Work Permits for Spouses and Common-law Partners of International Students

(Application instructions for applying from WITHIN Canada only)

Accompanying spouses or common-law partners of international students are eligible for an open work permit, which means they do not need a job offer or a labour market impact assessment (LMIA) from Service Canada. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) defines common-law partners as people of the same or opposite sex who currently cohabitate and have cohabitated in a conjugal relationship for at least one year.

How do I know if I am eligible?

If you are the spouse or common-law partner of an international student, you may be eligible if you satisfy the following conditions:

- Your spouse/common-law partner is a full-time student at:
  - a public post-secondary institution, such as a college or university or collège d’enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEP) in Quebec
  - a private post-secondary institution that operates under the same rules and regulations as a public institution, and receives at least 50 percent of its financing for its overall operations from government grants (currently, only private college-level educational institutions in Quebec qualify) or
  - a Canadian private institution authorized by provincial statute to confer degrees
- Your spouse/common-law partner has a valid study permit

How do I apply for a work permit if I am the spouse/common-law partner of an international student?

If you are currently in Canada and have valid visitor, student or worker status, you have two options for applying:

1. Apply online.
   - **Step 2.** Apply online at [http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/e-services/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/e-services/index.asp) after creating a GCKey or Sign-in Partner login ID, and registering with MyCIC. Enter your Personal Checklist Code when prompted.
   - Scan and upload all required documents (see below and next page). Refer to your online checklist for acceptable file formats.
   - OR

2. Apply by mail
   - **Step 1.** Download the required forms from [http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/extend-worker.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/extend-worker.asp)
   - **Step 2.** Complete the forms, and mail them along with the necessary supporting documents (see below and next page) in a large envelope to the address below. Do not include a prepaid return envelope with your application.

   Address the envelope as follows:
   - Case Processing Centre in Edmonton
   - Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada
   - c/o Work permits for spouses or common-law partners, Station 777
   - 9700 Jasper Avenue NW, Suite 55
   - Edmonton, AB T5J 4C3

What documents do I need to apply for this work permit either online or by mail?

All documents should be current and original (unless it clearly states photocopies are acceptable). Please note that all the below documents will be required for the application, regardless of whether it is submitted online or using a paper-based application (unless otherwise indicated in the list below). If applying online, your checklist may not include all of the items listed; however, you must provide them all (unless otherwise specified in the chart below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tips</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Document Checklist (required for paper-based applications only)</strong></td>
<td>Application Checklist (IMM 5556)</td>
<td>* Place this document on top of your application package</td>
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| **Application Form** | Application to Change Conditions, Extend My Stay or Remain in Canada as a Worker (IMM 5710) | * Fill out the application form electronically (not by hand)  
  * Your 8 or 10-digit Client I.D. number on your study permit is your UCI  
  * Select “Other” for Question 1a on page 3 (type of work permit), and indicate “Spousal work permit” for Question 1b |

The information in this document has been reviewed and endorsed by a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) pursuant to section 91 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. This is not a legal document and information may change without notice. Always refer to [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca) for the most updated information. This document was last updated on September 21, 2018.
You must also include all of the following supporting documents:

| To be provided by international student: | Photocopies of all relevant passport pages.  
   | → Include all pages with photos, signatures, entry stamps, visas and any other markings.  
   | → Photocopies of all current valid immigration documents such as your study permit, work permit, etc.  
   | Official current SFU confirmation of enrolment (COE) letter which may be downloaded through the Student Information System. For instructions, please see: [https://www.sfu.ca/students/records/confirmation-of-enrollment.html](https://www.sfu.ca/students/records/confirmation-of-enrollment.html)  
   | → Exception: Graduate students may request a letter from their department and include this in addition to their SFU COE letter should they wish to include proof of financial support.  
   | Official current transcripts which include your last two terms of studies.  
   | → If you have attended a different institution in the last two terms, you must include official transcripts from that institution as well.  
   | → SFU transcripts may be requested online through the Student Information System and may take several days to be issued.  
   | → Open these documents to ensure they are accurate. They do not need to be sealed.  
   | Proof of sufficient financial support in Canada totaling at least $10,000 CAD, plus:  
   | • An additional $4000 for the first accompanying family member (ex. spouse)  
   | • $3000 for each additional family member (ex. dependent child)  
   | • Current official bank statements, proof of scholarship or employment, letter of financial support from family members along with their official bank statements, etc. are examples of documents that can be included. Proof of the additional financial support for family members may be provided by either the international student or the spouse. |
| To be provided by spouse: | Photocopies of all relevant passport pages.  
   | → Include all pages with photos, signatures, entry stamps, visas and any other markings.  
   | → Check the expiration of your passport first. IRCC will not issue a work permit for longer than your passport.  
   | Photocopies of all current valid immigration documents such as your study permit, work permit, visitor record, etc.  
   | Digital photo (online applications only) – refer to your online checklist for photo specifications |
| Fee Receipt | The current fee for a work permit is $255 CAD.  
   | → For online applications  
   | You can pay online using a credit card (IRCC accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express, JCB, China Union Pay) or a debit card (IRCC accepts Visa Debit, Debit MasterCard or Interac). Follow the steps outlined during the online application process.  
   | → For paper applications  
   | Pay online using a credit card via the IRCC e-Payment tool [http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/fees/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/fees/index.asp). Print the receipt of payment and include it with your application. |

If applying by mail, we strongly recommend that use a trackable method to mail in your application (Registered mail, Xpresspost or courier) and that you keep copies of all documents sent.

Please note:
- If you wish to work in health services, child care, primary or secondary education, you will need a medical examination and a satisfactory medical assessment before a work permit can be issued to you. Visit: [https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/medical-exams/requirements-temporary-residents.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/medical-exams/requirements-temporary-residents.html) for more information.
- Processing times vary. For up-to-date information on estimated processing times, please visit the IRCC website at [http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/temp.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/temp.asp).
- Once you have obtained your work permit, you should apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN). For further information, please refer to our Social Insurance Number handout at [http://www.sfu.ca/students/issap/resources.html](http://www.sfu.ca/students/issap/resources.html).

**When should I extend my work permit?**

You should apply to extend your work permit 90 days in advance of expiry. However, as long as the Case Processing Centre in Alberta receives your application before the expiry date, you are considered to have “implied status” in Canada until you receive your renewed work permit, even if the expiry date has passed while your extension is being processed. If your work permit has already expired and you have not applied to extend or change your status in Canada, see an International Student Advisor immediately for advice and assistance.