NEXIMM
WHERE IMMIGRATION MATTERS !!

WORK PERMITS | LMIA-EXEMPT | INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAM

C11 Work Permit for Entrepreneurs and Self-Employed Business Owners

The C11 work permit lets a foreign business owner come to Canada to start, buy or run their own business without an LMIA. It is for owners staying temporarily, and it needs real proof that the business will create jobs or another significant benefit for Canadians.

CODE	LMIA	OWNERSHIP	NORMAL MAXIMUM
C11 · R205(a)	**Not required**	**51% or more**	**18 months**

Table of Contents

Click any section to jump to it. Use “Back to contents” at the top of each page to return. Tick the boxes in section 10 to track your progress.

01	C11 Eligibility Checker
02	What Is the C11 Work Permit?
03	Visitors and Work Permit Holders in Canada
04	Entrepreneur or Self-Employed?
05	Eligibility and the 51% Rule
06	Significant Benefit and the Business Plan
07	NOC Code and TEER Category
08	Funds, Duration and Extensions
09	C11 Situations IRCC Recognizes
10	Documents to Prepare
11	Why Applications Get Refused
12	Building a Strong C11 Case
13	How Neximm Can Help

C11, C60 or A77: IRCC split its business owner instructions in 2022. C11 now covers only owners seeking temporary residence. Owners with provincial or territorial support who plan to apply for permanent residence use C60, and Start-up Visa applicants use A77 (IRCC; work permit codes).

1. C11 Eligibility Checker

Answer one question at a time. You will see where you can apply from (including as a visitor or work permit holder in Canada), how strong a C11 case looks, and what to fix. It follows IRCC's C11 officer instructions. Not sure which NOC to use? Try the NOC/TEER checker in section 7.

Pick an answer in each list; the result updates as you go. Q2 is only for people in Canada, Q3 for people outside Canada or visitors; Q8 and Q9 do not apply to jockeys. Works in Adobe Acrobat Reader and most desktop PDF readers.

1. Where are you right now?
Choose an answer

2. What is your current status in Canada? Only if in Canada
Choose an answer

3. Which passport or status do you hold? Outside Canada or visitors
Choose an answer

4. What are your long-term plans in Canada?
Choose an answer

5. What share of the business will you own and control?
Choose an answer

6. Who will do the day-to-day work?
Choose an answer

7. Is the business one of IRCC's recognized C11 situations?
Choose an answer

8. How will the business benefit Canadians during the permit? Not for jockeys
Choose an answer

9. What does your business plan show? Not for jockeys
Choose an answer

10. Can you show separate support funds and business funds?
Choose an answer

11. How long will you stay, and how will you leave?
Choose an answer

12. Do you have experience in this sector and the language skills to run it?
Choose an answer

13. Which NOC code will your Employer Portal offer use?
Choose an answer

14. Have you submitted your own offer and paid the compliance fee?
Choose an answer

Your result

2. What Is the C11 Work Permit?

C11 is the code for business owners under paragraph R205(a). It covers foreign nationals seeking only temporary resident status who come to run, or establish, their own business, where the business may bring significant social, cultural or economic benefits to Canadians (IRCC).

You can start a new business or run one you have bought or control, but you must actively operate it. Because you are both employer and employee, you submit the offer of employment for yourself in the IRCC Employer Portal, choose "C11 – Business Owner - Temporary Purpose", pay the $230 compliance fee (IRCC fee list), and then apply using the offer number.

3. Visitors and Work Permit Holders in Canada

C11 has no special rule on where to apply. The general rules apply: most people apply from outside Canada, and only the groups listed in R199 can apply from inside Canada (IRCC).

YOUR STATUS IN CANADA	APPLY FROM INSIDE?	WHAT TO DO
Visitor (visa, eTA or visitor record)	No. The policy allowing this ended August 28, 2024 (IRCC)	Apply online as an outside-Canada application, then enter Canada from abroad to get the permit
Business visitor	No	As for visitors. Meetings and site visits are allowed, but not running the business (IRCC)
Closed work permit	Yes, R199(a)	Apply before it expires; keep to your current permit until C11 is approved
Open work permit (PGWP, spouse)	Yes, R199(a)	Apply before it expires. Planning permanent residence? Compare C60
Study permit	Yes, R199(c)	Your study permit must be valid when you apply
Spouse or child of a permit holder	Yes, R199(e)	That person's permit must be valid when you apply
Status expired	No	Restoration may be possible within 90 days. Get advice

- **No flagpoling:** since December 23, 2024, people already in Canada cannot get a work permit by leaving for the U.S. and coming straight back, except U.S. citizens and permanent residents and a few other groups (CBSA)
- **Arriving from abroad:** visa-exempt nationals may apply at the port of entry, but IRCC encourages online C11 applications because the files are complex (IRCC, port of entry rules)
- **Do not start early:** running your business as a visitor, or outside your current permit, is unauthorized work and can stop a permit being issued (R200(3)(e))
- **Temporary intent still applies:** years of permits or permanent residence plans can make officers doubt you will leave. On maintained status, do not leave Canada (IRCC)

4. Entrepreneur or Self-Employed?

IRCC treats both as business owners but assesses them differently, and the difference decides your NOC code (IRCC).

TYPE	WHAT IT MEANS
Entrepreneur	Takes on greater than normal financial risk and hires non-family staff to do the work. Manages the business; benefit is usually shown through jobs and investment. Uses NOC 88888.
Self-employed	Works for themselves and rarely hires outside the family, usually doing the work too. Benefit can be the service to Canadian clients, especially if it is hard to find locally. Uses a duty-based NOC.

Incorporation does not change the category: if only you and family members work in the business, you are self-employed. Time worked under C11 does not count toward the Canadian Experience Class.

5. Eligibility and the 51% Rule

To qualify under C11, you must show that (IRCC):

- **The work is temporary or seasonal,** and you plan to leave Canada within a set period
- **You have support funds** for yourself and your family, separate from the business money
- **You have business funds,** separate from support funds, to set up or run the business
- **The work brings a significant benefit** to Canadian citizens or permanent residents
- **You control at least 51%** of the business, shown in shareholder registers, articles or purchase agreements

> **Under 51%:** a partial owner must apply as an employee, usually with an LMIA. The one exception is hunting and fishing camps and outfitters owned in equal shares, where each equal owner can use C11 if the business shows significant benefit (IRCC).

6. Significant Benefit and the Business Plan

Officers apply the general C10 meaning of "significant" and look at spin-off benefits. The benefit must come from your work during the permit, not after you leave, and the plan must set out real start-up steps rather than only an industry study (IRCC).

- Job creation that affects the local job market, or prevents job losses
- Growth in a regional or remote area, or expanded export markets
- Advancing an industry through technology, innovation or better skills for Canadians
- For the self-employed: a service that is hard for Canadians to access in the area

SCENARIO	LIKELY ASSESSMENT
Convenience store in downtown Toronto with 2 low-wage staff	Not significant: competes with existing businesses for the same workers
Same store in a rural town 20 km from the nearest grocery store	May be significant: hires locally and draws people to nearby businesses

SCENARIO	LIKELY ASSESSMENT
The only franchise of its kind in a town	May be significant if it attracts people from a wider area

Questions officers ask about the plan

AREA	WHAT THE OFFICER ASKS
Location and customers	City or rural? A new customer base, or customers taken from Canadian businesses?
Product and finances	Canadian or imported supplies? Are set-up costs and first wages funded, or does the plan rely on immediate sales?
Jobs and wages	Are the jobs significant for the area, at the median wage or higher?
Your background	Do your skills, experience and language make the business viable?
Temporary nature	Is it seasonal? If long-term, who will run it after you leave?

7. NOC Code and TEER Category

The NOC code and job title in your Employer Portal offer carry into the work permit. Entrepreneurs use **88888 "Entrepreneur"**, a generic IRCC code. Self-employed owners must use the real NOC 2021 code that matches their duties, not 88888 (IRCC). The second digit of a NOC 2021 code is its TEER (NOC 2021).

Enter a 5-digit NOC code

Press Tab or click outside the box to see the result.

Or choose from all 516 NOC 2021 occupations (in code order)

Choose an occupation

Result

Works in Adobe Acrobat Reader and most desktop PDF readers. If no result appears, use the second digit of the code: it is the TEER category. 88888 is the entrepreneur code.

C11 has no list of eligible occupations and no minimum TEER. The recognized situations each point to a usual code:

SITUATION	NOC 2021 CODE (TEER)	SOURCE
Self-employed gold miner	85110 Mine labourers (TEER 5) or 94100 mineral processing operators (TEER 4)	IRCC example, converted from NOC 2016
Camp owner or director	88888 if run with staff; a hands-on director may fit 50012 (TEER 0)	Usual match

SITUATION	NOC 2021 CODE (TEER)	SOURCE
Outfitters and U.S. fishing guides	64322 Outdoor sport and recreational guides (TEER 4)	Usual match
Freelance horse jockeys	53200 Athletes (TEER 3)	Set by IRCC (IRCC)

- **Duties must match** the NOC, job title and the benefit you claim
- **Requirements must be met:** gaps in experience, education, language or licences can lead to refusal under R200(3)(a)
- **Spouse work permits depend on the TEER:** usually a TEER 0 or 1 job, or select TEER 2 or 3 jobs, with at least 16 months left on your permit when the spouse applies (IRCC). With an 18-month C11 permit, the spouse should apply early

8. Funds, Duration and Extensions

FUNDS	WHAT OFFICERS LOOK FOR
Support funds	Free of debts, at least the low-income cut-off (LICO) for your family size for 18 months, or your stay if shorter. Cash, transferable investments, bank drafts or wages from your existing business
Business funds	Separate money to set up or run the business and pay yourself, with proof of where it came from. Used to judge R200(3)(a) and whether the offer is genuine

C11 work normally does not exceed 18 months. If you ask for more, you must show a definite plan to step out of running the business (IRCC).

BUSINESS TYPE	WHAT YOU NEED TO SHOW
Seasonal B&Bs, gold miners, wildlife guides	Naturally temporary
Year-round Repair shops, salons, IT firms	Extra proof of temporary intent, and an exit plan such as hiring a manager

- **Repeated permits:** years of permits with no break may fail R200(1)(b). Owning a business does not let you live in Canada permanently
- **Extensions:** show the benefits already delivered, why you need more time, and what the next period will achieve

9. C11 Situations IRCC Recognizes

SITUATION	KEY CONDITIONS
Camp owners or directors	Sole, majority or equal-share owners of children's camps or hunting and fishing camps, and their spouses. Other family members working at the camp need an LMIA (IRCC)
Fee-charging outfitters	Benefit judged on income kept in Canada, spending on Canadian goods, services and wages, and impact on Canadian outfitters
U.S. fishing guides on Canadian lakes	U.S. citizen or permanent resident, self-employed with no employer on either side; border lakes use C20 (IRCC)
Freelance horse jockeys	BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba or Ontario only; a racing licence or eligibility letter, and an offer from the first horse owner. In Ontario the first race must be a stakes race (IRCC)

10. Documents to Prepare

Tick each item as you collect it. The burden of proof is on you (IRCC).

- ☐ Offer of employment number from the Employer Portal, submitted for yourself (IMM 5802 only if IRCC authorizes it)
- ☐ Proof of the $230 compliance fee payment, the work permit application, and proof of at least 51% ownership
- ☐ A concrete business plan with start-up steps, costs, hiring timeline and wages
- ☐ Evidence of significant benefit, such as market expansion, local jobs or new technology
- ☐ Separate proof of support funds and business funds, with their source
- ☐ Evidence of temporary stay: ties abroad and, for year-round businesses, an exit plan
- ☐ Proof of sector experience, language ability, and any licences, leases or contracts

11. Why Applications Get Refused

GROUND	WHAT IT MEANS	HOW TO PREPARE
R200(1)(b)	Doubt you will leave, often because the business looks long-term or not genuine	Show ties abroad and an exit plan
R200(1)(c)(ii.1)	No significant benefit, for example a small business in a crowded city	Choose the location and quantify jobs
R200(3)(a)	You lack the skills, experience or language to run the business	Document sector experience

GROUND	WHAT IT MEANS	HOW TO PREPARE
R200(3)(f.1)	Offer not submitted or fee not paid before applying	Get the offer number first

If you submit a detailed business plan, the officer's notes should explain which parts were not convincing. A bare statement that R205 is not met is not enough (IRCC).

12. Building a Strong C11 Case

- **Check where you can apply** (section 3) and **confirm the code:** plan to immigrate? Look at C60 or A77. Moving from a multinational? An intra-company transfer may fit better
- **Lock in 51% control** in the corporate records
- **Choose the location:** filling a gap in a smaller community is easier to justify than a saturated city market
- **Show jobs early:** a hiring timeline within the permit, at or above the median wage
- **Separate and trace your money,** and plan your exit
- **Keep the file consistent:** portal fields, NOC, business plan and documents tell one story

13. How Neximm Can Help

Under C11 you are both the employer and the employee, so we prepare both sides of the file together.

Neximm Immigration is an RCIC-led consultancy based in Dehradun, India. A licensed Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant advises on and represents your file.

- **Before you apply:** category review (C11, C60, A77, ICT or trade agreement), ownership structure and NOC selection
- **Your file:** business plan and benefit evidence, Employer Portal offer with original wording, funds evidence and the work permit application
- **Family and future:** spouse and children's permits, extensions, and permanent residence options if your plans change

Book your C11 assessment today

Neximm Immigration · 2nd Floor, 152/2, Rajpur Road, opp. Scholar's Home, Jakhan, Dehradun, Uttarakhand 248001
info@neximmvisa.com · WhatsApp +91 90569 99123 · www.neximmvisa.com

-

General information, not legal advice. Based on IRCC instructions reviewed in October 2026; rules can change, and IRCC makes all decisions.