



Wildfire recovery: Information for employers of foreign workers

As an employer, I've had to lay off temporary foreign workers as my business was impacted by the wildfire. Can a new employer hire impacted temporary foreign workers?

If temporary foreign workers have an employer-specific work permit and the business cannot operate due to the wildfires, they must find an employer willing to hire him/her and apply for a new Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). Their application must be made by August 3, 2016. It will be processed on a priority basis and the fee will not be charged.

The work permits for temporary foreign workers I employ are expiring. Can they extend their status?

If you employ a temporary worker affected by the wildfire, a grace period will be granted to apply for an extension to their temporary status. If their work permit expires after May 3, 2016 they can apply for an extension, as long as the application is made by August 3, 2016.

I've had to lay off temporary foreign workers as my business was impacted by the wildfire. They have been unsuccessful in securing a new employer and have to return to their home country. Do I have to pay for their airfare?

If your worker was employed in the Low-Wage stream, as the employer, you must pay for the cost of airfare for your employee to return to their home country. If you have concerns about meeting this obligation, please contact Service Canada, Employment Contact Centre toll-free at 1-800-367-5693.

What financial assistance is available to temporary foreign workers?

Temporary foreign workers may be eligible for the same provincial financial supports as other evacuees. They include Emergency Financial Assistance debit cards and Emergency Needs Allowance. Temporary foreign workers can also apply for federal Employment Insurance, if they meet eligibility criteria.

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I'm unable to provide a Record of Employment to my employees who are temporary foreign workers. Will this affect their EI application?

If they meet eligibility criteria, Fort McMurray evacuees, including temporary foreign workers, can apply for EI benefits without needing a Record of Employment. Affected workers can apply online (www.esdc.gc.ca/en/ei/apply.page) or in person. The Government of Canada has a reference code to facilitate and accelerate the processing of claims for affected workers. Apply by phone: 1-800-206-7218, choose option 6

Apply online, enter reference code 4812012016030516

The temporary foreign workers working for me have lost their documents or were damaged by the fire. Do they still have to pay replacement fees?

The following documents may be replaced at no cost and on an urgent priority basis until August 3, 2016.

- citizenship certificates
- permanent resident cards
- permanent resident travel document (paper or electronic)
- confirmation of permanent residence
- verification of status
- work permits
- study permits
- visitor records

Fees for work permit extensions are also waived until August 3, 2016. Applications will be processed on a priority basis.

Temporary foreign workers should contact their country's consular office for replacement passports. A list of offices can be found at <http://alberta.ca/consultesinalberta.cfm>.

I'm willing to hire impacted temporary foreign workers, but I do not want to apply for an LMIA. Can the provincial government issue a letter of support to assist with an application for a new work permit?

Letters of support are available only to applicants who have been nominated under the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP). To find out if the AINP may be able to assist with a letter of support, please call 1-877-427-6419 or email immigration.info@gov.ab.ca for details. Letters of support are not available to applicants who have not been nominated under the AINP.

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I'm unable to continue supporting my employee's Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) application. What will happen to their application?

If your employee has an AINP application waiting to be assessed and is now laid off due to the wildfire, the application will be put on hold for up to a year from the date of evacuation to give him/her more time to maintain eligibility. If the applicant is unable to meet AINP eligibility criteria, they may be able to explore alternative options for permanent residence. Please call the Immigrate to Alberta Information Service for assistance.

Important Contacts

Employment Insurance

- 1-800-206-7218, choose option 6 or online:
www.esdc.gc.ca/en/ei/apply.page

Emergency Financial Assistance

- 310-4455, or 1-844-406-3276 outside of Alberta

Immigrate to Alberta Information Service

- 1-877-427-6419 or email immigration.info@gov.ab.ca
- For questions about available settlement services, work permits, and immigration status

Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline

- 1-877-944-9955
- For questions on pay, working hours, termination related to the fire situation, and the loss of important documents

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