

Provincial Report Card

Saskatchewan



Legislative Protection of Migrant Workers

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Since 2013, the *Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act* (FWRISA) requires employers to register with the Province, and recruiters and consultants must obtain a licence to ensure they meet criteria and can be located. Licensees are required to post \$20,000 which can be used to pay compensation if the licensee violates the legislation. FWRISA prohibits charging recruitment fees or costs to foreign workers, and requires recruiters and consultants to sign transparent contracts with employers and foreign workers.

Enforcement of Legislative Protections

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FWRISA is enforced through a Program Integrity Unit. There are two Integrity Officers who carry out investigations and audits, along with one intake and referral officer. Since 2013, hundreds of proactive audits and tip- or complaint-based investigations of employers and immigration representatives have been conducted, resulting in suspensions and disciplining. Information about sanctioned employers is not made public.

Access to Permanent Residence

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Migrant workers in certain “low-skilled” occupations (long-haul truck drivers and some hospitality and food service workers) can access permanent residence via the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP). Seasonal workers are not eligible.

Settlement and Support Services

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Migrant workers have access to provincially funded settlement services including language instruction in 11 “newcomer gateway” organizations. They can also access language training online. The organizations do not provide assistance with immigration processes.

Access to Information for Migrant Workers

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Several resources created for migrant workers provide contact information for support services and the Program Integrity Unit. These can be accessed with online language translation, but the Province only provides the information in English. Employment Standards provides information sessions on FWRISA for migrant workers at the newcomer gateway organizations. Access to information may remain problematic for migrant workers who are isolated or don’t have internet access.

Awareness-raising among Employers

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When FWRISA was introduced, public education meetings and mailings were undertaken to inform employers. Now the Province offers presentations only on request. Information about employers’ responsibilities to migrant workers is available online.

Access to Healthcare

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All migrant workers with a valid work permit are covered by provincial healthcare, with no waiting period.

Saskatchewan

Building on a solid foundation



EVALUATING
MIGRANT WORKER
RIGHTS IN CANADA
2018

The *Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act* (FWRISA), which came into force in October 2013, is the most comprehensive legislation in Canada to counteract the vulnerabilities that migrant workers face. The Province’s employer registry, recruiter licensing and proactive enforcement, as well as access to provincially-funded settlement services including language instruction, make Saskatchewan the province with the most support and protections for migrant workers.

Employers of migrant workers in Saskatchewan must register with the Province in order to receive a positive LMIA from the federal government. As of January 2018, there were 3,265 employers registered in accordance with the FWRISA. Just over 350 immigration consultants and foreign worker recruiters have been licensed.

Enforcement Statistics 2014-2017

Employers and Licensees Investigated (Following Tip or Complaint)	500
Employer Audits	406
Employers Suspended	28
Licensee Audits	56
Licensees Suspended	0
Wages Recovered from Audits and Investigations	\$200,678

The Program Integrity Unit (PIU) has suspended 28 employers for violations since the legislation was implemented in 2013. The approval rate of applications for recruiters, immigration consultants and representatives hovers around 70%, indicating that the licensing system weeds out unsuitable candidates. So far, no licensee has been suspended, although many have been audited and some disciplined for infractions. As of January 2018, \$200,678 has been recovered for workers through FWRISA, thanks to PIU audits and investigations. The lack of a public registry of sanctioned employers (as exists in Manitoba) can be considered a shortcoming with regards to transparency and access to information.

Saskatchewan Provincial Nominee Program

Year	Hospitality		Truck Driver	
	Nominations	% of Total	Nominations	% of Total
2014	459	9.5%	127	2.6%
2015	657	11.9%	117	2.1%
2016	174	3.2%	33	0.6%
2017	65	1.8%	16	0.4%

Saskatchewan has prioritized the attraction and retention of newcomers in recent years, giving some migrant workers access to permanent residence via the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP). However, among “low-skilled” workers, only truck drivers and some hospitality and food service workers are eligible, and the number of these migrant workers being nominated has plummeted in the last few years, from over 14% of the total in 2015, to just 2.2% in 2017. In 2017 the total number of nominations was 3,671, of which only 81 were workers in “low-skilled” occupations. Saskatchewan should enhance its efforts to fill labour shortages and protect migrant workers by expanding eligibility to other “low-skilled” occupations, and introducing a stream for family and community nominations, so that workers are not dependent on their employers for sponsorship.

Saskatchewan is unique in offering provincially funded services to all migrants, regardless of status. These services include information and referrals, counselling, interpretation, and employment services. Language instruction is delivered by regional colleges in 40 communities as well as online. One shortcoming is that assistance with immigration processes, including the SINP, is not offered, which means that migrant workers must rely on paid immigration consultants and lawyers, despite generally earning low wages. Provincially funded services should include support with immigration processes.

Number of Work Permits Issued	2017
Live-In Caregivers	50
Agricultural Workers	350
Other Temporary Foreign Workers with LMIA	420
Total	820



Canadian Council for Refugees
Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés

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ccrweb.ca/en/migrant-workers