



CANADA RELEASES EXPRESS ENTRY PERMANENT RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has released an Express Entry Permanent Residence program, which will become effective January 1, 2015. Under the new program, it is anticipated that selected Permanent Residence applications will be adjudicated in approximately six (6) months. Previously, Permanent Residence applications were adjudicated by Citizenship and Immigration Canada based on the order in which they were received. Under the Express Entry program, priority is given to certain applications, specifically those submitted by applicants with a Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) supported job offer.

Beginning January 1st, all potentially qualified applicants must first submit a permanent residence application online through the Citizenship and Immigration Canada [website](#). The system will screen the application for eligibility and selects qualified applicants for the Express Entry program pool. Eligibility for the Express Entry pool will be determined by the number of points an applicant receives, which are awarded based on age, education, language skills, professional experience and other human capital factors. Candidates receive extra points for Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) supported job offers or provincial nominations. Once awarded, the applicants in the pool with the most points will be selected for Express Entry, *i.e.* candidates are ranked against each other and there is not a minimum number of points that must be achieved to qualify.

It appears that under the new Express Entry program priority is being given to individuals working pursuant to an LMIA-approved Work Permit, as opposed to non-LMIA based Work Permits, such as the Intra-Company Transfer and NAFTA Professional Categories. Additionally, applicants without a Canadian job offer must register with the Canadian Job Bank, through which they may be able to secure an LMIA-based job offer.

Employers and applicants need to take these significant upcoming changes into consideration when planning to apply for permanent residency in Canada. As always, Foster will continue to monitor changes to immigration requirements and procedures and will provide future updates via our firm's website at www.fosterglobal.com.