International Applicant Guide

The following guide has been created to assist international emergency responders and paramedics navigate the immigration process and joining BC Emergency Health Services. If you have questions during the process, please feel free to reach out to our recruitment team at careers@bcehs.ca, who will help where we can.

Please note: This is not an exhaustive guide, and each situation is unique. We strongly recommend seeking the counsel of a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant based in British Columbia who will be familiar with the details of the immigration process and will be able to advise you on the most appropriate path based on your unique situation.

Key Considerations

There are two main factors that will determine your ability to relocate to BC and begin working with BCEHS: your license to practice, and your legal status in Canada.

Securing a BC License

All out-of-province applicants are required to successfully complete the BC jurisprudence exam through the Emergency Medical Assistants Licensing Board (EMALB) before a license will be issued.

The jurisprudence exam consists of 25 questions, and applicants must achieve 80% or higher to pass. Applicants have three attempts to complete the jurisprudence exam successfully. The EMALB has provided a checklist for each license level to help you understand which license your current qualifications are most closely aligned with.

Steps for International Accreditation

- Your current regulatory body begins the process by submitting the Practitioner Essential Competencies Comparison form to the EMALB. **Note**: when applying for a license in British Columbia, **you do not need to be licensed by COPR.**
- Submit an Application for License form (and copies of your program certificate or transcript.
- Submit an online EMA Professional Experience Record form.
- Undergo a criminal record check.
- Complete your licensing exam

Note: meeting Language Proficiency Requirements (IELTS level 7 or higher in each category) are mandatory for both EMALB and for BCEHS.

Once you have received your license from the EMALB, you can apply for a position and our recruitment team will support you as you move through the application process.

Your Legal Status in Canada

The two paths available are via a **work permit** or **permanent residency**. A work permit is limited in duration, and can be limited to a specific employer, whereas permanent residency offers a path to Canadian citizenship and access to social services.

Generally speaking, you should apply for permanent residency (PR) if you intend to live in Canada indefinitely and desire the benefits and stability of long-term settlement. Applying for a work permit isn't necessarily a required step, but it may be easier to obtain a work permit than permanent residency depending on your country of origin/citizenship. It is also advantageous to use the work permit to gain experience to improve your qualifications for permanent residency.

You generally need a path to permanent residency such as through the BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP), Express Entry, or family sponsorship. The BC PNP is available at the provincial level, while Express Entry program is a federal program.

BC PNP

International applicants can potentially qualify for the BC PNP, which is a more streamlined entry path to Canada for skilled professionals. Once nominated by the BC PNP, international applicants are then able to apply for a LMIA-exempt work permit supported by their BC PNP nomination and their BCEHS job offer and for permanent residency. To be eligible, you will need to meet specific requirements, including having your paramedic credentials assessed for equivalency with BC standards and securing a job offer from a BC-based employer.

Once you have received a permanent, full-time job offer (minimum 30 hours per week), our team can provide supporting documentation and guidance through the BC PNP program. International applicants can apply for a work permit online and if you are from a visa-exempt country, you also have the option of applying for your work permit at a port of entry. As you will be working in a health occupation, you must complete an Up Front Medical Exam from an IRCC-approved panel physician before applying for a work permit to ensure that your work permit is not restricted from working in Healthcare.

Express Entry

If an international paramedic meets the eligibility requirements of the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), they can apply for permanent residency through Canada's Express Entry system. If they do not qualify for Express Entry, they can apply through the Non-Express Entry pathway if they are nominated by the BC PNP.

After receiving a nomination from the BC PNP or being invited to apply through an Express Entry program, you can apply for permanent residency to the Canadian government.

Fees

Please note that the costs associated with immigration to Canada are outside our control and are subject to change. At the time of writing, the following chart summarizes the current fees in Canadian dollars

BC Provincial Nominee Fee	
Confirmation of Nomination	$1475
Work/Study Permit Fees	
Work Permit (Primary Applicant)	$155
Open Work Permit for Spouse or Common-Law Partner	$255
Study Permits for dependents under 18 years of age	$150 per dependent
Visitor Records for Children/dependents under 5 years of age	$100 per dependent
Biometrics (14+ years of age) - US citizens exempt	$85 per person, or $170 for family 2+
Permanent Residency Fees	
Application for Permanent Residency (Primary Applicant)	$1525
Application for Permanent Residency (Spouse/Common-Law Partner if applicable)	$1525
Application for dependents	$260 per dependent
Biometrics (14+ years of age, required for all Foreign Nationals)	$85 per person, or $170 for family 2+

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm an international paramedic, and I'm interested in moving to Canada. Can I apply to BCEHS right away?

While we welcome the opportunity to work with international applicants, we can only move your application forward once you have:

- a valid and unrestricted work permit, and
- a valid EMR or PCP license issued by, and in good standing with EMALB.

What are work permit restrictions, and what should I look for?

If you are unsure if your work permit has restrictions, please to the **Conditions**, which are summarized on your work permit. A condition that stipulates "**Not authorized to work in childcare, primary/secondary school teaching, health service field operations**" will prohibit you from working with BCEHS until that restriction is removed.

In order to remove the Healthcare restriction, you must complete an Upfront Medical Examination, and submit it to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Please refer to the Government of Canada website for additional details.

My work permit is due to expire soon. Can I still apply?

If you already have a work permit, and it is due to expire within a year of applying to BCEHS, please apply for an extension with IRCC; with the minimum timeline being 30 days prior to expiry.

Once you have received confirmation of receipt of your application, you will be granted **Maintained Status**, which allows you to keep working under the same conditions until a decision is made, however you may not be able to begin working in a new job or role until your extension has been approved. Also if you are on maintained status, it's not recommended that you leave Canada until your new permit is approved. If you do leave Canada while on maintained status, upon re-entry to Canada your status will change to visitor, and you will not be able to work until your new work permit is approved.

Can BCEHS sponsor my Work Permit or PR application?

Under certain circumstances, BCEHS can sponsor Work Permit applications being submitted through the BC PNP The conditions we operate under include:

- You must be offered an **Indefinite Temporary** or **Permanent** position
- You must be able to work a minimum of 80% full-time equivalency (30 hours/week)
- You must have the intention of permanently settling in British Columbia