

# EMPLOYER TOOLKIT

## GUIDE TO ATTRACTING AND RETAINING NEWCOMERS

*We acknowledge and honour that  
we work and live on the land of  
Treaty 6, Treaty 7 people and Metis  
Nations of Alberta.*





## WELCOME

Red Deer's growth and success are powered by the people who choose to build their lives here. Newcomers, immigrants, foreign workers, and international students bring essential skills, fresh ideas, and global experience that strengthen our local workforce and enrich our community.

This toolkit was developed by the Red Deer Local Immigration Partnership (RDLIP) to support employers in creating inclusive, resilient workplaces where everyone has the opportunity to contribute and succeed. Inside, you'll find practical guidance and local resources to help you attract, hire, and retain newcomer talent.

By opening doors to opportunity, employers play a critical role in shaping a strong workforce and a welcoming community. Thank you for helping make Red Deer a place where people feel valued, included, and able to thrive.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Employers in Red Deer are essential partners in building a strong, adaptable, and future-ready workforce. Through the RDLIP Workplace Inclusion Charter and the Economic Pathways ad-hoc working group, employers work alongside service providers, educators, and community leaders to remove barriers, strengthen workforce participation, and connect skilled newcomers to local employment opportunities. Sectors such as construction, manufacturing, health care, transportation, and professional services are already feeling the pressures of labour shortages.

The Economic Pathways ad-hoc working groups offer employer-focused solutions, including support for credential recognition, job-ready training programs, mentorship opportunities, and tools to connect employers directly with newcomer talent. Newcomers bring skills, professional experience, and global expertise that can immediately strengthen workplaces. Canada welcomes hundreds of thousands of permanent and temporary residents each year, many with the technical training and international experience that local employers need. In Red Deer, recent arrivals contribute across manufacturing particularly meat processing and food production retail, construction, and emerging fields such as technology and engineering.

By committing to the principles of the RDLIP Workplace Inclusion Charter and collaborating through the Economic Pathways ad-hoc working group, employers can directly shape Red Deer's workforce of the future. Inclusive workplaces, equitable policies, and intentional employee support create competitive advantages: they attract skilled workers, improve retention, strengthen workplace culture, and support the long-term economic vitality of the city. For employers, welcoming newcomers is not just a community good it's a smart business strategy that positions organizations for growth, resilience, and sustainability.

## GETTING STARTED

Creating a thriving and sustainable workforce takes intention, planning, and a willingness to learn. Taking time to prepare your organization and your team before hiring newcomers can make the process smoother and more rewarding for everyone.

By thinking ahead, you can anticipate challenges, identify support, and set up an environment where both new and existing employees can thrive. Strong leadership, open communication, and genuine curiosity are key to building an inclusive culture where newcomers feel valued and supported.

Thriving workplaces benefit from a wider range of ideas, stronger problem-solving, and improved staff morale. They also stand out as employers of choice; places where people want to work and stay.

As you use this toolkit, remember that there are no one size fits all solutions. Every workplace is unique, and this guide is designed to help you reflect, adapt, and grow as you welcome newcomers to your team and community.

**THIS TOOLKIT GIVES EMPLOYERS IN RED DEER AND CENTRAL ALBERTA PRACTICAL GUIDANCE ON INCLUSIVE HIRING, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND NEWCOMER INTEGRATION. WITH INSIGHTS FROM LOCAL EMPLOYERS, NEWCOMERS, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, IT PROVIDES EASY-TO-USE RESOURCES, BEST PRACTICES, AND DATA TO HELP YOU HIRE, RETAIN, AND SUPPORT NEWCOMERS WHILE STRENGTHENING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY.**



## UNDERSTANDING LABOUR MARKET TERMS

**Labour Market** - is the supply and demand for workers which affect job opportunities, wages, and the availability of skills.

**Foreign Credential Recognition** - the process of verifying that the foreign qualifications are equivalent to Canadian standards.

**Labour Force** - the total number of people who are employed or actively seeking employment.

**Labour Demand** - the number of workers employers are willing to hire at different wage levels.

**LMIA (Labour Market Impact Assessment)** - a document from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) that shows hiring a foreign worker will not negatively impact Canadian labour market. Most employers need a positive LMIA before hiring.

**Upskilling** - training workers to upgrade or change their skills

**Employment contract** - a written agreement outlining job duties, salary, working hours, benefits and termination conditions.

**Work Permit** - authorization issued by IRCC that allows a foreign national to work in Canada. It can be an employer-specific (closed) or an open work permit

**Job Offer/Offer of Employment** - For LMIA-exempt hires, employers must submit job details through the IRCC Employer Portal

**NOC (National Occupational Classification)**- Canada's system for categorizing occupations. Important for determining wage requirements, LMIA eligibility and Immigration streams (e.g., Express Entry)

**Visa** - an official document stamped in a foreign national passport that allows them to enter Canada for specific purpose, such as tourism, study, or work. It does not grant permission to work or stay in Canada but serves as an entry requirement.

## WORKING DEFINITIONS

**Accessibility** - the design and implementation of systems, facilities and services that are usable and available to all employees so they can perform to their full potential.

**Equity** - providing fair treatment, access to opportunities, and advancement for all individuals, irrespective of their background, characteristics, or circumstances to allow an equal playing field.

**Diversity** - the presence of a wide range of different backgrounds, perspectives, identities and characteristics within a group, organization or community.

**Newcomer(s)**- individuals who have recently arrived in Canada, often as immigrants, refugees, or temporary residents.

**International Student** - a temporary resident who is legally authorized to study in Canada on a temporary basis. With a few exceptions, international students must get a study permit if they are taking a course of studies that will last for more than 6 months.

**Foreign Trained Professional** - individuals who have received education, training or professional credentials in another country and seek to practice their profession in Canada

**Foreign National** - an individual who is not a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident, this includes a stateless and/or non-status person.

**Permanent Resident**- a foreign national who has been granted the rights to live and work in Canada indefinitely, but not yet citizens.

**Express Entry**- a Canadian points-based immigration system used for managing and selecting candidates for immigration programs that assesses eligibility based on various factors, including age, education, work experience, and language proficiency.

# **UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

## **What Diversity Means**

Diversity is define recognizing and respecting the many ways people are different. In the workplace, this includes differences in culture, language, religion, age, gender, race, ability, education, and life experience.

A diverse workplace brings together people with a wide range of perspectives and problem-solving styles. These differences can lead to new ideas, stronger teamwork, and better results

When employers value diversity, they make space for all employees to share their strengths and feel that they belong.

## **What Inclusion Means**

Inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, respected, and able to take part fully. It is about more than hiring people from different backgrounds; it is about making sure they are supported, heard, and treated fairly.

An inclusive workplace encourages open communication, fairness, and trust. It helps people feel safe to share ideas, ask questions, and contribute to decisions.

## **Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter**

Diversity and inclusion make workplaces stronger. When people with different experiences work together and feel valued, they are more creative, engaged, and productive.

In 2022, more than one in four Canadian workers (28.2%) were racialized, including about 1.6 million South Asian, 1.0 million Chinese, and 872,000 Black Canadians. Almost half of all workers (47.6%) were women, and there were more Chinese, Black, and Filipino women than men in the labour force (Statistics Canada, 20

These numbers show that Canada's labour force is becoming more diverse each year. Employers who understand and support this diversity are better prepared to attract and keep talented workers from many different backgrounds.

### **Inclusive workplaces:**

- Attract and keep talented employees
- Build stronger relationships with customers and communities
- Reduce misunderstandings and conflict
- Improve teamwork and morale
- Reflect the community they serve

In Red Deer, diversity continues to grow as more newcomers and international workers join our community. Employers who build inclusive workplaces help make Red Deer a welcoming place for everyone.

### **Tips for Building Inclusion**

- Listen to employees and encourage feedback.
- Learn about different cultures and communication styles.
- Provide equal opportunities for training and advancement.
- Make sure policies and practices are fair and accessible.
- Celebrate cultural events and recognize the value of all employees.



These questions can help you think about how diversity and inclusion show up in your workplace. You can use them for team discussions or your own reflection.

- How do we show that all employees are valued and respected?
- Do our hiring and training practices give everyone a fair chance to succeed?
- How do we handle language barriers or cultural misunderstandings?
- What steps can we take to make new employees feel included from day one?
- Do our policies and daily practices reflect our values of respect and inclusion?
- How can we learn more about the cultures and experiences of the people we work with?

By reflecting on these questions, employers and teams can build awareness, find areas for improvement, and strengthen their commitment to inclusion.

**AS NEWCOMERS TO CANADA, I KNOW FIRSTHAND HOW CHALLENGING IT CAN BE TO FIND MEANINGFUL WORK AND BUILD A STABLE FUTURE. INSPIRED BY OUR OWN JOURNEY, MY BUSINESS PARTNER AND I WANTED TO CREATE A SPACE WHERE EVERY EMPLOYEE FEELS VALUED, THEIR SKILLS RECOGNIZED, AND OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO THOSE WORKING HARD TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

**WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVED IN CANADA, WE BROUGHT WITH US BIG DREAMS AND A DRIVE TO SHAPE OUR OWN PATH. WE QUICKLY REALIZED THAT OUR GREATEST POTENTIAL SHINES WHEN WE HAVE THE CHANCE TO BUILD SOMETHING OF OUR OWN, TO TURN AMBITION INTO ACTION, AND CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITY. IN CREATING OUR COMPANY, WE NOT ONLY FOUND A SOLUTION FOR OURSELVES, BUT ALSO DISCOVERED A WAY TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY THAT WELCOMED US.**

**OUR MISSION GOES BEYOND OUR OWN SUCCESS. WE ARE EXCITED TO MENTOR AND SUPPORT OTHER NEWCOMERS WHO DREAM OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP, HELPING THEM NAVIGATE THEIR JOURNEY AND ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS. THROUGH THIS WORK, WE HOPE TO SHOW THAT NEWCOMERS ARE NOT JUST BENEFITING FROM CANADA, THEY ARE ACTIVELY CREATING, CONTRIBUTING, AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES AROUND THEM.**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO BUILDING A SPACE WHERE DREAMS ARE NURTURED, SKILLS ARE CELEBRATED, AND OPPORTUNITIES FLOURISH FOR EVERYONE. TOGETHER, WE CAN GROW, GIVE BACK, AND INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF CANADIAN ENTREPRENEURS.**

-Nikki Sewell Lewis  
Business Owner

# **PREPARING YOUR WORKPLACE FOR** **NEWCOMERS**

The first step is preparation. Before your new employee arrives, take time to consider what support and resources are in place to help them settle in successfully. Think about how your workplace can be ready to welcome and train newcomers in a way that feels inclusive and respectful.

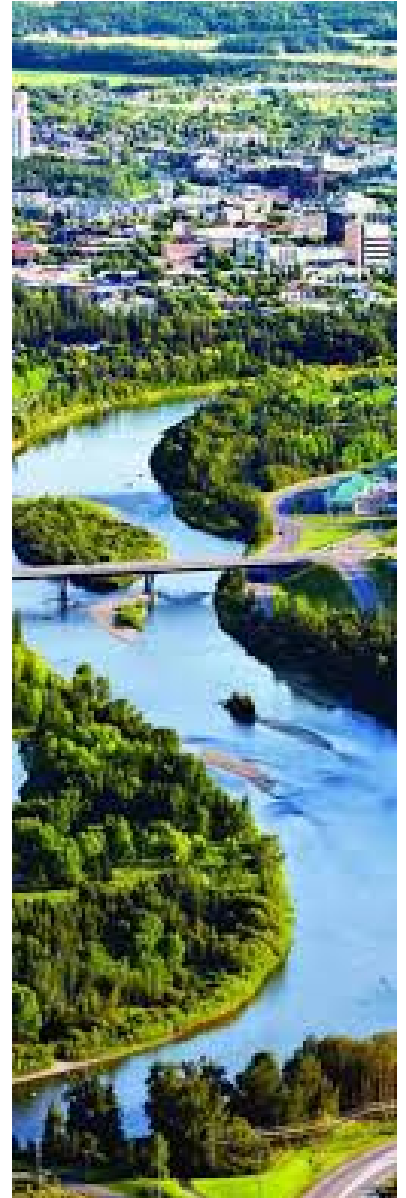
Reach out to local organizations that work with immigrants and newcomers in Red Deer. They can help you access resources, language support, and cross-cultural training for your staff. Collaboration with these community partners will make the transition easier for everyone.

Each workplace is different, but preparation always pays off. When staff, supervisors, and leadership share an understanding of inclusion and respect, newcomers are more likely to succeed, and so is your business.

## **A PLACE TO START**

Understanding who your new employees are is a meaningful way to begin building connections and trust. Take time to learn about their background, experience, and culture.

Even a small effort, like learning how to say hello in their first language, can go a long way.



Consider learning about:

- The newcomer's country of origin, culture, and language(s) spoken
- Social and cultural norms that may shape communication or workplace expectations
- Major holidays or customs that might be important to them
- Current events that may affect their community or family abroad

Local newcomer serving agencies can also provide country profiles or cultural awareness sessions to help you better understand your new team members.

## **CONVERSATION GUIDES**

These questions can help you reflect and prepare your workplace for a newcomer's arrival:

- What might life have been like in their home country?
- What circumstances may have led them to move to Canada?
- Does the newcomer have family still abroad or going through resettlement?
- What language(s) do they speak, and how comfortable are they with English?
- What was their professional background or education before arriving in Canada?
- What values or workplace expectations might differ from those in Canada?
- How can we show respect and curiosity about their culture and experiences?

By reflecting on these questions, you can create a foundation of understanding that helps newcomers feel seen, respected, and supported from day one.

## PREPARING YOUR STAFF

Welcoming new members of your team successfully begins with preparing your existing team. When staff understand the benefits of a diverse workplace and feel supported in their role, they are more confident and engaged in helping new employees succeed.

Start by sharing why your organization is hiring newcomers and the value this brings to your workplace. Encouraging open conversations can help address uncertainty and build excitement about what new perspectives and skills will add to the team.

### **Consider these steps as you prepare your staff:**

- **Provide information and awareness:** Offer a short orientation or discussion about diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness. Highlight the strengths newcomers bring and the positive impact of inclusive workplaces.
- **Offer learning opportunities:** Explore training sessions or online modules on cross-cultural communication or bias awareness. Local organizations and the Alberta Human Rights Commission both offer helpful resources.
- **Involve supervisors early:** Identify who will be responsible for onboarding, training, and mentorship. Make sure they have the tools and time they need to guide newcomers effectively.
- **Encourage empathy and curiosity:** Remind staff that “common sense” is shaped by culture and experience. What feels natural in one context may be new in another. Patience and openness go a long way.
- **Model respect and inclusion:** Leaders set the tone. When management approaches diversity with respect and enthusiasm, the team will follow.



## TIPS FOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Use clear, plain language when giving instructions or feedback. Avoid idioms or slang.
- Create opportunities for the employee to share how they would complete the task to make sure expectations are clear.
- Provide written instructions or visuals when possible.
- Be aware that communication styles, eye contact, or body language can vary across cultures. Focus on clarity and kindness.
- Avoid making assumptions about what a newcomer does or doesn't know about Canadian workplace norms.
- Encourage an open-door approach where questions are welcome.
- Allow extra time for onboarding and orientation. It can take longer to adjust to both a new job and a new country.
- Pair newcomers with a “buddy” or mentor who can answer questions informally.
- Provide step-by-step training and opportunities for hands-on practice.

Inclusive teams are over 35% more productive.  
– (LinkedIn Learning, n.d.)

“Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization.”  
– Mahatma Gandhi

Diverse companies earn 2.5x higher cash flow per employee.  
– (LinkedIn Learning, n.d.)

*At Ballad Group, hiring immigrants and newcomers matters to us because they are an important part of our community and workforce. Many of the people we work with come to Red Deer ready to work, learn, and build a better future for themselves and their families. When employers give newcomers a chance, it helps people move forward and strengthens the local workforce at the same time.*

*We see real value in hiring immigrants because they bring a wide range of skills, life experience, and strong work habits. Many newcomers are reliable, motivated, and open to learning new skills. They often bring different ways of thinking that help teams solve problems and better understand the diverse communities they serve.*

*Newcomers support our success by showing up, putting in the work, and contributing to a positive team environment. Their efforts help fill important roles, support employers, and keep programs running smoothly. Supporting immigrant employment aligns with what we do at Ballad every day: helping people find meaningful work while building a stronger, more inclusive community in Red Deer.*

### **BalladGroup Red Deer Training Centre**

*Carolina Pannenbecker  
Career Coach*

- Review progress regularly and celebrate small successes.
- Encourage team members to be welcoming and patient with new colleagues.
- Recognize and value diverse perspectives and problem-solving approaches.
- Celebrate cultural holidays or invite staff to share traditions if they feel comfortable.
- Address discrimination or bias quickly and respectfully.
- Offer opportunities for professional development and advancement.
- Check in regularly about how the employee is adapting, both to the role and to the workplace culture.
- Be flexible where possible with schedules, especially during transitions.
- Share feedback in a constructive, supportive way, focusing on growth.

In October 2025, the unemployment rate in Alberta was 7.8% - (Government of Alberta, n.d.)

# **RECRUITMENT: WHERE TO POST JOBS**

## **AND FIND EMPLOYEES**

Finding the right candidates is the first step in building an inclusive and skilled workforce. Employers can reach newcomers through a combination of local, provincial, and national channels. Posting jobs in the right places increases your chances of connecting with qualified applicants. In Red Deer, the Chamber of Commerce can support employers by offering job posting opportunities, networking events, and business resources to help connect with potential candidates.

### **Where to Post Jobs**

#### **Online Job Boards**

- Indeed – widely used by job seekers across Canada
- Job Bank – Canada's national job site
- Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) Student/Alumni Job Board – great for connecting with recent graduates and students
- Catholic Social Services (CSS Alberta) Jobs – connects employers with newcomers and immigrant job seekers

#### **Community and Local Resources**

- Local settlement agencies – organizations such as CAIWA and Care for Newcomers may help match newcomers with employers
- RDLIP (Red Deer Local Immigration Partnership) – can provide guidance and connections to newcomer talent networks

#### **Other Channels**

- Social media groups, including Facebook job groups and LinkedIn
- Networking events, job fairs, and community hiring events

#### **Tips for Employers**

- Include a clear job description with required skills, responsibilities, and language expectations
- Highlight that you welcome applications from newcomers and value diverse experience
- Be open to candidates who may not have Canadian experience but bring strong international skills
- Respond promptly to applications and provide feedback when possible

## **RESUMES, COVER LETTERS, EDUCATION ASSESSMENT, AND INTERVIEWING NEWCOMERS**

When hiring newcomers, you may notice resumes and cover letters that look different from what you are used to. Some may include photos, personal details, or formats that are unfamiliar. This does not mean the applicant has put in less effort or is unqualified. Non-standard documents are not a reflection of skill or experience. Take the time to review the content carefully and focus on the skills, experience, and qualifications that are relevant to the job.

### **Interviewing Newcomers**

Interviews with newcomers may be slightly different than what you are used to. Language, cultural norms, and experience with Canadian workplaces can influence how candidates present themselves. Keeping this in mind helps ensure a fair and effective process.

### **Checking References for International Applicants**

When reviewing applications from newcomers, keep in mind that their references may be located in other countries and in different time zones. Email is often the most effective way to contact international references, as phone calls can be difficult to coordinate. If language barriers exist, you can request written confirmation of employment, job duties, or performance instead of a full verbal reference. Being flexible in how you verify references helps ensure a fair and accurate assessment of a candidate's experience.

### **Tips for Employers**

- Speak clearly and avoid slang or idioms.
- Allow extra time for responses if the candidate is using English as a second language.
- Ask questions about skills, experience, and problem-solving rather than focusing on minor language mistakes.
- Be aware that body language, eye contact, or ways of expressing confidence may differ across cultures.
- Provide clear explanations of the job expectations, duties, and work environment.
- Encourage candidates to ask questions about the role or workplace.
- Consider using structured interviews with the same questions for all candidates to ensure fairness.

# **HIRING PROGRAMS AND PATHWAYS**

When hiring newcomers, employers in Alberta have access to several programs that help bring in skilled workers on both short-term and long-term bases. Below is a basic run-down of key options and how employers can use them.

## **1. Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP)**

This is a federal program through which you can hire workers from abroad for a limited period when you cannot fill the position locally. Employers usually must apply for a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) first. Learn more:

**<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers.html>**

## **2. Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP)**

A provincial program that allows employers to support workers for permanent residence nomination in Alberta. Key streams include:

- Alberta Opportunity Stream: For workers already in Alberta with a full-time job offer. **<https://www.alberta.ca/aaip-alberta-opportunity-stream>**
- Alberta Express Entry Stream: For candidates in the federal Express Entry pool who meet Alberta's priorities
- **<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-advantage-immigration-program>**

Employers must meet certain requirements when offering a job under AAIP. **<https://www.alberta.ca/job-offer-and-employer-requirements>**

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I CAME TO CANADA AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND WAS EVENTUALLY GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK AND BUILD A CAREER HERE, FOR WHICH I AM TRULY GRATEFUL. ALONG THE WAY, I HAVE BEEN THANKFUL FOR THE CHANCE TO STUDY, WORK, LEARN, MEET NEW PEOPLE, AND BUILD A FUTURE WHILE MAKING CANADA MY HOME.

TO IMMIGRANTS BEGINNING THEIR JOURNEY IN CANADA, I HOPE YOU FIND SOMEONE WILLING TO GIVE YOU A CHANCE, JUST AS I WAS GIVEN ONE, SO YOU TOO CAN GROW AND CONTRIBUTE IN YOUR OWN WAY.

Karell O'Connor

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### 3. Rural Renewal Stream

The Rural Renewal Stream is part of Alberta's immigration programs designed to help rural communities attract skilled workers. Employers in eligible rural communities can hire international workers through this stream to fill positions where there is a labour need.

For more information, including eligibility criteria and application steps, visit:

<https://www.alberta.ca/aaip-rural-renewal-stream-community-designation>

### 4. Long-Term vs Short-Term Hiring

- Short-Term: Using TFWP to fill immediate vacancies while you recruit locally or train employees.
- Long-Term: Using AAIP or other immigration streams to bring in workers you intend to retain and develop over time.

### HOW EMPLOYERS CAN GET STARTED

- Ensure your job offer meets program requirements (e.g., full-time, fair wage, genuine need). <https://www.alberta.ca/job-offer-and-employer-requirements>
- Work with a newcomer candidate about credential assessment, work authorization, and immigration-pathway planning.
- Keep informed of program changes and eligibility criteria. Both federal and Alberta programs update regularly.
- Visit the program websites for detailed requirements and to access employer guides.

### More In-Depth Information

- TFWP & LMIA: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers.html>
- AAIP (Alberta): <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-advantage-immigration-program>
- AAIP – Alberta Opportunity Stream: <https://www.alberta.ca/aaip-alberta-opportunity-stream>
- Employer support for international hires & permanent residence pathways: <https://www.sait.ca/industry-engagement/guide-to-hiring-international-talent/pr-pathway-support>

### Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP)

- Allows international students graduates to work for almost any employer in Canada after completing their program.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/after-graduation.html>

## **ACCREDITATION AND TRAINING**

Many newcomers bring valuable education, training, and work experience from their home countries. Some plan to continue in the same field when they come to Canada, while others may choose related work while they complete the steps needed to get their credentials recognized.

The process of accreditation can sometimes be long and costly. Employers can support newcomers by understanding that international qualifications may take time to transfer and by helping them find the right information or local contacts.

## **ASSESSING EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, & REGULATED PROFESSIONS**

Many skilled immigrants have completed their education and training outside of Canada. For some professions and trades, their international credentials must be formally assessed to confirm how they compare to Canadian standards. Employers can request a certified assessment to better understand an applicant's qualifications and ensure a good match for the job.

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**“Supporting accreditation helps newcomers build their careers and helps employers fill important roles.”**

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In Canada, several designated organizations provide recognized Educational Credential Assessments (ECAs).

These include:

- World Education Services (**WES**)
  - <https://www.wes.org/ca/>
- International Qualifications Assessment Service (**IQAS**) – Alberta
  - <https://www.alberta.ca/iqas-immigration>
- International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (**ICAS**)
  - <https://www.icascanada.ca/>
- Comparative Education Service (**CES**) – University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies
  - <https://learn.utoronto.ca/comparative-education-service/educational-credential-assessment-eca-canada>
- International Credential Evaluation Service (**ICES**) – BC Institute of Technology
  - <https://www.bcit.ca/ices/>
- Medical Council of Canada (**MCC**) – for physicians
  - <https://mcc.ca/>
- Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (**PEBC**) – for pharmacists
  - <https://www.pebc.ca/>

When screening applicants, consider asking whether they already have a certified credential assessment. This helps employers accurately interpret international education, make fair comparisons, and understand how an applicant's qualifications align with job requirements.

Supporting accreditation helps newcomers reach their full potential and strengthens your organization. When employees can apply their full skills and experience, they are more engaged, motivated, and likely to stay long-term.

## Regulated Professions and Licensing

Some occupations in Canada are regulated, meaning a license or certification from a governing body is required to practice. Employers hiring newcomers should be aware of the following:

- Check if the occupation is regulated: <https://www.cicic.ca>
- Professional Licensing Bodies: Each regulated profession has its own governing body that evaluates education, experience, and competency.
- International Credentials: Even if a newcomer has education or work experience from another country, they may need exams, supervised practice, or bridging programs to meet Canadian standards.
- Employer Tips:
  - Ask candidates if they hold the necessary license or certification.
  - Verify credentials directly with the licensing body.
  - Be aware of timelines, as licensing processes can take months.

By combining credential assessments and regulatory requirements, employers can make informed hiring decisions and support skilled newcomers in successfully integrating into their workplace.

## How Employers Can Help

- Learn about how international credentials are assessed in your industry. Local colleges, universities, or training institutions can provide current information.
- Encourage newcomers to talk with others who have completed the accreditation process to learn what to expect.
- Connect with newcomer-serving organizations that offer guidance and support with education and career pathways.
- Contact the regulatory or licensing body for your trade or profession to understand the requirements and timelines.
- Provide opportunities for newcomers to use their skills and gain Canadian work experience while they work toward full accreditation.

## **SAMPLE NEWCOMER WELCOME LETTER**

### **Welcome to [Organization Name]**

We are happy to have you join our team. You bring valuable skills, experience, and ideas that will help our workplace grow and improve.

Starting a new job can be a big change, especially in a new place. Our goal is to help you feel comfortable, supported, and ready to succeed.

During your first few weeks, you will

- meet your team and learn about your role
- tour the workplace and review safety information
- learn about our policies and employee benefits
- meet your supervisor and your workplace buddy or mentor
- have time to ask questions and learn at your own pace

We value open communication and want you to feel welcome to share your thoughts and ideas. Everyone learns from each other, and your perspective is important.

If you have any questions or need support, please talk with your supervisor or human resources contact. We are here to help. Welcome again to [Organization Name]. We are excited to work with you and glad you are here.

**Sincerely,**

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization Name]

# **NEWCOMER ORIENTATION CHECKLIST**

A clear and welcoming orientation helps newcomers feel comfortable, confident, and part of the team. It also reduces confusion, improves safety, and helps employees learn their new role faster.

Employers can use this checklist to plan what information to share during a newcomer's first days and weeks at work. You can adapt it to fit your workplace, whether you have formal training sessions or informal introductions.

Encourage supervisors and mentors to check in regularly and answer any questions.

## **Before the Employee Starts**

- Prepare the workspace and make sure tools, equipment, and supplies are ready.
- Let the team know that a new employee is joining and share basic information about their role.
- Assign a workplace buddy or mentor to help answer questions.
- Review key workplace policies, benefits, and safety procedures.
- Collect any required documents (for example: SIN, work permit, banking information).
- Prepare a welcome package or copy of the welcome letter.

Shopify was developed by Tobias Lütke who immigrated from Germany.

Across Canada, 37% of people working in scientific research and development services are foreign born. - (Government of Canada, 2023)

The Instant Pot was invented by Robert Wang who immigrated from China

## On the First Day

- Greet the new employee and introduce them to their team and supervisor.
- Give a tour of the workplace, including washrooms, lunchroom, emergency exits, and first aid stations.
- Review basic workplace safety and emergency procedures.
- Go over start and end times, breaks, and how to report absences or late arrivals.
- Review workplace expectations, dress code, and communication norms.
- Explain how to ask questions or report concerns.
- Make sure the new employee knows who to contact for help.

## During the First Week

- Review the job description and main tasks step by step.
- Provide written or visual instructions where possible.
- Give hands-on training and time to practice new tasks.
- Explain payroll, pay periods, and benefits.
- Check in regularly to see how the new employee is adjusting.
- Encourage team members to be welcoming and supportive.
- Ask for feedback about the onboarding process.

## After the First Month

- Schedule a short meeting to review how things are going.
- Ask what supports have been helpful and where the employee may need more guidance.
- Provide constructive feedback and celebrate progress.
- Discuss opportunities for further training or skill development.
- Continue checking in regularly and recognizing accomplishments.



**When employees seen  
and valued, they stay  
and thrive**

## **ARRIVAL: FIRST DAYS**

The first days in a new community are exciting but can also be overwhelming for newcomers. How you welcome and support your employee during this time sets the tone for their experience in your workplace and in Red Deer. Planning ahead ensures that newcomers feel safe, comfortable, and ready to focus on work.

### **First Impressions Matter**

- Greet the newcomer warmly and, if possible, learn a few words in their first language.
- Be patient and understanding. Jet lag, long travel, and stress can affect focus and energy.
- Speak clearly and avoid slang or idioms; consider a translator if needed.
- Provide encouragement and show enthusiasm for their arrival.

## **PERSONAL INFORMATION AND PREPARATION**

Before your new employee arrives, gather key details and prepare for important tasks that need to be completed in their first few days.

### **Personal Details**

- Confirm the newcomer's full name and preferred pronunciation.
- Ask about any special considerations, such as dietary restrictions, religious observances, or medical needs.

### **Essential Documents and Applications**

- Newcomers will need to complete several required applications shortly after arrival. Employers should not complete applications on their behalf, but can offer guidance, transportation, and help understanding required documents.
- **Social Insurance Number (SIN)**
  - The SIN is required before the employee can be added to payroll.
  - Applications can be completed online or in person at a Service Canada Centre.
  - Required documents normally include a passport and immigration papers.
  - **Service Canada information and application details:**  
**<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin.html>**

- **Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP)**

- All newcomers must register for provincial health coverage.
- Applications can be submitted online, by mail, or in person at a registry agent.
- Required documents typically include a passport, immigration documents, and proof of Alberta residence.
- **More information:** <https://www.alberta.ca/ahcip>

- **Bank Account Setup**

- A Canadian bank account is needed for payroll and daily living.
- A SIN is not required to open an account (though some banks may ask for it).
- Identification is required, such as a passport or Alberta ID.
- Employers can assist by directing newcomers to nearby banks and explaining typical banking processes.

- **Alberta Identification**

- Newcomers may wish to apply for:
  - An Alberta ID Card (non-driver government ID), or
  - An Alberta Driver's Licence (if eligible).
- Applications are completed through Alberta Registry Agents.

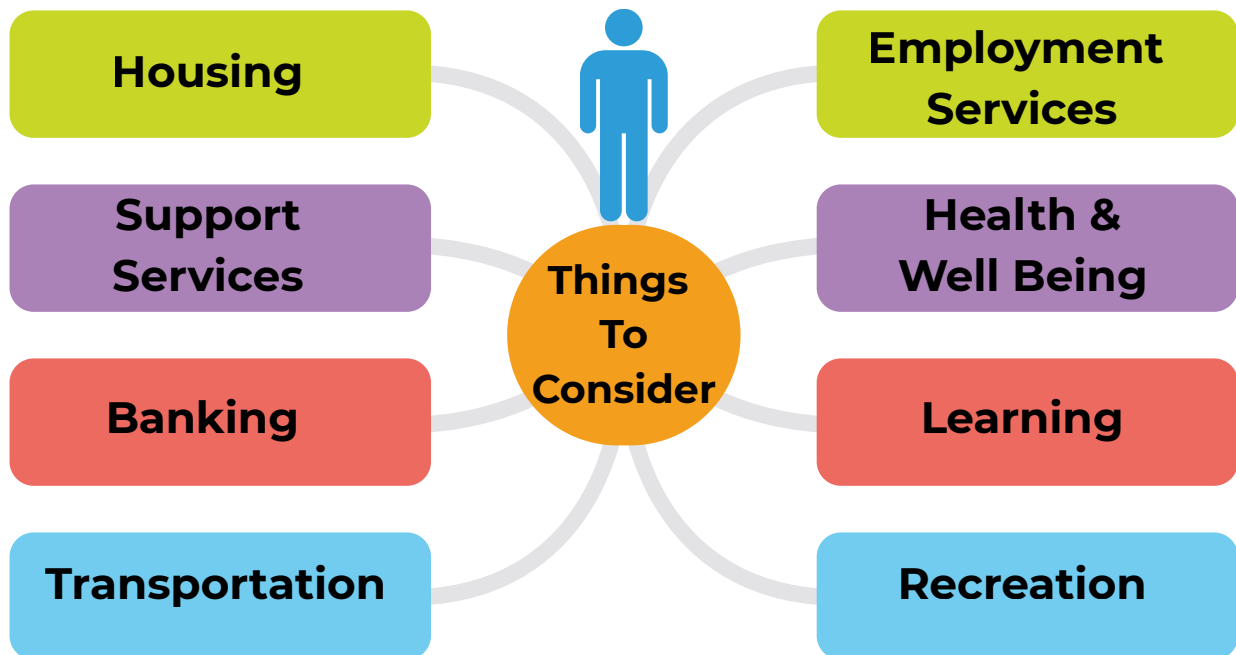
### **Practical Tips for Employers**

- Consider assigning a workplace buddy or mentor to guide the newcomer through both work and community life.
- Repeat important information as needed, the first days can be overwhelming.
- Encourage questions and create a supportive environment for learning about Canadian workplace culture.

### **First-Day Priorities**

- Make sure basic needs are in place: housing, clothing, food, and transportation.
- Provide a brief workplace orientation and introduction to key staff.
- Share local maps and point out essential locations in Red Deer, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, and public transit stops.
- Offer a welcome package with printed resources, local contacts, and helpful guides.

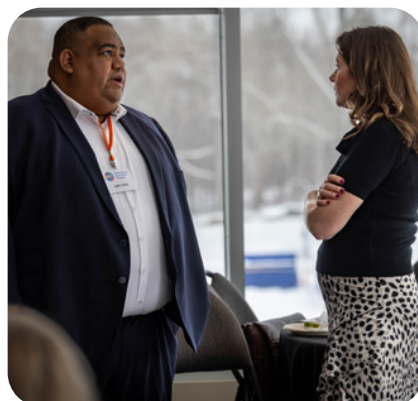
# ARRIVAL AND SETTLING INTO THE COMMUNITY



Helping newcomers settle into Red Deer is an important part of supporting their success at work. Planning ahead and providing practical information about local resources can make the transition easier, help address common challenges, and connect employees with the support they need.

Employers can make newcomers feel welcome and supported by helping them meet basic needs such as housing, transportation, and access to essential services. Taking these steps can reduce stress, ease the transition, and help employees feel more confident and comfortable in their new environment.

The following sections provide practical guidance and local resources for employers to support newcomers in key areas such as housing, employment, health, transportation, banking, recreation, learning, and community connections.



**Retention  
starts with  
RESPECT**

## Housing and Clothing

- Ensure safe and furnished accommodation is arranged before arrival.
- Explain how to use appliances and basic utilities.
- Provide guidance on housing expectations and rental agreements.
- Help newcomers prepare for Red Deer's climate:
  - Winter: Warm coats, insulated boots, gloves, hats, scarves
  - Summer: Light layers, rain jackets, sun protection
  - Layering: Temperatures vary, so layers are useful year round
- Suggest local options for clothing and household items: second-hand stores, thrift shops, Facebook Marketplace, and Kijiji.

## Employment

- Explain workplace orientation, training, and schedules.
- Share information about local employment supports, career services, and job fairs.
- Assign a workplace buddy or mentor to help the new employee navigate work expectations.

## Health and Well-Being

- Provide information on Alberta Health Care coverage and local clinics.
- Share contacts for nearby medical facilities, pharmacies, and mental health support.
- Explain emergency contacts such as 911 and local RCMP.

## Recreation

- Highlight local recreation centers, gyms, parks, and walking trails.
- Share information on cultural associations, clubs, or volunteer opportunities for social connection.

## Transportation

- Explain local transit options and bus routes.
- Provide guidance on driving in Red Deer, including licensing and road safety if relevant.
- Offer assistance with transportation for errands or appointments if needed.

## Banking and Financial Management

- Help the new employee open a bank account and understand payroll deductions.
- Provide basic information on budgeting, paying bills, and managing finances in Canada.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Red Deer Local Immigration Partnership (RDLIP): 403-346-8818  
<https://rdlip.ca/>

Red Deer Chamber of Commerce: 403-347-4491  
<https://www.reddeerchamber.com/>

CARE For Newcomers: 403-346-8818  
<https://www.carefornewcomers.ca/>

Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association: 403-341-3553  
<https://caiwa.ca/>

Catholic Social Services  
<https://www.larcc.ca>

Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline: 1-877-944-9955  
<https://www.alberta.ca/temporary-foreign-workers>

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada: 1-888-242-2100  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship.html>

Employment Standards Contact Centre: 1-877-427-3731  
<https://www.alberta.ca/employment-standards>

Workplace Health and Safety Contact Centre: 1-866-415-8690  
<https://www.alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety>

Worker's Compensation Board Alberta: 1-866-922-9221  
<https://www.wcb.ab.ca/>

National Occupation Code <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/find-national-occupation-code.html>

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/b5037e42-7ccc-4a94-b9f1-66946166cd2a/resource/4f670cb7-7dda-494a-b43b-86b41c12d6ea/download/tbf-economic-statistics-insights-economics-immigrants-alberta.pdf>

## SOURCES

Graphics: [www.Canva.com](https://www.Canva.com)

<https://www.cicic.ca/>

[www.alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca)

<https://www.alberta.ca/aaip-alberta-opportunity-stream>

<https://www.alberta.ca/aaip-rural-renewal-stream-community-designation>

<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-advantage-immigration-program>

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/annual-report-parliament-immigration-2024.html>

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/12/canada-welcomes-historic-number-of-newcomers-in-2022.html>

<https://learning.linkedin.com/resources/learning-culture/diversity-workplace-statistics-dei-importance>

<https://reddeeradvocate.com/2023/01/13/red-deers-international-migration-highest-in-20-years-statscan/>

<https://www.sait.ca/industry-engagement/guide-to-hiring-international-talent/pr-pathway-support>

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/4420-salute-canadian-workers>

**For more information:**



**[www.rdlip.ca](http://www.rdlip.ca)**



**Email: [info@rdlip.ca](mailto:info@rdlip.ca)**

**Address: #202, 5000 Gaetz Avenue, Red Deer, Alberta, T4N 6C**

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