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A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAMS

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A clear trend in the Canadian immigration law is the increasing role that the provinces and territories have in the selection of prospective immigrants to Canada. Increasingly, immigrants who arrive in Canada do so after being nominated by a province. Attention needs to be paid to the opportunities and possibilities of immigrating to Canada through the various provincial programs. *A Practical Guide to Provincial Nominee Programs in Canadian Immigration Law* provides an overview of provincial nominee programs for those needing to understand what these nominee programs have to offer. It is important to also understand the practicalities of how various provincial programs work and this book aims to provide that information by providing specific and practical information and tips about accessing the provincial programs.

What's New

This release features significant updates to Chapter 3. British Columbia Provincial (Immigration) Nominee Program and Chapter 12. Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program.

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Highlights

Chapter 12. Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program – § 12:1. Introduction – The following is an excerpt from this section –

The only Saskatchewan statute directly affecting the SINP remains the Immigration Services Act, S.S. 2024, c. 14 (“ISA”), which came into force on July 1, 2024 and replaced the Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act. The ISA regulates recruiters and representatives, as well as employer registration, but does not codify SINP selection criteria, which continue to be set administratively and amended by updates on the SINP website. As a result, program criteria—such as eligible occupations, scoring grids and subcategory requirements—can change quickly, and counsel must consult current online guidance in addition to this chapter.

2024–2025 restructuring

At the time of writing, Saskatchewan is implementing substantial changes to the SINP. On August 30, 2024, the Province introduced the Health Talent Pathway and Agriculture Talent Pathway and permanently closed the Hard-to-Fill Skills Pilot; these health and agriculture streams have since been treated as priority pathways for both overseas recruitment and processing. On March 27, 2025, Saskatchewan announced a broader overhaul, including closure of the Entrepreneur and Farm Owner/Operator streams, increased emphasis on nominations for foreign nationals already in Canada on temporary status, and sector-specific caps that limit nominations in accommodation/food services, retail trade and trucking. The March 2025 restructuring introduced a three-tier intake management system that fundamentally altered how nominations are allocated:

- 1. Priority overseas recruitment** (unrestricted): Health, Agriculture and designated skilled trades. These sectors continue to accept Job Approval Letters and overseas applications without quota constraints or wait-lists.
- 2. In-Canada temporary resident pathway** (prioritized): Foreign nationals already in Canada on valid work permits or study permits are now processed on an expedited basis and receive preferential allocation of nomination spaces across all categories.
- 3. Capped sectors** (constrained): Accommodation/food services, retail trade and trucking are subject to annual nomination caps, which may be reached mid-fiscal year, resulting in queued JAL applications and extended processing delays for nominees in these sectors, even if they meet all eligibility criteria.

Chapter 12. Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program – § 12:8. SINP CATEGORIES – 12.8.4 Employment Offer Subcategory – The following is an excerpt from this section –

Practical impact of 2025 caps. Sectoral caps and the emphasis on in-Canada candidates mean that, by 2025, overseas applicants without existing Saskatchewan ties may find it substantially more difficult to secure nomination under Employment Offer, particularly in accommodation/food services, retail and trucking. Health, agriculture and certain trades, by contrast, continue to be actively recruited, including overseas, under the specialized Talent Pathways described below.