

International Credentials Recognition Act

Comes Into Force In BC



On July 1, 2024, the *International Credentials Recognition Act*, SBC 2023, c 39 (the “Act”) came into force in British Columbia.

The legislation is intended to address the shortage of skilled professionals in BC by reducing barriers for internationally trained professionals seeking jobs in this province. The Act is designed to improve the credential recognition process, making it more fair, efficient, and streamlined for applicants seeking certification from professional regulators.

The new legislation affects 29 professions across various sectors including education and social work; biology and environmental sciences; engineering and architecture; health and legal professions; and financial and real estate.

The Act outlines new responsibilities for 18 regulatory authorities, including the following:

1. Remove unfair Canadian work experience requirements;
2. Prohibit the need for applicants to provide new English language test results if they have already submitted valid results;
3. Charge similar fees for both international and domestic applicants; and
4. Publish all information about the regulatory body’s credential assessment processes online.

Note that there is a transition period for the Canadian work experience requirement exemptions. In particular, section 16 of the Act stipulates that unless a regulatory authority has been granted an exemption by the Superintendent of International Credential Recognition (the “Superintendent”), the regulatory authority must *not* impose a requirement for Canadian work experience for internationally trained applicants. “Canadian work experience” means any of the following: work experience obtained in Canada; work experience obtained in Canada under the Supervision of a Canadian supervisor; or work experience obtained outside Canada under the supervision of a Canadian supervisor. Section 16 does not apply to regulatory authorities during the transition period of January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025 (the “Transition Period”).

A regulatory authority may apply for an exemption from the Superintendent during the Transition Period in order to require internationally trained applicants to have

Canadian work experience.

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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