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WORK PERMITS | PERMANENT RESIDENCE APPLICANTS IN CANADA

Bridging Open Work Permit (BOWP) Guide

A bridging open work permit lets you keep working in Canada while IRCC decides your permanent residence application. It is for principal applicants in certain economic programs whose work permit is about to expire.

PERMIT TYPE	APPLY FROM	USUAL LENGTH	IRCC FEE
Open (A75)	**Inside Canada**	**24 months**	**$255 CAD**

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Scope of this guide: This guide is for principal applicants for permanent residence who are in Canada on a work permit. Start with the eligibility checker in section 1 for a quick result.

1. BOWP Eligibility Checker

Answer each question from the dropdown lists to see if you can apply for a BOWP. The checker follows IRCC's BOWP client page and officer instructions.

Choose an answer in each list; the result updates after each choice. Questions 6 and 7 only count for the programs shown. The form works in Adobe Acrobat Reader and most desktop PDF readers. If no result appears, use the checker on the Neximm webpage for this guide, or the checklist in section 4.

1. Which permanent residence program did you apply to?

Choose an answer

2. Are you the principal applicant on the PR application?

Choose an answer

3. Where are you now?

Choose an answer

4. What is your status in Canada?

Choose an answer

5. How far is your PR application?

Choose an answer

6. Does your nomination letter say "Restrictions on employment: Yes"? Provincial Nominee Program only

Choose an answer

7. Was your CSQ valid when you applied for permanent residence? Quebec programs only

Choose an answer

8. Where do you plan to live?

Choose an answer

Your result

Self-check only: This is general information, not legal advice. The officer decides based on your facts and documents.

2. What Is a BOWP?

A BOWP is an open work permit for people already working in Canada who have applied for permanent residence (PR). It covers the gap between the end of your current work permit and the decision on your PR application (officer instructions). IRCC issues it under paragraph R205(a), exemption code **A75**, so you do not need a job offer or a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA).

ITEM	DETAILS
Who applies	The principal applicant on an eligible PR application, from inside Canada
Status needed	A valid work permit, maintained status as a worker, or the right to restore worker status
PR stage	Depends on the program: completeness check passed, eligibility passed, or approval in principle
Length	Usually 24 months from the date of issue, and not past your passport expiry
IRCC fees	$155 work permit fee + $100 open work permit holder fee = $255

3. Eligible PR Programs

Only some PR programs lead to a BOWP. Each one needs a different PR stage and proof (IRCC, officer instructions).

PROGRAM	PR STAGE YOU NEED	PROOF TO UPLOAD AND WHERE YOU CAN WORK
Express Entry: Federal Skilled Worker, Canadian Experience Class or Federal Skilled Trades	Complete e-APR that passed the completeness check	Acknowledgement of receipt (AOR) letter. **Work:** Any employer, anywhere in Canada
Provincial Nominee Program through Express Entry	Complete e-APR that passed the completeness check	Nomination letter showing no employment restrictions, and the AOR letter. **Work:** Any employer, in the nominating province only
Provincial Nominee Program, base stream (not Express Entry)	Passed the PR eligibility assessment (IRCC holds the BOWP until then)	Nomination letter showing no employment restrictions, and the AOR letter. **Work:** Any employer, in the nominating province only
Quebec skilled worker class	PR application passed the completeness check; CSQ valid when you applied	CSQ, and the letter with your permanent application number (starts with E). **Work:** Any employer, in Quebec only
Quebec investor class	PR application passed the completeness check; CSQ valid when you applied	CSQ, and the letter with your permanent application number (starts with E). **Work:** Any employer; you must live in Quebec
Home Child Care Provider Pilot or Home Support Worker Pilot (2019 to 2024)	Approved in principle after proving 6 months of qualifying work experience	Approval in principle letter. **Work:** Any employer, anywhere outside Quebec
Caring for children class or caring for people with high medical needs class (applied before June 18, 2019)	Approved in principle	Approval in principle letter. **Work:** Any employer, anywhere outside Quebec

PROGRAM	PR STAGE YOU NEED	PROOF TO UPLOAD AND WHERE YOU CAN WORK
Agri-Food Pilot	Approved in principle	Approval in principle letter (apply online). **Work:** Any employer, anywhere outside Quebec

Not eligible: the Home Care Worker Immigration pilots that opened in 2025 (IRCC), the Yukon Community Pilot (IRCC), family sponsorship (sponsored spouses have their own open work permit), and any program not listed above.

4. Who Can Apply?

You must meet **all** of these general rules when you submit your application (officer instructions, IRCC). Tick each one that applies.

- ☐ I am in Canada, after entering as a temporary resident
- ☐ I have a valid work permit, or maintained status after applying to extend it, or my permit expired less than 90 days ago and I can restore my status
- ☐ I am the principal applicant on my PR application, not a spouse or dependant
- ☐ My PR application has reached the stage my program needs (section 5)
- ☐ I will live outside Quebec (or in Quebec, for the Quebec programs)
- ☐ I will apply online, not at the border or a visa office

Who does not qualify: people working without a permit under a work permit exemption (other than maintained status), applicants at a port of entry, spouses and dependants of PR applicants, and anyone inadmissible to Canada (officer instructions).

5. The PR Stage You Need

STAGE	PROGRAMS	WHAT IT MEANS
Completeness check	Express Entry (FSW, CEC, FST, PNP through Express Entry), Quebec skilled worker, Quebec investor	IRCC confirmed your PR application is complete (R10) and sent your acknowledgement of receipt (AOR)
Eligibility passed	Base PNP (not Express Entry)	You send the AOR. IRCC holds the BOWP until your PR application passes the eligibility assessment
Approval in principle	Agri-Food Pilot, caring classes, Home Child Care Provider and Home Support Worker pilots	You received the approval in principle letter

PNP update until December 31, 2026: PNP applicants in Canada who have no AOR yet can send the email confirming their online PR submission, with proof of PR fee payment, instead of the AOR (Operational bulletin 699).

PNP nominations: Your nomination letter must show "Restrictions on employment: No". If the nomination is restricted, IRCC will not issue a BOWP, but you may qualify for an employer-specific PNP work permit (T13) (officer instructions).

An Express Entry profile or an invitation to apply is not a PR application. If your permit will expire before you can submit your PR application, extend your current permit instead; your employer may need a new LMIA or job offer (IRCC).

6. When to Apply and Keeping Status

- **Timing:** Apply once your PR application reaches the right stage and your permit is close to expiring. IRCC's help centre still says Express Entry applicants can apply when their permit expires in 4 months or less (IRCC Help Centre).
- **Maintained status:** If you apply before your permit expires, you can keep working under the same conditions while IRCC decides (IRCC Help Centre).
- **Expired permit:** Within 90 days, apply for the BOWP and restoration together. You cannot work until it is approved (IRCC).
- **Travel:** You can leave Canada while IRCC processes your application. If your permit expires while you are away, you cannot work until the BOWP is approved, and PNP applicants must be in Canada with valid status when IRCC decides (IRCC).

7. How to Apply

1. Sign in to your IRCC secure account and apply online to change the conditions of your work permit (form IMM 5710) (IRCC).
2. Choose **"Open work permit"** as the type of work permit. A BOWP cannot be issued if you choose another type (officer instructions).
3. Upload your PR proof in the **"Client information"** field: the AOR, your nomination letter, your CSQ letter or your approval in principle letter.
4. Quebec programs: answer **"Yes"** to "Have you been told by an IRCC office that you are approved in principle for permanent residence in Canada?"
5. Pay the work permit fee **and** the open work permit holder fee, plus the restoration fee if needed. Give biometrics if asked.
6. Apply on paper only if you cannot apply online (IRCC).

8. Documents Checklist

- [ ] Passport (all pages with stamps or visas)
- [ ] Current work permit, or proof you applied to extend it
- [ ] AOR letter for your PR application (or, for PNP until December 31, 2026, the submission email and fee receipt)
- [ ] PNP: nomination letter showing no employment restrictions
- [ ] Quebec programs: CSQ, and the letter with your permanent application number (starts with E)
- [ ] Agri-Food Pilot, caring classes and caregiver pilots: approval in principle letter
- [ ] Digital photo, proof of fee payment and any documents in IRCC's online checklist

9. Permit Length, Conditions and Fees

ITEM	DETAILS
Length	Usually 24 months from the date of issue, and not past your passport expiry (officer instructions)
Employer and job	Open: any employer and any job, shown as NOC 99999
Location	PNP: nominating province only. Quebec skilled worker: Quebec only. Other programs: anywhere in Canada
Medical	If you have not had an immigration medical exam, some jobs (such as health care or child care) may be restricted
Renewal	Case by case, if your PR application is still in process. Quebec extensions are usually 12 months

FEE (CAD)	AMOUNT
Work permit processing fee	$155
Open work permit holder fee	$100
Restoration of status (if needed)	$246.25 extra
Biometrics (if required)	$85

Fees are from the IRCC fee list. If IRCC refuses a BOWP because the PR application is incomplete, it refunds the open work permit holder fee but not the processing fee (officer instructions).

10. Spouses and Children

Your spouse, common-law partner or dependent child cannot get a BOWP. Once you hold a BOWP, they may apply for a family open work permit (code C49) from inside or outside Canada, if they are included in your PR application (C49 instructions, IRCC).

11. Common Refusal Reasons

REFUSAL REASON	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	HOW TO PREPARE
Wrong PR stage	No AOR, PR application incomplete, or no approval in principle yet	Wait for the right letter, or extend your permit
Restricted nomination	PNP letter says "Restrictions on employment: Yes"	Apply for a T13 employer-specific permit instead
Wrong permit type	"Open work permit" not selected on the form	Check the form before you pay
No valid status	Permit expired over 90 days ago, or no work permit	Apply before your permit expires
Not the principal	Spouse or dependant applied for a BOWP	Apply for a family open work permit instead

12. How Neximm Can Help

A BOWP depends on timing: your PR application must reach the right stage before your work permit runs out. A late application or the wrong permit type can leave you unable to work.

Neximm Immigration is an RCIC-led consultancy based in Dehradun, India. A licensed Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant advises on and represents your file. We check your program, dates and documents before you apply.

- **Eligibility review:** confirming your program and PR stage qualify
- **Timing plan:** extending your permit or applying for a BOWP before it expires
- **PNP and Quebec checks:** nomination restrictions and CSQ rules
- **Status planning:** maintained status and restoration options
- **Family permits:** open work permits for your spouse or partner
- **Application preparation:** forms, uploads, fees and follow-up with IRCC

Book your BOWP assessment today

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Official IRCC sources

IRCC – Bridging open work permit for permanent residence applicants: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/pr-work-permits/bridging.html

IRCC program delivery instructions – Bridging open work permits [R205(a) – A75]: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/provincial-nominees-permanent-resident-applicants/bridging-open-work-permits.html

IRCC Operational bulletin 699 – PNP work permits before an AOR (June 9, 2026): https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/bulletins-2026/699.html

IRCC Help Centre – Can I renew my post-graduation work permit?: https://ircc.canada.ca/english/helpcentre/answer.asp?qnum=676

IRCC Help Centre – Maintained status: https://ircc.canada.ca/english/helpcentre/answer.asp?qnum=188

IRCC – If your work permit expired (restoration): https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/extend/expired-permit.html

IRCC – Problems applying online in Canada: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/problems-applying-online-in-canada-work-study-visit.html

IRCC – Home Care Worker Immigration pilots: after you apply: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/caregivers/home-care-worker-immigration-pilots/child-care-home-support/after-apply.html

IRCC – Yukon Community Pilot open work permits: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/special-initiatives-pilot-project/yukon-exemption-code-a75.html

IRCC – Open work permit for sponsored spouses in Canada: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/family-sponsorship/spouse-partner-children/spouse-common-law-partner-canada-open-work-permit.html

IRCC – Family members of PR applicants [C49]: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/public-policy-competitiveness-economy/c49.html

IRCC – Open work permits for family members: how to apply: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/special-instructions/spouses-dependent-children/apply.html

IRCC fee list: https://ircc.canada.ca/english/information/fees/fees.asp

This guide offers general information and is not legal advice. It is based on IRCC web pages and program delivery instructions reviewed in October 2026. IRCC rules can change at any time. Contact Neximm Immigration for advice on your own situation.