



CIC Announces Changes to the Canadian Experience Class

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Originally published in *Blaneys on Immigration* (December 2013)



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Introduction

On November 9, 2013, Citizenship and Immigration Minister, Chris Alexander, announced significant changes to the Canadian Experience Class ("CEC"). Citizenship and Immigration Canada ("CIC") will now impose a total annual cap on the number of new CEC applications that it accepts and introduce limits on the number of applications that may be accepted in certain occupations. In addition, CIC will change the timing of when language ability is assessed.

Total Annual Cap

For the period commencing on November 9, 2013, and ending on October 31, 2014, CIC will accept a maximum of 12,000 new CEC applications. However, it still intends to admit approximately 15,000 individuals (whose cases are currently being processed) as permanent residents under the CEC during 2014.

Sub-Caps for Certain Occupations

As of November 9, 2013, CIC will impose sub-caps of 200 applications each for *National Occupational Classification* ("NOC") Level Skill Level B (usually requiring college education or apprenticeship training) occupations. NOC Skill Level 0 (management-level) and Skill Level A (usually requiring university education) occupations will not be subject to occupational sub-caps, but they will be subject to the total annual cap of 12,000 applications.

Eliminated Occupations

As of November 9, 2013, the following six occupations will no longer be eligible under the CEC:

- a) Cooks (NOC code 6322);
- b) Food service supervisors (NOC 6311);
- c) Administrative officers (NOC 1221);
- d) Administrative assistants (NOC 1241);
- e) Accounting technicians and bookkeepers (NOC 1311); and
- f) Retail sales supervisors (NOC 6211).

CIC claims that it already has a large inventory of applications in these occupations and will continue processing them to a final decision.

“Up Front” Assessment of Language Ability

CIC will maintain the same language criteria for CEC applicants but, as of November 9, 2013, it will now assess language ability during its initial review of the application. The current language requirements are Canadian Language Benchmark (“CLB”) 7 for NOC Skill Level 0 and Skill Level A occupations, and CLB 5 for NOC Skill Level B occupations. Applicants who do not have the required language proficiency will have their applications returned to them along with the processing fee. ■