# PROCESSING OF VISA FOR TEMPORARY WORKERS BOUND FOR CANADA

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The Canadian Embassy in Manila has provided information on the issuance of visas for temporary workers intending to work in Canada to ensure that prospective workers and employers comply with Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and Regulations.

According to the Embassy, processing of visa application is on a first come, first served basis. This is to ensure that the processing of visa applications is treated in a fair manner as possible. Due to the growing number of visa applications received which has resulted to backlogs, efforts are being made to shorten the processing time of visa applications. The Embassy is currently processing applications which were submitted 18 weeks ago.

The following are some processing tips in order to facilitate the processing of Temporary Work Permit applications:

- Visa applicants are encouraged to provide as much information as possible on the following:

- The mode of recruitment i.e. whether the worker was recruited through a recruitment agency or through relatives or contracts.

- The mode of selection i.e. whether the worker was selected through an interview, written exam or any other procedures.

- The steps taken to verify the worker's level of competency in education, experience and of the English language.

- The type of compensation the worker will receive.

- Visa applicants are required to submit an NBI Clearance. However, NBI Clearance with notation of "No Criminal Record" indicates that there may be a criminal concerns and the visa application may take longer to process.

- Visa applicants are required to pass an Immigration Medical Examination at a Designated Medical Practitioner to ensure their medical fitness prior to the issuance of a Temporary Work Permit. The medical examination request will normally be made at the same time with the visa application but it does not mean the visa application is accepted.

- All work permit applications will cost CDN$150 or its equivalent and is not refundable in case of visa denial. Payment in Canadian dollars is recommended rather than in Philippine pesos.

- Visa applicants should provide evidence that they will return to the Philippines. Applicants who have been unemployed for several years, single and has close relatives in Canada might be a cause for concern. However, a relative in Canada is certainly not a bar to acceptance of an application.

- Wages paid to Filipino workers should be the same as the salaries paid to Canadians for the same job. If the employer pays less, he would be charged with violations of the Canadian Human Rights Legislation.

- The processing of both the Labor Market Opinion (LMO is given by HRSDC in Canada) and the work permit (by the Canadian Embassy in Manila) at the same time is possible if an applicant is applying for a work permit at the skill level of A, B, or O (for higher skilled areas). Work Permit will only be issued after receipt of the LMO by the Embassy. The application maybe refused if the LMO is not received by the Embassy within 90 days.

- Workers applying under the Temporary Foreign Workers in Occupations Under Pressure Program will only be allowed to work for 2 years in Canada.

- Employers are advised to consider the following criteria during the selection process:

- Philippine High School Level has only the equivalent of 10 years high school in Canada. In order to have the equivalent of Canadian High School, completion of an additional 2 years of studies is necessary.

- Applicants must speak English or French at a level which will allow him to perform the job required and to function in Canadian society.

- If the applicant does not meet the above criteria of language or education/ experience, the employer must submit a letter stating why the particular worker is essential for the Canadian operations.

- Travel costs are to be borne by the employer and are not recoverable from the worker. Employers must ensure that there are no recruitment fees paid by the worker to any recruitment agencies.

For the information of all concerned.

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