

ADVENTURE. ALBERTA.



Alberta Awaits

Spring 2008

A newsletter for people interested in moving to Alberta, Canada
Produced by the Government of Alberta - Employment and Immigration

This newsletter may also be found online at www.alberta-canada.com/immigration/about/albertaawaits.html

Alberta's labour market

Alberta employers report recruitment challenges due to a shortage of suitably skilled, qualified, and experienced people in the labour market. One way of addressing these challenges is through the recruitment of immigrants and temporary foreign workers.

To provide a picture of the magnitude of the labour shortages faced by Alberta employers, current labour demand and supply projections indicate a potential shortfall of nearly 110,000 workers by 2017. The unemployment rate in Alberta has been steadily declining over the past decade. In 2007, Alberta's unemployment rate was 3.5 per cent, the lowest in Canada. This indicates the workforce is virtually at full employment. As a result, the Alberta Government has placed an emphasis on the important role immigration will play in addressing skill shortages and helping sustain Alberta's strong economic growth.

Labour shortages stretch throughout all areas of the economy and include a variety of skilled and semi-skilled occupations across all industries. Crucial shortages in Alberta consist of those in health professions, including doctors and nurses, as well as construction and engineering related occupations. This translates into a range of job opportunities for newcomers to Alberta. For more information about skill shortages in Alberta visit <http://employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/2654.html>

Immigration is a priority for the Government of Alberta. The website, www.albertacanada.com/immigration, can help you

learn about finding work and adjusting to common practices in Alberta's workplaces. This site will help you learn about:

- How to find a job: Advice and information on finding the right job for you
- Recognition of credentials: Find out if your current work or educational credentials will be recognized in Alberta or if you should seek additional credentials
- Temporary foreign workers: Information for those who plan to work in Alberta for a short period before returning to their home country
- The Workplace: Information about the Alberta workplace, including employment standards, paycheques, health and safety standards and employer expectations.
- Jobs in Alberta: A list of job vacancies
- How to become a permanent resident of Canada through Alberta's Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)



Healthcare



In accordance with the Canada Health Act, Alberta has a publicly administered and funded health care system that guarantees Albertans receive universal access to medically necessary hospital and health care services. There are monthly premiums to be paid by all those enrolled in the Alberta Healthcare Insurance Plan. It is common for employers to cover the entire monthly premium amount, or a portion of it. For more information, see the useful links listed below.

Within the first three months of your arrival, you must register with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan by contacting Alberta Health and Wellness at 780-427-1432 or health.ahcipmail@gov.ab.ca.

Once registered with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan, you will receive your Alberta Health Care Card along with your personal Health Care Number. Keep this card/number in a safe place as it is for your use only and may be requested in order to obtain health services. For more

information on what health services are covered under this plan:

www.health.gov.ab.ca/ahcip/AHCIP_brochure-NCN0009.pdf

Useful Links:

Financial Institution Listing- www.cfeedayplanner.com/en/key-lists.php, click on the link for 'List of Financial Institutions'

Alberta Health and Wellness- www.health.gov.ab.ca/ahcip/AHCIP.html

Driver's Licence Information-www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/Drivers_MotorVehicles.cfm

Alberta Ministry of Transportation/Ministry of Infrastructure - www.infratrans.gov.ab.ca/DriversVehicles.htm

Canada Health Act- www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/nrcp/2002/2002_care-soinsbk4_e.html

Before and After Immigration Checklist - www.alberta-canada.com/immigration/immigrate/checklists.html





Driver's License/ID

If you come to Alberta with a valid driver's licence from Russia, you will be permitted to use it for the first three months of your residency. After the three months, you will be required to apply for an Alberta driver's licence and surrender your old licence. To obtain your Alberta driver's licence, you will be required to pass the learner's test and the advanced road test. For more information about how to become a licensed driver in Alberta, see the useful links.



Holders of an International Operator's Licence issued in Russia may only use it to operate the same type or class of vehicle in Alberta that is specified on that licence. You may use such a licence for 1 year or until it expires, whichever comes first.

A photo identification card is also available to an Alberta Resident who does not or cannot hold a valid Alberta operator's licence. The minimum age required for a resident of Alberta to apply for photo identification is 12 years of age.

In order to obtain an operator's licence or photo identification, proof of legal Canadian (i.e.: visa, permanent resident card, etc.) and Alberta (i.e.: 3 party residential lease agreement, letter from Alberta based employer, etc.) residency must be provided.



Banking

Start by setting up an account (chequing, savings or combination of both) with a financial institution of your choice. Each financial institution offers different interest rates, services charges, and additional bonuses so do some research to determine which one is best for you. Once your account is opened, you can transfer your current account balance into your new account.

Social Insurance Number

The Social Insurance Number (SIN) is a nine-digit number that you need to work in Canada and to have access to government programs and benefits. It is issued in a credit card style format and can be used as an official form of identification. Your SIN card/number should be kept confidential and in a safe place. For the fastest and most secure method, apply for your SIN by visiting a Service Canada Centre near you. For locations and more information visit: <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/sc/sin/>





Russian Community in Alberta

More than 92,000 Albertans are of Russian descent, the majority located in Calgary and Edmonton. The Russian communities in both of these cities have established Russian language schools, churches, grocery stores and restaurants which contribute to the diverse ethnic groups in both these cities, and provide the Russian community with a link home.

In 2007, the Russian community in Edmonton participated in the Heritage Days festival for the first time. The Heritage Days Festival is held every August, and it gives Edmonton's diverse ethnic groups the chance to showcase their culture through arts and crafts, creative performances and cuisine. In Calgary, the Russian community organizes events such as the Pushkin Festival and the Russian Winter Ball, which is a Christmas party for children that involves theatrical performances and Christmas celebrations. Ethno-cultural associations, such as the Edmonton Russian

Recreation Club and the Calgary Russian Community are other ways the Russian communities in Alberta welcome newcomers and celebrate their culture. You can learn more about these associations through these links:

www.russianalberta.ca/association
Russian-Canadian Association of Alberta

www.aboutrussianheritage.com
Russian Heritage Cultural Development Association

www.zarubegom.com
Official Site of the Russian Community in Calgary For more information contact the Executive Director- Yuriy Rogvik (403) 640 0937

russoclub.tripod.com
Edmonton Russian Recreation Club

Schools and English as a Second Language (ESL)

It is advisable that you apply for a study permit for your children if you plan to come to Alberta as a temporary foreign worker with your children at the pre-school, primary or secondary school level. If you are concerned about their English language capabilities, contact the local school board in your area. The school board will be able to help you find a suitable school that will meet your children's ESL needs. Most schools in Alberta either have ESL programs, or other ways to support students whose first language is not English. Such programs offer you and your children with the knowledge and support needed for your children's smooth transition into Alberta's school system.

Useful Links:

Alberta Ministry of Education www.education.alberta.ca

Alberta Ministry of Education's school and school board directory www.education.alberta.ca/apps/schoolsdir

Calgary School Board www.cbe.ab.ca/schools/schools.asp

Calgary Catholic School District www.cssd.ab.ca

ESL information from the Calgary Board of Education www.cbe.ab.ca/programs/prog-esl.asp#centres

Edmonton Public School Board www.epsb.ca

Edmonton Catholic School District www.ecsd.net