

Ontario to remove work certification barrier for immigrants

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Ontario immigrants who qualify for certain trades and occupations will no longer be required to have job experience in the province to obtain work certification, under legislation to be introduced by Labor Minister Monte McNaughton.

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The goal is to eliminate the Catch-22 in which qualified immigrants come to the province with much-needed skills, but are then forced to take low-paying, low-skilled jobs because they work the hours required to obtain the credential. cannot submit. They need to find employment in their area.

Under the new rules, migrant workers will still have to go through the same assessment and testing that all Ontario applicants struggle to qualify for a license. But the law aims to ensure that they can no longer be banned from businesses or trades simply because of their lack of Canadian work experience.



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"The purpose of these measures is to level the playing field so that everyone who is qualified to work can contribute," Mr McNaughton said on Wednesday.

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The new law, if passed, would eliminate the work experience requirement for more than 30 professions and skilled trades, from engineers to hairstylists, accountants to sheet metal workers, plumbers to teachers.

Workers in the health care sectors are not currently included in the new rules, but the ministry said it was working to assess which occupations could be included in the future.

The inability to work in areas that match the qualifications of immigrants has been a problem for decades. Licensing bodies are often reluctant to accept experience gained abroad. And there are a limited number of apprenticeships and other work opportunities in Ontario. People who are locally educated are often given preference.

This has forced immigrants to either return to school or leave their farms to qualify for Canada. Previous efforts by governments at both the provincial and federal levels to convince licensing bodies to recognize qualifications obtained abroad have met with only limited success.

Doug Ford is totally wrong in his suggestion that the target of immigrants is to wander around

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The need for skilled workers is especially acute now. As Canada's economy continues to thaw in the wake of the pandemic-induced lockdown, baby boomers are retiring. There are very few new employees available to replace them, then Decades of low fertility.

The Ontario Ministry of Labor estimates that between 270,000 and 290,000 jobs are being lost in Ontario. "And the situation is only going to get worse," said Mr McNaughton. The skilled trade industry may face a shortage of more than 100,000 workers over the next decade.

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Canada has responded to the challenge by importing hundreds of thousands of skilled immigrants each year.

According to background material provided by the ministry, the new rules would require licensing bodies to complete the accreditation process for immigrants "in a reasonable amount of time". Currently it can take up to 18 months for an application to be processed and approved.

The law also aims to streamline language proficiency requirements. And certification can be further accelerated in times of emergency, such as a pandemic.

But Premier Doug Ford sparked controversy on Monday when he added this warning to newcomers: "If you think you're coming to dole out and sit, it's not going to happen. Go somewhere else." "

Mr Ford declined to apologize for the remarks, which critics said strongly bias against newcomers.

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According to provincial statistics, although immigrants account for a third of Ontario's workforce, only 25 percent of internationally educated immigrants are employed in regulated occupations for which they were educated and trained.

"By requiring certification of qualified workers, we are ensuring that everyone contributes and our economy continues to grow," Mr McNaughton said.

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