



Domestics' Info

Vancouver Committee for Domestic Workers and Caregivers Rights

CDWCR seeks to improve the lives and working conditions of caregivers and domestic workers through information, counseling, organizing, support networks, educational and training programs, referrals for legal advice and temporary accommodation.

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Changes to Caregiver Program Announced!

On February 23, 2019 – the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced that foreign care workers will soon have access to two new 5-year caregiver immigration pilots that will be launched later this year – Home Child Care Provider Pilot and the Home Support Worker Pilot.

Following are the highlights of the new pilot programs:

- Applicants will be assessed for permanent residence criteria before they begin working in Canada.
- Care workers will be provided with occupation-specific work permit so they can easily change employers when necessary.
- Care workers will need to complete two years work experience before they can apply for permanent residency status.
- Care worker's family can accompany them to Canada with open work permits for spouses/common-law partners and with study permits for dependent children

(Continuation page 3.)



During the CDWCR Care-Net Project Immigration Workshop, CDWCR discussed the recently announced changes to the Caregiver Program. Speakers of the workshop included MP Jenny Kwan and representatives from Migrant Workers Center and MOSAIC

CDWCR Attends the Cross Canada Gathering to Combat Racism and Fight for Migrant Justice

Lorina Serafico and Julie Diesta represented CDWCR to meet with various organizations in Canada on the Cross Canada Gathering to Combat Racism and Fight for Migrant Justice. It was held in Toronto on December 8 and 9, 2018 and attended by thirty-five (35) organizations from across Canada representing migrant, migrant worker, and anti-racist organizations.

The event was coordinated by the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change (MWAC). Following were the objectives of the event:

- Build a shared analysis of local, regional and organization political contexts across the country in the lead to the federal elections.
- Identify key actions and dates to achieve key policy priorities for federal reforms in the current mandate ending in October 2019 for migrant workers.
- Develop narrative and action strategy to push back against racism and xenophobia.

A Migrant Rights Network was formed – and CDWCR agreed to be part of this network.

Following are the key dates and actions decided during the gathering for 2019:

- March 21- Cross Country Action: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- May 1 - International Workers Day
- June 16 – International Domestic Workers Day
- September 2 – Canada Labour Day

CDWCR will announce the details of each action that would be planned for each date in collaboration with other migrant organizations and supporters in BC.

CAREGIVER'S PERSPECTIVE

Applying for PR – Sharing my Experiences

Based on my experience, applying for permanent residence (PR) under the Caregiver Program is quite complicated and very challenging. Since my arrival in Canada almost two years ago, I became a member of CDWCR. My membership and my active participation in CDWCR's activities helped me to understand the PR application process. During my first year in Canada, I already started collecting some of the requirements by focussing on documents that have longer validity and longer process to obtain. Education assessment was the first process I completed knowing that it could take some time to obtain the document from my university in the Philippines. The education assessment took almost two months to complete after accrediting body received the documents from the Philippines. I also knew that I needed to take the language test, so I started preparing for the test during the first year of my contract. During my days off, I went to the public libraries to research and do some self studying. CDWCR also offered free English as a Second Language (ESL) class to help care workers like me prepare for the English test- focussing on speaking, writing, listening and reading. I availed this class which helped me prepare and successfully pass the test and meet the CLB 5 requirements of the Caregiver Program.

As my work permit was getting closer to expire, I had a lot of questions that I needed answers. To help me answer these questions, I contacted the IRCC directly to ensure that I was getting the correct information. I also consulted with my friends at CDWCR. When the Canadian government announced the new Interim Pathway, I learned that I could qualify to apply already, which I learned while attending one of the CDWCR's workshops. Since I already completed all the needed requirements at that time, I proceeded to fill up the application. I availed free services from MOSAIC to fill out the forms and print them. I made sure to check my application for completeness many times to ensure that I did not miss anything in the checklist.

After a week from submitting my application, I received an acknowledgement letter from IRCC confirming the receipt of my application and that I was eligible for permanent residency. I also received my open work permit and now, I am just waiting for my PR status. Applying for PR is a complex and expensive process, but based on my experience, if we try to learn the requirements and prepare for them ahead of time, we could overcome all the obstacles. It is also important to attend the information workshops provided by organizations like CDWCR. We could save some money by availing free resources that are available to us.

This article was written by Lalaine Zamora, who arrived in Canada as an In-home Caregiver under the TFWP. Lalaine is an active member of CDWCR and a member of Education Committee.

2019 Care-Net Project Updates

CDWCR Care-Net Project is continuing in 2019. Following are the highlights of the workshops that were completed to date:

February 3 – Study on Caregivers Immigration and TFWP

The workshop was attended by 20 participants, and facilitated by CDWCR volunteers. The topics covered included overview and requirements of the Caregiver Program. CDWCR also shared some information regarding the regulatory amendments to Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) that would effectively extend the BC program providing abused migrant workers access to open work permits to the rest of the country. Participants of the workshop were divided into groups to share some of their experiences and challenges relating to TFWP and Caregiver Program.

February 24 – Caregivers Immigration Workshop

Resource Speakers who came to this workshop were Jenny Kwan – Member of the Parliament for Vancouver East, NDP Critic for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship; Nancy Morgan - Legal Advocate from Migrant Workers Centre; and Rey Blasco - Outreach Worker from MOSAIC. The day prior to the workshop, the government of Canada announced the changes to the Caregiver Program. This resulted to overwhelming number of attendees, 53 participants wanting to learn the new program. Upon learning about the changes, CDWCR adjusted the agenda to ensure that the changes were discussed along with the Interim Pathway for Caregivers. During the workshop, MOSAIC shared information relating to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) providing abused migrant workers access to open work permits.



Participants of the Financial Literacy Workshop

March 17 – Income Tax Workshop

Number of Attendees: 20

April 14 – Financial Literacy Workshop

Number of Attendees: 19

Both workshops were facilitated by Lorina Serafico – CDWCR volunteer and Scotiabank Financial advisor. Some of the topics discussed during the Financial Literacy Workshop were how to budget, save and do financial planning in preparation for the permanent residence application.

All workshops were held at South Vancouver Adult Day Centre, 3076 E. 49th Ave. (and Kerr Street), Vancouver from 1pm to 4pm. More workshops for 2019. See Announcement in page 4 for details.

Interim Pathway Information Tool

In addition, the Minister also announced an Interim Pathway for Caregivers, which would be open from March 4, 2019 to June 4, 2019. The interim pathway was launched to address the issue resulting from the confusion created by the Caregiver Program back in 2014. Some of the care workers began working in Canada only to find out that they were not going to qualify for permanent residency under the 2014 Caregiver Program.

Short of granting Landed Status upon arrival for care workers, the new 5-year pilot program could produce dramatic and substantial changes in the lives of care workers and their family. These positive changes resulted from lobby work of migrant organizations including CDWCR and their supporters. These positive changes are welcome, but there are lot more to be done.

Following are some of the concerns we have on the announced programs:

With regard to the Interim Program:

- The window to apply for permanent residency under the Interim Pathway is very short. The three months is not enough for care-workers who may be eligible to become aware of the program and process the application.
- It does not allow undocumented workers to apply for permanent residency.
- The CLB Level 5 requirement for language is still restrictive. If the workers do not meet the Level 5 at their first attempt, they will not be able to retake due to limited time.
- The second medical examination should be removed
- There is no Interim Pathway for Quebec workers.

With regard to the 2019 Caregiver Pilot Program:

- The requirements of the new Caregiver Program are still not clear in terms of education, language and work experience. It is not clear whether they use the same higher education and language requirements of the existing Caregiver Program.
- Children of care workers who are of working age should also be able to come to Canada with open work permit.
- They must be entitled to the same settlement resources available to permanent residents to help them settle in Canada, such as affordable housing, health care, ability to attend schools and post secondary education without paying high international fees.
- Medical Inadmissibility must be repealed.

CDWCR along with other migrant organizations sent out a letter outlining the issues identified. CDWCR is concerned that since the announced changes are only pilot programs and not policy changes, the programs can be easily changed depending on the government of the day and therefore any positive changes could remain temporary and could be replaced for the worse.

CDWCR, together with other migrant organizations, continue to call for permanent resident status upon arrival for all migrant workers.

Who are eligible to apply?

- Care workers who have valid work permit, have applied to extend your work permit and waiting for a decision; or have applied to restore the status as temporary worker.

Who are not eligible to apply?

- You are not eligible if: your application to extend your work permit is refused; your application to restore your status is refused; your current work permit is under Live In Caregiver Program (LCP), or you are applying to extend your work permit or restore your status and your most recent work permit was under LCP.

What are the requirements to apply:

- Since November 30, 2014, you must have gained at least 12 months of full time work experience under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) as a home child care provider or home support worker or a combination of two.
- Language level: CLB 5
- Education (Educational Credentials Assessment -ECA): credentials equivalent to Canadian high school/secondary diploma

What would happen if I will not be able to complete my ECA and Language Test in time with the application?

- If you can not get your ECA before the Interim Pathway for Caregivers closes, you must provide proof that you have applied to get one. Send the ECA as soon as you receive it. Do not request that your ECA be sent to IRCC directly.
- If you can not get your language test results before the Interim Pathway closes, you should schedule your test for the earliest available date. Include proof and date that you made an appointment to take the language test by an approved agency. Send the original test results as soon as you receive them. The date on the test must match the date given to IRCC with the application

How long will it take to process the application?

- average 12 months

Do I need to redo my medical exam if it has expired since I came as a temporary worker?

- Yes.

What will happen after you apply?

- You may apply and be eligible for an open work permit as an in Canada applicant for permanent residence. If you are eligible, this permit can let you keep working while you wait for a final decision on your permanent residence application.

If you have any questions, please contact IRCC or visit their website. www.cic.gc.ca

ANNOUNCEMENT

2019 Care-Net Project Schedule

June 9: Health and Wellness Workshop
 September 8: Study on Employment Standards Act
 October 20: Employment Standards Workshop
 November 3: Preparing for the Future

CDWCR Care-Net Workshop will be held at South Vancouver Adult Day Centre, 3076 E. 49th Ave. (and Kerr Street), Vancouver from 1pm to 4pm with Free Lunch from 12pm to 1pm.

2019 CDWCR EVENTS

May 26: Annual General Meeting
 July 1- Canada Day Walk for Landed Status Now
 November 23: Fundraising Event
 December 14: CDWCR 27th Anniversary and Christmas Party

Time and details to follow



Care-Net Project is funded by BCGEU (British Columbia Government & Service Employees Union)

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Due to the increasing printing and mailing cost, CDWCR will be sending out copy of Newsletter to its members through e-mail. If you want to receive your copy through email, please send your email address and updated contact information to cdwcr.org@gmail.com. Print out can be availed by attending CDWCR workshops. Thank you for your understanding.

CDWCR Participates in March 21 Cross Canada Date of Action: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Unite Against Racism)

CDWCR along with other local migrant organizations and supporters such as BC Federation of Labour, Migrante BC, Sanctuary Health, Puerisa Migrante and Watari, held an indoor rally on March 21, 2019 at the Vancouver Public Library. The event was part of the Cross Canada Date of Action of migrants to unite against racism and to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

CDWCR during the occasion called to achieve a just and fair lives for migrant care workers and their families; to fight for immigration and labour laws and social services that will truly provide all migrants protection from injustice.



Lorina Serafico of CDWCR speaking during the Unite Against Racism rally

Congratulations to the 17 students who completed the first set of 2019 ESL Class held every Sunday from March 10 to 31. Thank you very much Mary Rowles, our volunteer instructor. Thank you to BCGEU for providing the funding and venue for the class.

The second set of 2019 ESL class is scheduled on Sundays from September 22 to October 13. Please contact CDWCR if you are interested to register. Limited seats available, first come, first serve. Temporary foreign care workers will be given priority.

We wish to thank:

- BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)
- Hospital Employees' Union (HEU)
- Movement of United Professionals (MoveUp)
- Vancouver and District Labour Council (VDLC)
- BC Employment Standards Coalition
- Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter (VRRWS)
- Migrant Workers Centre (formerly called Westcoast Domestic Workers Association)
- Immigrant Services Society of BC

We also want to acknowledge everyone's effort in putting our newsletter together. Thank you very much for all your contributions.

Membership Form

Mail to: CDWCR PO Box 37033, Vancouver, BC V5P 3X0 For inquiries: (604) 874-0649

Yes, I want to help the Vancouver Committee for Domestic Workers and Caregivers Rights (CDWCR)

Sign me up! I want to become a CDWCR member (membership is \$5/year)

Date of Membership: _____

I would like to make a donation to CDWCR 's work. (Sorry, we are not registered for tax deductible donations.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Email address: _____

Telephone Number : Home: _____ Cell: _____