will be asked to show a valid licence from home.

Passport

Do not give your passport to anyone other than a government official. Your passport is a private document. Your boss or employment agency may review it, but they must give it back to you. Keep your passport and work permit documents in a safe place.

2 EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

You may have signed an employment contract with your employer. You must both follow the terms of the contract. Make sure you keep a copy so you can look at it later if you need to.


If you don't have a contract, the government has rules and laws for working in Alberta. They are contained in the **Employment Standards Code**.

We will set out some of the most important information here but for more help you can go on the Internet or call the numbers listed in this guide.

Tools for Learning

For web-based courses on

- Basics of Employment Standards
- Resolving disputes in the workplace, visit:

WEB  www.employment.alberta.ca/es
Click on Education & Promotion,
then E-Learning Programs.

3 WAGES AND DEDUCTIONS

Wages

You will be paid wages, also called salary.

Alberta has a minimum wage you must be paid for every hour you work. To find out the minimum wage call **Alberta Employment Standards** or check the website listed on the last page of this booklet.

Wages do not include tips, bonuses (gifts), allowances and expenses, or employer contributions to pension or medical plans.

The above items are all added onto your salary.



EXAMPLE

Mary works in a restaurant. Customers leave tips for her too. She gets her wages plus tips.

Deductions

Your employer must take off some money from your pay (deductions) and they must tell you in writing what the deductions are.

Normal deductions include:

- Federal and Provincial Income Tax
- Employment Insurance
- Canada Pension Plan

If you belong to a union, union dues will be deducted also.

Other deductions your employer may take off of wages have to do with benefits, like:

- Company pension plan
- Extended medical
- Coffee/social fund
- Personal tab (e.g. for food)
- Purchases you made on your employer's account
- Uniform

You must give permission to your employer for these deductions. Some benefits may be in your contract.

Employers cannot take deductions for:

- Accidental damage of goods in a store
- Breakage in a restaurant
- Mistake in calculation
- Damage to company vehicle
- Cash shortage when other employees have access to the till

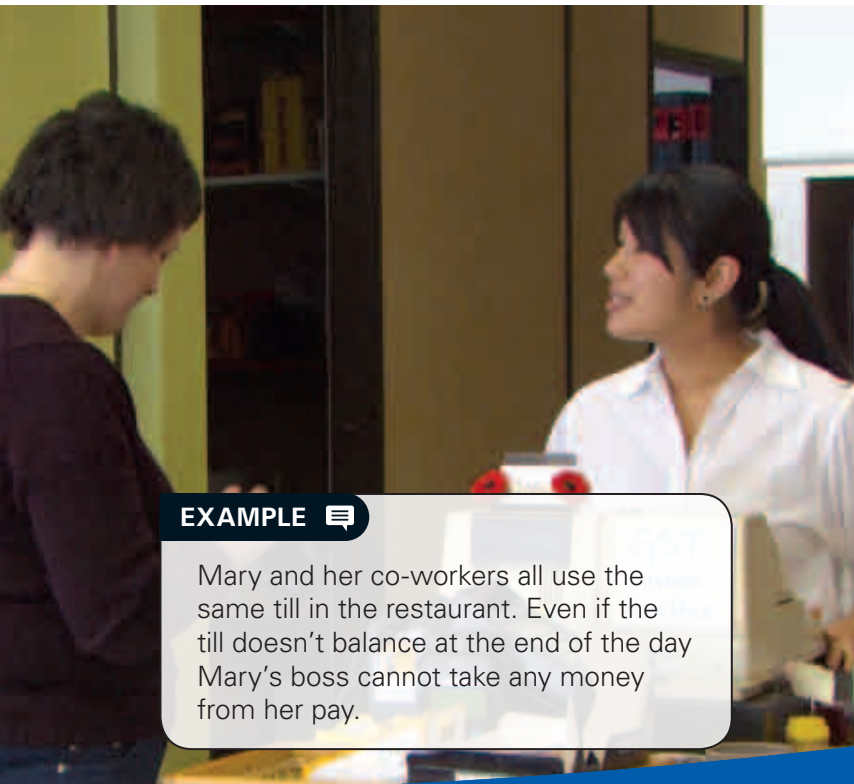
Employment agencies cannot take deductions.

In Alberta, employment agencies cannot charge a deposit or fee for finding a job for a temporary foreign worker and an employer cannot deduct the cost of the agency fee from your pay.

If this happens, you should call **Service Alberta**:

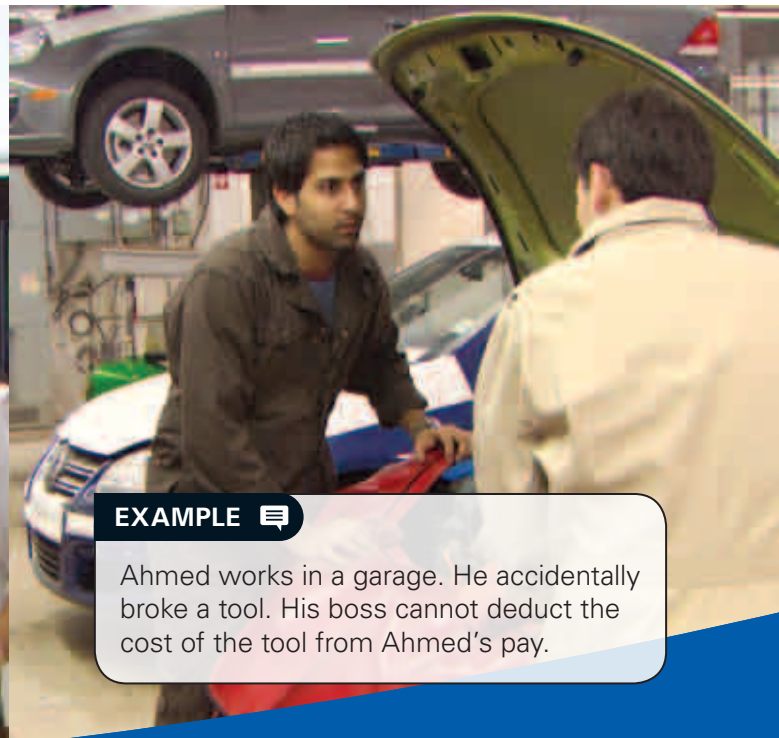
PHONE 

1-877-427-4088 (toll free)
780-427-4088 in Edmonton



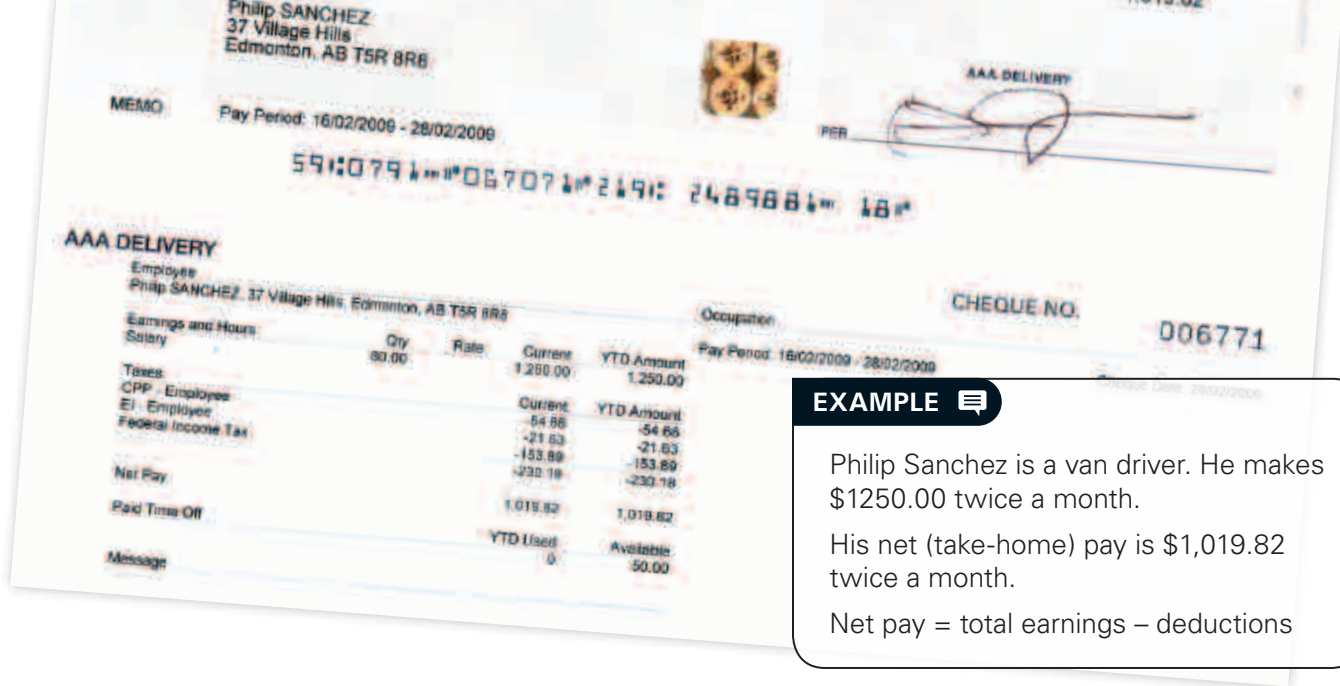
EXAMPLE

Mary and her co-workers all use the same till in the restaurant. Even if the till doesn't balance at the end of the day Mary's boss cannot take any money from her pay.



EXAMPLE

Ahmed works in a garage. He accidentally broke a tool. His boss cannot deduct the cost of the tool from Ahmed's pay.



EXAMPLE Philip Sanchez is a van driver. He makes \$1250.00 twice a month. His net (take-home) pay is \$1,019.82 twice a month. Net pay = total earnings – deductions

4 PAY DAY, VACATION PAY AND HOLIDAYS

Pay Day

Employers decide when to pay their workers, but the **Employment Standards Code** says they must set up pay periods for wages and overtime.

A pay period can be daily, weekly, every two weeks or once a month. Your boss must pay you at least once a month, within 10 days of each pay period.

Employers pay workers in different ways:

- Cash
- Cheque
- Direct deposit into the employee’s bank account

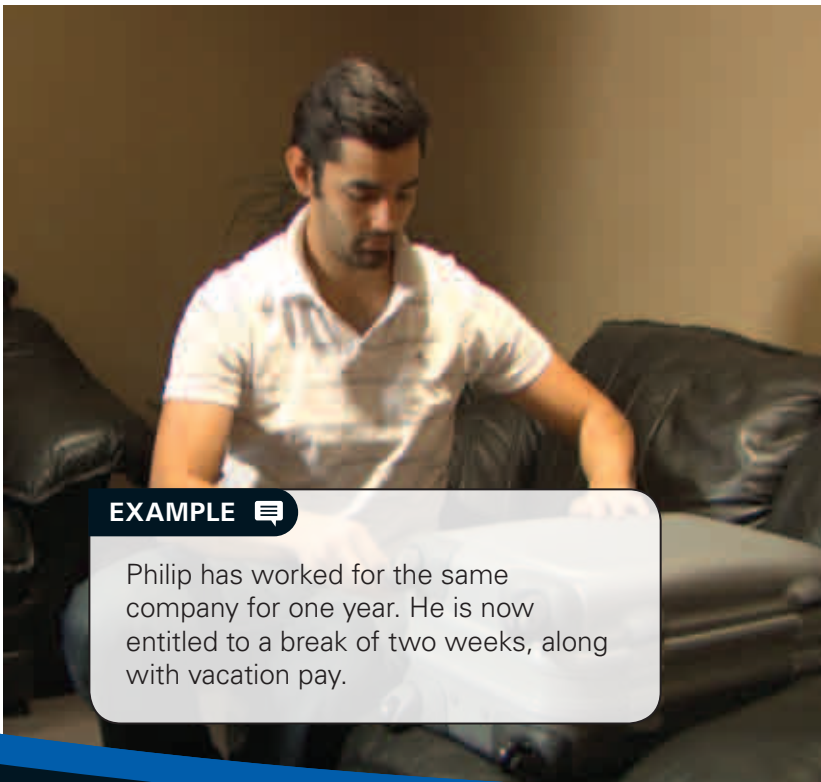
If you are absent from work for illness or a medical appointment, your employer does not have to pay you for those hours.

Work for Less than Three Hours

If you work for less than three hours and your employer tells you to go home, they must pay you for at least three hours.

Vacation Pay

Workers get vacation pay in different ways. Some workers get vacation pay on every pay cheque. Others receive a bit of vacation pay in every cheque while they are working and nothing while they are away.



EXAMPLE Philip has worked for the same company for one year. He is now entitled to a break of two weeks, along with vacation pay.

General Holidays

There are nine general holidays in Alberta. They are called “stat” holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Alberta Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day

Not everyone gets a day off on these holidays. If you do work, you may get extra pay. If you don’t have to work on the holiday, but it was your usual work day, you will get extra pay. Ask your employer how you will get paid.

5 WORKING HOURS, OVERTIME AND REST DAYS

Working Hours

Your workday cannot be longer than 12 hours. Your employer must put up a schedule of your hours or shift.

It’s a good idea to write down your work schedule so you can keep track of your hours worked.

Philip is a driver. He must keep a log book with his hours as part of his job. Other employers might ask you to submit a time sheet or punch a time clock.

Typical Work Day

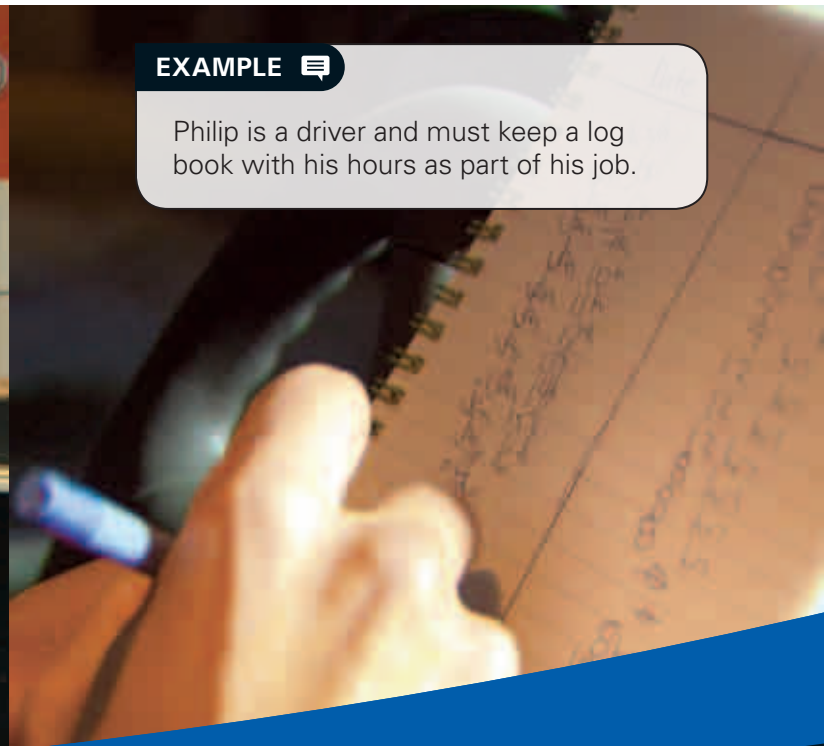
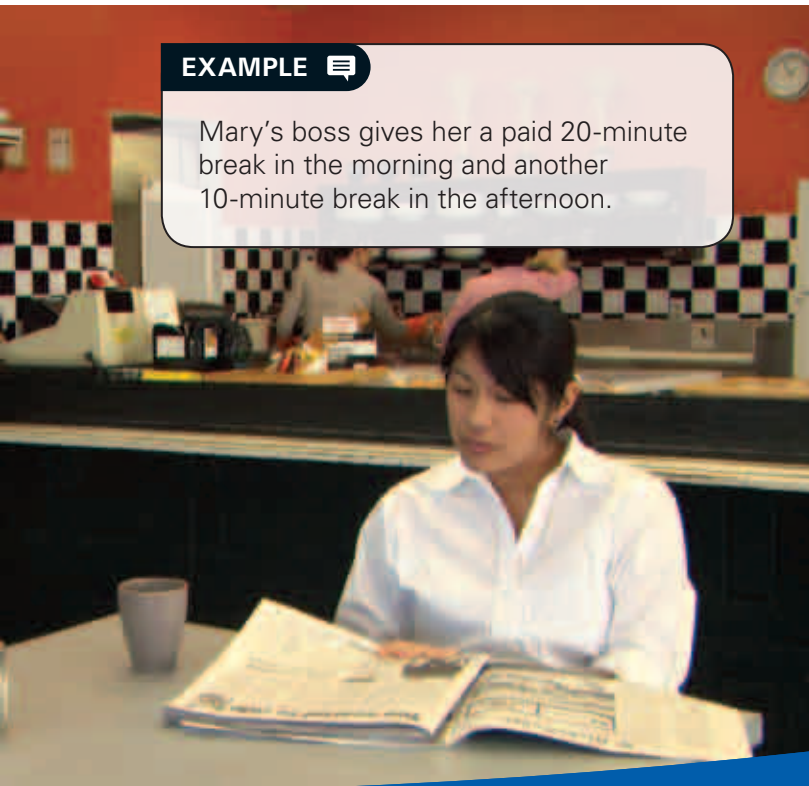
If you work more than five hours, you must have 30-minutes or more to rest during that shift. The break may be paid or unpaid.

EXAMPLE

Mary’s boss gives her a paid 20-minute break in the morning and another 10-minute break in the afternoon.

EXAMPLE

Philip is a driver and must keep a log book with his hours as part of his job.



EXAMPLE

Gina works for a catering company. She usually works an 8-hour shift. Yesterday she worked 10 hours.

Here is how she will be paid:

Monday	8 hours x \$10.00 = \$80.00
Tuesday	8 hours x \$10.00 = \$80.00
	2 hours x \$15.00 = \$30.00
	<hr/>
	\$110.00

Gina was paid 2 hours of overtime pay at one and a half times her regular rate of pay.



Overtime (Extra Hours)

Sometimes, if it's busy, employers ask workers to work extra hours.

In most jobs, workers get overtime if they work more than eight hours a day or 44 hours a week.

Employers must give overtime pay or time off with pay. Ask your employer how they calculate overtime.

If you sign an **Overtime Agreement** you will be taking time off with regular pay for every overtime hour that you work.

For more information about overtime agreements go to:

WEB 

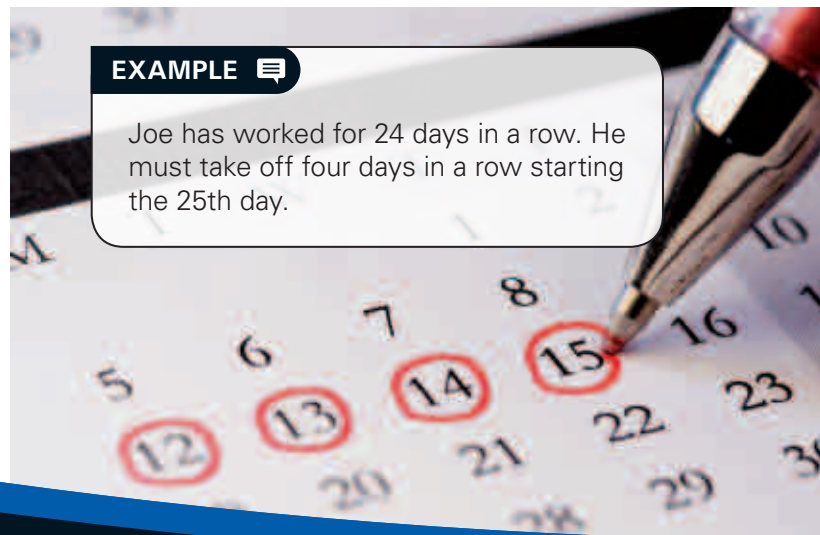
www.employment.alberta.ca/es
Click on Alberta's Standards,
then Overtime

Days Off

Alberta law says that you must be given at least one rest day for each week you work. You can save your days off. For example, you can work up to 24 days with no days off, but then you must take four days off at the same time.

EXAMPLE

Joe has worked for 24 days in a row. He must take off four days in a row starting the 25th day.



6 HEALTH INSURANCE, WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND SAFETY

Health Insurance

Your employer must provide you with medical and health insurance when you arrive in Canada. Ask your employer to give you copies of the papers to make sure you are covered and ask about possible health benefits.

Workers' Compensation


The **Workers' Compensation Board (WCB)** provides employees with income replacement and other benefits when they have an incident or other workplace injury or disease. WCB coverage is paid by the employer. You do not have to pay for WCB.

Benefits include:

- Visits to the doctor
- Medication
- Physiotherapy and rehabilitation
- Return to work plan (modified work options)

Look for the 1-2-3 Poster on your work site. It gives you the steps to follow if you are injured.

For more information about **WCB** call:

PHONE  1-866-922-9221 toll free

Or visit the website:

WEB  www.wcb.ab.ca

Workplace Health and Safety

Your employer must provide you with a safe and healthy workplace. There are also rules for health and safety that you must follow. You may be required to wear special safety equipment.

Examples of safety equipment are:

- Safety boots
- Hard hat
- Safety glasses
- Ear plugs
- Harness

If you are concerned about your workplace safety call the **Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline** number on the last page of this booklet.

You must refuse to work in an unsafe workplace.

The poster is titled "If you are injured at work..." and features three numbered steps in large blue boxes:

- 1 Tell Your Employer**
details of your injury
- 2 Tell Your Health Care Provider**
you were injured at work
- 3 Tell WCB**
send your Report of Injury form to WCB right away!

Below the steps, it says "Avoid delays. Report early!" and provides contact information for WCB. At the bottom, it says "WCB Worker's Compensation Board".



If You Become Injured on the Job:

Tell your employer immediately about your injury.

Your employer must report it to WCB right away if you:

- Need medical treatment beyond first aid, or
- Cannot do your job beyond the day of the incident.

Tell your doctor you were injured at work.

Tell WCB. Fill out a Report of Injury form and send it to WCB right away. You can get forms from your employer or any WCB office. You can also get a form online at the website listed on the last page of this booklet under **Workplace Health and Safety**.

Ten Questions to Ask Your Employer about Health and Safety in the Workplace

1. What are the dangers of my job?
2. Are there any other hazards or dangers that I should know about?
3. Will I receive job training?
4. Do you have health and safety meetings?
5. Is there protective equipment I'll be expected to wear and will I receive training in how to use it?
6. Will I be trained in emergency procedures (like fire or chemical spills?)
7. Where are the fire extinguishers, first aid kits and other emergency equipment located?
8. What do I do if I get hurt? Who is the first aid person?
9. What are my health and safety responsibilities?
10. Who do I ask if I have a health or safety question?



Maternity and Parental Leave


If you have worked (permanently) for an employer for longer than a year, you can take maternity or parental leave. This means that if you are pregnant or a father-to-be, you will get time off work (without pay) and your job will be protected until you return.

Birth **mothers can take up to 52 weeks** in a row of unpaid leave. **Fathers can take up to 37 weeks** in a row of unpaid leave.

You must give at least 6 weeks notice to your employer that you will be taking maternal or parental leave. You may be able to collect Employment Insurance while you are on leave.

For more information about maternity and parental leave, check the last page of this guide under **Alberta Employment Standards** for phone numbers and website.

For information about Employment Insurance call **Human Resources and Skills Development Canada** at:

PHONE  1-800-206-7218

7 TERMINATION, LEAVING A JOB OR EXTENDING YOUR STAY

Termination or Leaving a Job

Alberta law says that both employer and employee must give written notice to each other about ending a job.

The amount of notice depends on how long you worked in the job.

- Less than three months: no notice.
- More than three months but less than two years: one week notice.

Neither your employer or employment agency can make you leave the country if you quit or are terminated from your job.

Only the government can tell you to leave Canada.

You cannot be terminated from your job because of your religious or cultural background.



Extending Your Stay

If you find a new job or want to extend the job you have now, you must contact **Citizenship and Immigration Canada** right away.


As a temporary foreign worker, you can apply to extend your stay, change the conditions of your stay and fix any problems with your work permit.

Important – Apply for your renewal **before** your current documents expire.

Applying for a New Work Permit

An employer who wants to hire temporary foreign workers must have a Labour Market Opinion (LMO). When you find a new job, your new employer must have an existing LMO or obtain one and you must obtain a new work permit describing your new job.


To get an application call **Citizenship and Immigration Canada**:

PHONE  1-888-242-2100 (toll free)

Or visit the website:

WEB  www.cic.gc.ca

For more information on work permits go to:

WEB  www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign_workers/index.shtml



Canadian work permit


Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program

If you think you would like to work and live in Alberta permanently, the Alberta government has a program (Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program) to help you with this process.


If you are successful in your application, you and your spouse and dependent children can apply for a **resident visa**.

There are different ways to apply. For example, if you already have a permanent full time job in some industries – like manufacturing or long haul trucking – you may be eligible.

To find out the different rules for applying go to:

WEB  www.albertacanada.com/immigration
Click on
Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program


For more information, call the **Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program** at:

PHONE  1-877-427-6419 (toll-free)
780-427-6419 (in Edmonton)

! WHERE TO GET HELP

Alberta Employment Standards

For **Employment Standards** information about your employer, wages, days off, overtime, or holidays call:

PHONE  1-877-427-3731 (toll free)
780-427-3731 in Edmonton


Or visit the website:

WEB  www.employment.alberta.ca/es

You do not have to give your name or your employer's name when you call.

Workplace Health and Safety

To speak to someone about how to work safely, to learn about safety programs, or if you have concerns about your workplace, including if it is unsafe or unhealthy, call:

PHONE  1-866-415-8690 (toll free)
780-415-8690 in Edmonton

Or visit the website:

WEB  www.employment.alberta.ca/whs


You can also call the:

Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline and Advisory Offices

if you have questions about your rights or your workplace.

They can also help you

- Complete forms
- Communicate with other government offices

PHONE  1-877-944-9955 (toll free)
780-644-9955 in Edmonton




Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Offices

2nd floor, 10242 - 105 Street
Edmonton AB T5J 3L5


3rd floor, JJ Bowlen Building
620-7th Avenue S.W.
Calgary AB T2P 0Y8

Immigrate to Alberta Information Service (I2A Info Service)


For more information about immigration matters contact:

PHONE  1-877-427-6419 (toll-free)
780-427-6419 in Edmonton

Or visit the website:

WEB  www.albertacanada.com/immigration
Click on Help for Employers,
then I2A Info Service

For more information, call the **Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program** at:

PHONE  1-877-427-6419 (toll-free)
780-427-6419 (in Edmonton)

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