

Mobility: Immigration alert

October 2023

Canada

Pilot program launches to streamline work permit processing for Canadian employers recruiting in the Philippines

Executive summary

On 19 October 2023, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, the Honourable Marc Miller announced the launch of the CAN Work Philippines program - a pilot program aimed at streamlining the work permit processing for eligible Canadian employers recruiting in the Philippines.

Background

As an important part of advancing Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy and recognizing that the Philippines is a major source of newcomers to Canada, the Canadian government has announced the introduction of a pilot program to fast-track the work permit application process for Filipino nationals applying for a work permit to work for eligible employers in Canada.

Key developments

This pilot program will implement new procedures, technologies, and policies intended to accelerate work permit processing, allowing employers to schedule group appointments for medical examinations and biometrics for potential employees.

While specific details of the pilot program are still to be released, to participate in this program, the Canadian employer must be recruiting from the Philippines and either hiring approximately 50 or more workers or hiring for critical occupations in sectors such as health care, construction, and agri-food. These employers must also demonstrate their commitment to fair and ethical recruitment guidelines, as published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

What this means

The CAN Work Philippines pilot program will give Canada an important advantage in the global race for talent, and will support Canadian industries in addressing labor market shortages.

The government is hoping that the streamlining of processes will help reduce overall processing times at the Canadian visa office in the Philippines, which currently sit at about 14 weeks (and possibly longer for non-essential workers). The intention is to get Filipino temporary workers on the ground and working in Canada faster, which will be of benefit to both Canadian employers and Filipino workers alike, as well as further strengthen the social ties between Canada and the Philippines.

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your EY Law LLP professional.



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