

Two New Canadian Immigration Measures for International Doctors

Authors: Jennifer McRae Katie Leung

published 12/12/2025

On December 8, 2025, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced two new measures to support international doctors in working and remaining in Canada, namely, 1) a **new Express Entry** for international doctors and 2) **additional spots for international doctors** under the Provincial Nominee Program.



We have included the details from the announcement on both programs below. We expect more details about the new measures to be released in early 2026.

The announcement can be found here: **Targeted immigration measures to boost Canada's supply of doctors - Canada.ca.**

1. New Express Entry Category for international doctors - invitations to apply will be issued in early 2026

Currently, international doctors seeking Canadian Permanent Residence through Express Entry must apply under either the Canadian Experience Class (**CEC**) or the Federal Skilled Worker (**FSW**) Program.

Under the Canadian Experience Class, the challenge some international doctors face are the high Comprehensive Ranking System (**CRS**) scores required to be invited to apply. The Comprehensive Ranking System takes into account many factors, such as age, education, language results, work experience, etc. The CRS score under the CEC for the lowest-ranked candidates invited in the past 10 draws ranged from 518 to 547 points, which is quite high. This creates challenges for international doctors seeking permanent residence to stay in Canada despite their strong educational credentials.

Regarding the Federal Skilled Worker Program, it has essentially been on pause, as the last round of invitations under this program was in February 2023.

Here is what we know about the new Express Entry Category for international doctors so far:

- It will target international doctors with at least 12 months of full-time (or equal amount of part-time), continuous Canadian work experience gained within the last 3 years
- The international doctors will need to be in the following eligible occupations:
 - **NOC 31102** - General practitioners and family physicians
 - **NOC 31101** - Specialist in surgery
 - **NOC 31100** - Specialists in clinical and laboratory medicine
- Invitations to apply for the new Express Entry category will be issued in early 2026

Therefore, it is recommended that any international doctors who are working in Canada on a Work Permit and currently meet or will soon meet the eligibility requirements, obtain the necessary documents and submit an Express Entry Profile, so they may be in the best position to receive an invitation to apply when IRCC conducts the draw. Some required documents for an Express Entry Profile include a recent approved English language test and Educational Credential Assessment by an approved organization.

At TDS Law, we can guide interested physicians through the document-gathering process and review the documents to ensure they meet IRCC's requirements.

2. 5,000 additional spots for international doctors under the Provincial Nominee Program

IRCC has announced an additional 5,000 spots for provinces to nominate licensed doctors with job offers. In addition, IRCC committed to expediting the Work Permit processing time to 14 days for nominated doctors, allowing them to work while awaiting Permanent Residence. Essentially, this new measure could allow provinces to attract international doctors who have received a job offer to come to Canada and work within a short timeframe while their Permanent Residence application is pending.

Information about how the nomination spots will be allocated amongst the provinces or the eligibility requirements for each province has not been announced yet.

Next Steps

We will provide a more detailed update once more information on these new measures are released. At **TDS Law**, we can assist physicians and their families in navigating the immigration process through the Express Entry system and/or the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program.

For more information, please contact **Jennifer McRae** at jem@tdslaw.com or **Katie Leung**

at khl@tdslaw.com.

DISCLAIMER: *This article is presented for informational purposes only. The content does not constitute legal advice or solicitation and does not create a solicitor client relationship. The views expressed are solely the authors' and should not be attributed to any other party, including Thompson Dorfman Sweatman LLP (TDS), its affiliate companies or its clients. The authors make no guarantees regarding the accuracy or adequacy of the information contained herein or linked to via this article. The authors are not able to provide free legal advice. If you are seeking advice on specific matters, please contact Keith LaBossiere, CEO & Managing Partner at kdl@tdslaw.com, or 204.934.2587. Please be aware that any unsolicited information sent to the author(s) cannot be considered to be solicitor-client privileged.*

While care is taken to ensure the accuracy for the purposes stated, before relying upon these articles, you should seek and be guided by legal advice based on your specific circumstances. We would be pleased to provide you with our assistance on any of the issues raised in these articles.