

Alberta Advantage Immigration Program Announces A New Expression Of Interest System



AAIP's new Expression of Interest System will launch on September 30, 2024.

The Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (“AAIP”) is a provincial economic immigration program that nominates individuals for permanent residence in Alberta. To be eligible for the AAIP, prospective nominees must have skills that will fill job shortages in Alberta or plan to start a business in the province.

The AAIP is administered by Alberta’s provincial government under a specific agreement with the federal government. Currently, the AAIP operates under a monthly application system. However, this system has experienced capacity issues in the recent years due to the AAIP’s popularity.

On August 7, 2024, AAIP [announced](#) a new Expression of Interest (“EOI”) system, which will come into effect on September 30, 2024. This is a continuous intake system, wherein applicants may submit an EOI at any time. As of September 30, 2024, candidates must submit an EOI to apply for the program. Candidates will then be entered into a selection pool, through which they may then receive an invitation to apply if selected. Whether an invitation to apply is provided is assessed based on candidate ranking, provincial needs and market priorities.

Prior to this announcement, the AAIP was seeing significant capacity issues. This resulted in significant delays in nomination processing, causing immigration issues for foreign nationals using the system. On February 15, 2024, the AAIP shut off its open application process. On June 11, 2024, the program switched to limiting applications to specific application dates once per month, creating a “gold rush” to submit applications in the window.

As a result of this new continuous intake system based on EOI, the AAIP will cancel the remaining monthly application acceptance dates for 2024. This will eliminate some of the uncertainty that the prior “gold rush” system was creating for applicants. Although everyone who is qualified will now be able to submit an EOI, there will still be some lack of certainty as to what skills, education and background will be required to receive an Invitation to Apply under the EOI system.

Takeaways for employers

Employers who wish to retain foreign workers in Alberta should recognize that ongoing issues with the AAIP and the federal Express Entry System are impacting the ability to secure permanent residency status. As a result, employers may see increasing requests or need to rely on the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and Labour Market Impact Assessments to secure further temporary working status for foreign national employees.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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