

The End Of Express Entry Points For Job Offers – What Employers Need To Know About The Latest Immigration Changes



The federal government has introduced a significant change in how Express Entry candidates are evaluated. Effective March 25, 2025, job offers will no longer earn candidates additional points in the Express Entry selection process.

This change is aimed at removing the potential incentive for illegally buying and selling Labour Market Impact Assessments (“**LMIA**s”). This move aligns with several different changes made across the immigration system in 2024 and 2025, all aimed at increasing integrity and combatting fraud within Canada’s immigration system.

Employers should be aware that under these changes, undertaking an LMIA to secure Express Entry selection points may no longer have the same value as it once did. Employers should consider all immigration options before deciding how best to support their workers.

The Express Entry system – a brief history

The Express Entry system is a Permanent Residency (“**PR**”) application pool for skilled workers. A points-based system called the Comprehensive Ranking System (“**CRS**”) is used to assess, score and rank applicants in the Express Entry pool. Applicants receive “points” based on factors like education, language ability, work experience and, until very recently, holding a valid job offer with a Canadian employer. Using these criteria, applicants receive a CRS score based on the number of points they have. They are then ranked within the pool based on CRS score, and are invited to apply for PR based on their rank.

What’s changing?

As of yesterday, a job offer will no longer earn applicants points in the Express Entry system. Prior to this change, applicants could earn an additional 50 or 200 CRS points (sometimes referred to as Arranged Employment Points) for having a valid job offer. Arranged Employment Points were available for certain types of job offers, including when an employer was named on the applicant’s closed employer-specific work permit for a full-time permanent position. LMIA-based work permits and certain other LMIA-exempt closed employer-specific work permits also previously earned applicants Arranged Employment Points.

Now a valid job offer will no longer earn applicants extra points, which would have previously improved their chances of being invited to apply for PR. Candidates will instead be assessed based on factors such as education levels, age, work experience and language skills.

This move is part of the government's broader strategy to enhance the integrity of the immigration system and combat fraud. By removing this incentive, the government aims to ensure the Express Entry process remains fair and transparent.

What does this mean for employers?

If your business relies on hiring international talent, these changes could alter how you attract and retain skilled workers. Employers may also need to reconsider requests made by their foreign worker staff for LMIA's or other work permit supports as they may no longer result in the CRS points intended.

While Express Entry candidates may no longer gain an advantage from having a job offer, employers still have a crucial role to play in the immigration process.

Employers should consider the following when choosing how to support their workers:

- **Compliance is key:** The government's focus on integrity means that employers must ensure their practices align with immigration laws and regulations. This includes maintaining accurate records, ensuring that job offers are genuine and adhering to labour market standards.
- **LMIA's:** For many employers, the LMIA process remains essential for hiring foreign workers. This process demonstrates that hiring international talent will not negatively affect the Canadian labour market. In addition to understanding that Express Entry candidates will no longer receive additional points for job offers, employers who rely on LMIA's should be aware of the potential for increased scrutiny in the processing of these applications.
- **Mitigating risks:** Moving forward, employers can expect more scrutiny on their employment practices with respect to temporary foreign workers. With Canada's immigration system rapidly changing, employers need to ensure they stay on top of their compliance obligations and how to meet them, as failure to do so may result in penalties.

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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