

March 31, 2020 - 1:30 pm (MDT)

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC-CCRHA)

Special Partner Briefing - COVID-19

<https://mailchi.mp/5113e5d9c9ff/emerging-labour-issues-special-update-for-cahrc-partners-fall-5350817?e=6f4427c084>

March 30, 2020 - 10:00 am (MDT)

Guidance for Employers of Temporary Foreign Workers on COVID-19 (EN and FR)

<http://honeycouncil.ca/guidance-for-employer-of-tfws-on-covid-19-march-27-2020/>

<http://honeycouncil.ca/lignes-directrices-pour-les-employeurs-de-tet-concernant-la-covid-19-27-mars-2020/>

March 28, 2020 - 11:00 am

Guidance for Employers of Temporary Foreign Workers on COVID-19 - March 27, 2020

<http://honeycouncil.ca/guidance-for-employer-of-tfws-on-covid-19-march-27-2020/>

March 27, 2020 - 4:00 pm

Service Canada has provided the following updated Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) processing measures, introduced to support ensure efficient processing of agriculture and agri-food Temporary Foreign Workers this season:

- For Primary Agriculture and Agri-food employers, we are providing priority processing of Labour Market Impact Assessments and removing minimum recruitment requirements until October 31, 2020.
- For all employers, extending the period of validity of a labour market impact assessment from 6 to 9 months, to allow employers more time to identify candidates and bring them to Canada.
- For Low Wage stream employers, we are increasing the maximum duration of work permits from 1 to 2 years.
- For Primary Agriculture employers, added flexibility regarding the requirement to provide a recent Housing Inspection Report (HIR). A previously approved HIR within

the last 3 years (if available) or date-stamped photos of the accommodations if a previously passed HIR is not available. In all cases, employers will be required to provide a new HIR to the Department within the period of employment covered by the work permit.

- For all employers, temporary suspension of requirement to report minor administrative updates (e.g. – reporting lay-offs, teleworking arrangements, etc.)
- We have established an accelerated name change process with IRCC (from 5 days down to 1 business day) for employers wishing to change the name of an already identified foreign worker for reasons related to COVID-19.

Please note that these temporary measures will be proactively applied to all pending LMIA applications as well as future applications received by the Department.

We are also strongly encouraging employers and third party representatives who are registered on Job Bank to use the new LMIA Online system to submit their LMIA applications. Using the LMIA Online system accelerates our ability to assign applications Officers and to begin the assessment. Furthermore, through their online account, employers and third parties are able to obtain real-time status on the assessment of their LMIA applications.

A dedicated LMIA Online Team is available if employers require assistance:

EDSC.DGOP.PTET.ContactezNous-ContactUs.TFWP.POB.ESDC@servicecanada.gc.ca

March 26, 2020 - 4:00 pm (MDT)

Temporary Foreign Workers

Please go to the following link for recently announced details on the lifting of international travel restrictions for Temporary Foreign Workers and others with valid work permits:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/coronavirus-special-measures.html>

More information will follow on public health requirements, but for those looking to bring in workers, flights to the four approved international ports of entry are now legally permitted.

March 26, 2020 3:00 pm (MDT)

The CHC Labour Committee

Chair: Curtis Meidema

Members: Jake Berg, Bryan Ash, Kevin Nixon, Derek Moyen, Dave Tharle, Simon Lalonde, Rod Scarlett

Temporary Foreign Workers

- Friday evening, March 20, the federal government agreed to reopen its borders to temporary foreign workers. However, the agreement was contingent on implementation and compliance with a tight health and safety protocols surrounding the arrival of these workers
- The content of the protocols was discussed between the federal and provincial public health authorities
- The outline of the protocols was communicated to a select group of Canadian stakeholders including the Canadian Honey Council and a brief outline of the content of the protocol is printed below.
- Strict quarantine conditions are to be expected and clear commitments from producers must be made
- The federal government has promised stakeholders that the requirements will be communicated in writing very quickly

Travel

As for flights, regulatory changes have been finalized. The interim order exempts certain foreign nationals who are authorized to travel to Canada to work.

This includes temporary workers who were already established in Canada or who had made arrangements to come to Canada to work before the travel restrictions were put in place. It also includes new workers who are coming to Canada to be employed in critical industries, such as agriculture, food processing, health, transportation and emergency services.

These foreign nationals can self-identify to airlines at the point of boarding that they are exempt under this provision by presenting

- a valid work permit, or
- a letter of introduction from IRCC

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/service-delivery/coronavirus/travel-restrictions.html#temporary-workers>

However, TFW's are still not able to travel, unless arriving via commercial flights from countries who do not require acceptance of Canada's quarantine protocols. The Public Health protocols need to be distributed to other countries and approved. Global Affairs is engaging key countries to negotiate movement. (Guatemala and Mexico for sure). We will work with other organizations, (FARMS, WALLI, FERME) to get workers on charters that they arrange and are looking at ways to arrange charters from Mexico and Nicaragua.

Because many of the countries where beekeepers get their workers have closed visa Processing centers or shut down operations, it is likely that we will only be able to deal with those employees who have already received and are in possession of all their necessary documentation. Provincial associations and Provincial Apiculturalists have been very helpful and continue to provide assistance.

Beekeepers should not expect workers to arrive on time nor should they necessarily expect to get all the workers they requested. Domestic employee options should be explored.

Public Health requirements

- Worker will have a health check before boarding, and upon arrival.
- Mandatory 14-day isolation with no work but must be paid.
- Asymptomatic workers are able to travel domestically.
- Anyone showing symptoms will be quarantined at a federally designated facility (right now at federal gov't expense).
- Upon arrival at home, workers can be housed together but must meet a 2 metre isolation protocol. This is over and above provincial and municipal housing requirements. Public Health authorities will be doing compliance and enforcement spot checks. Employees are responsible for self-monitoring during those 14 days. If an employee shows symptoms, they must be isolated and anyone in contact would go into another 14-day isolation.
- The department is looking at programs enhancements or new programs to help out in the additional expenses.

Packages and Queens

Stock Replacement Committee

Chair: Ron Greidanus

Members: Maggie Lamothe Boudreau, Mario Swinkels, Mark Freisen, Osee Podolsky, Scott Plante, Jake Berg

California/Hawaiian Queens

The breeders have good stock and are preparing for their first loads. Since Air Canada has ceased carrying livestock alternate plans for Kona Queens have had to be put in place. Currently, we do not think there will be an issue, but that can change. We are working in cooperation with a lot of other industry participants on alternate plans should there be an issue in the delivery of queens from these locations.

Packages/ Queens from outside the USA

Again, Air Canada disruption of services has created a myriad of issues. Certain Australian beekeeping operations have closed down. Flights between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Europe are drastically reduced. The Government is assisting us in trying to find solution as these commercial operations are extremely important to our food security.

It is more difficult to provide exact information in stock replacement area since most of the activity is an one-off. We will continue to keep everyone updated as things progress.