

Guidelines for extending status and changing employers during the COVID-19 pandemic

The following are guidelines for agricultural workers inside Canada on how to submit a work permit extension application and how to [change employers](#) as per the public policy that was put in place on May 12, 2020.

- **Important Note:** The Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) employment contracts permit the transfer of workers within their work permit duration. Therefore, they do not need to follow the procedure below on changing employers as long as their work authorization is still valid.

Foreign nationals must submit their work permit applications online at this time. Only if you **can't** apply online because of a disability or because there is a [problem with the online application](#), may you apply on paper, but processing may take longer. If you apply on paper, make sure to send your application via courier and keep the tracking number.

Applicants who are in Canada are exempt from providing [biometrics](#) at this time.

WORK PERMIT EXTENSION APPLICATION

- A worker in Canada can apply to extend their work permit before it expires in order to benefit from implied status.
- They continue to have legal status in Canada and can continue to work under the same conditions of their previous work permit until a decision is made on the new one.
- Implied status applies only as long as the person remains in Canada – those who leave Canada automatically lose their implied status.

HOW TO APPLY

To extend your work permit without changing employers:

Apply for a new work permit from inside Canada. Use [Guide 5553 - Applying for a work permit inside Canada – extend, change conditions, initial and open work permits - online application](#) for assistance to fill out the forms and gather your supporting documents.

- You must have a copy of the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) from ESDC (your employer should give this to you)¹, AND a copy of an employment contract. If you are working in Quebec, you will also need to provide a Certificat d'acceptation du Québec (CAQ).

CHANGING EMPLOYERS

Eligibility requirements to the public policy:

¹ Employers can find more information on how to obtain a LMIA here: [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#)

You must:

- be in Canada with valid temporary resident status (including implied status);
- have submitted a work permit extension application in Canada for an employer-specific work permit, for which a decision has not yet been made;
- have held a valid work permit when your application for a work permit extension in Canada was submitted;
- intend to work for the new employer specified in the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) included in your work permit application;
- have applied for the public policy exemption using the Web form and applicable message (see below).

HOW TO APPLY

To change jobs or employers, follow these steps:

1. Apply for your work permit

Apply for a new work permit from inside Canada. Use [Guide 5553 - Applying for a work permit inside Canada – extend, change conditions, initial and open work permits - online application](#) for assistance to fill out the forms and gather your supporting documents.

- You must have a copy of the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) from ESDC (your employer should give this to you)², AND a copy of an employment contract from your future employer. If you are working in Quebec, you will also need to provide a Certificat d'acceptation du Québec (CAQ).

2. Fill out the IRCC Web form

In order to be considered for the public policy, after you apply, you must self-identify via the [IRCC Web form](#).

When you fill out the **Your enquiry** section, you must **copy the text** below that applies to your situation. Make sure you fill out the sections in square brackets, including the

- dates
- name(s) of employer(s)
- title of your job

Message for work permit holders changing jobs or employers

- *Priority Code PPCHANGEWORK2020: I am requesting consideration under the Temporary Public Policy to Exempt Foreign Nationals in Canada from Certain*

² Employers can find more information on how to obtain a LMIA here: [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#)

Requirements when Changing Employment During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic and ask that the applicable exemptions be granted until a decision is made on my work permit application or it is withdrawn.

- *I attest that I hold/held a work permit valid until [DATE] for employer [NAME] / in occupation [NOC CODE] and I have received new job offer for [new employer NAME] / [new occupation NOC CODE].*
- *I submitted my application for a work permit online. OR I submitted my application on paper and the postal/courier tracking number is NUMBER.*
- *I intend to work for [new employer NAME] / [new occupation NOC CODE] as specified in the aforementioned work permit.*
- *I understand that providing false, misleading or incorrect information is a violation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and may result in enforcement measures against me.*

If you applied on paper and don't know your application number, include your courier tracking number. This will ensure we can find your application.

3. Wait to receive an email from IRCC

Please note that identifying your request and confirming your eligibility for the public policy may require an estimated **10 business days** to complete. You may start working for your new employer **only** after you received an email confirmation that you meet the public policy requirements or that your work permit has been approved (whichever comes first). To find more information about the process, visit [Public policy on exemptions to work permit conditions when changing employment: COVID-19 program delivery](#).