

Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program Establishes Two Express Entry Streams

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Overview

As [previously discussed](#), Citizenship and Immigration Canada ("CIC") implemented its Express Entry system on January 1, 2015. Applicants seeking permanent residence under one of the following classes must now submit an Express Entry Profile and then wait until they receive an Invitation to Apply ("ITA") before they will be permitted to seek permanent residence:

- The Federal Skilled Worker ("FSW") Class;
- The Canadian Experience Class ("CEC");
- The Federal Skilled Trades ("FST") Class; or
- Members of the Provincial Nominee Class who fall within the Express Entry Stream of a Provincial Nominee Program ("PNP").

The fourth class describes a foreign national who has received a nomination certificate from a Provincial PNP. A PNP nomination gives the foreign national an additional 600 Comprehensive Ranking System ("CRS") points under Express Entry, which makes it much more likely that they will receive an ITA.

When the CIC Express Entry Program began on January 1, 2015, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (the "OINP"), formerly known as the Ontario PNP, still did not have an Express Entry Stream in place. However, the OINP has now announced two Express Entry Streams: (1) the Human Capital Priorities Stream, and (2) the French-Speaking Skilled Worker Stream.

The Ontario Human Capital Priorities Stream is for English-speaking skilled workers who want to live and work permanently in Ontario. The Ontario French-Speaking Skilled Worker Stream is for French-Speaking skilled workers who have strong English language abilities and who want to live and work permanently in Ontario.

Both Ontario Express Entry Streams require a potential applicant to first qualify under CIC's Express Entry pool, based on either the FSW Class or the CEC. This means that they must submit an Express Entry profile with CIC and be accepted into the pool of Express Entry candidates, under either the FSW Class or CEC.

Applicants may not apply directly to the OINP under either of the Ontario Express Entry Streams. They must first wait until they receive a Notification of Interest ("NOI") from Ontario.

Refugee claimants currently in Canada are also not eligible to seek a nomination under either of the Ontario Express Entry Streams.

Provincial Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply under either the Human Capital Priorities Stream or the French-Speaking Skilled Worker Stream, applicants must satisfy the following provincial criteria:

Work Experience

All applicants require a minimum level of work experience:

- If an applicant chooses to be assessed against the FSW criteria, he or she must have a minimum of one year of continuous and full-time employment (1,560 hours or more) or an equal amount in continuous part-time paid work experience in a National Occupation Classification ("NOC") level 0, A, or B occupation in the past five years from the date of the NOI from Ontario. The one year minimum of continuous and full-time (or equivalent continuous part-time) employment must have been completed in one specific NOC occupation.
- If an applicant chooses to be assessed against the CEC criteria, he or she must have a minimum of one year of cumulative and full-time employment (1,560 hours or more) or an equal amount in part-time paid work experience in a NOC 0, A, or B occupation in Canada in the past three years from the date of the NOI from Ontario.

Education

All applicants must have a Canadian Bachelor's, Master's or Ph.D. degree or an Educational Credential Assessment ("ECA") report produced by a designated organization indicating that their foreign education is the equivalent of a Canadian Bachelor's, Master's or Ph.D. degree.

Language Requirements

For the Human Capital Priorities Stream, all applicants must have a language level of Canadian Language Benchmark ("CLB") 7 or above in all language competencies (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in either English or French. For the French-Speaking Skilled Worker

Stream, all applicants must have a French-language level of CLB 7 or above in all language competencies (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) AND an English-language level of CLB 6 in all competencies.

Acceptable tests for language ability are:

- International English Language Testing ("IELTS") [General Training Test only] or Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program ("CELPIP") [General Test only] for English testing; or
- Test d'Évaluation de Français ("TEF") for French testing.

Express Entry Ranking

All applicants must score a minimum of 400 CRS points in CIC's Express Entry system. The applicant's CRS score must remain at or above 400 during both the Ontario nomination processing stage and at the federal permanent residence processing stage.

Settlement Funds

All applicants must possess sufficient funds and/or income to cover settlement costs in Ontario. Funds must be unencumbered, readily transferable in a convertible currency, and supported by bank statements. Income may be demonstrated from ongoing employment in Ontario or a valid job offer in Ontario (the applicant must be able to legally work in Ontario).

Intention to Reside in Ontario

All applicants must intend to reside in Ontario, as demonstrated by a statement of intent and indication of ties to Ontario.

Additional Requirements

Additionally, if an applicant chooses to qualify under the FSW criteria, they will also be assessed against CIC's six selection factors to ensure that they meet the minimum requirement of 67 points of assessment under the FSW Class.

Selection and Processing of Ontario Express Entry Stream Applicants

To determine which candidates will receive a NOI, the OINP searches CIC's Express Entry pool and identifies potential candidates who meet the criteria of the two Ontario Express Entry Streams. If it identifies a desirable applicant in CIC's Express Entry pool, the applicant will receive a NOI from the OINP, through CIC's web portal.

The NOI invites the applicant to apply for nomination under the one of the two Express Entry Streams. Upon receipt of this NOI, the applicant will have 45 days to apply for a nomination certificate.

If the application is approved, the applicant will receive notification from the OINP. The Applicant will have 30 days to accept the nomination from Ontario, within CIC's Express Entry system.

A nomination from the OINP will give the applicant an additional 600 CRS points (once their express Entry Profile has been updated) and they should receive an ITA from CIC soon after. Once the applicant receives an ITA from CIC, they will have 60 days to apply for permanent residence.