

Alberta's Trade Certification Process



Tradespeople in Alberta are trained and certified through the province's apprenticeship and industry training system, which is administered by Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT).

If you are a tradesperson from outside of Canada and wish to work in a compulsory trade in Alberta, you will need to meet Alberta industry trade standards for that specific trade. Temporary foreign workers may apply for certification under the Alberta Qualification Certificate Program.

Through this program:

- Your work experience and/or formal training in the trade will be verified;
- If approved, you will be required to write and pass a theory exam for the trade (pass mark is 70 per cent);
- For some trades you will also be required to pass a practical exam (pass mark is 70 per cent); and
- Your Alberta employer is required to provide a letter of declaration verifying you are performing work in the trade at the level of a certified journeyperson.

If the above requirements are met, you will be issued a Qualification Certificate which will allow you to work as a *certified journeyperson* in the specified designated trade in Alberta.

In Alberta, there are two classifications of designated trades:

1. Compulsory Trades

To work in a compulsory trade, a foreign worker must have a letter from Apprenticeship and Industry Training indicating their application is approved, be certified under the Qualification Certificate Program, or have a certificate issued by a regulatory authority in Canada that is recognized by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board.

2. Optional Trades

In optional trades, a person is not required to hold a trade certificate to work in the trade if an employer is satisfied that the uncertified person has the knowledge and skills expected of a journeyperson.

Foreign tradespeople who would like to be employed in an optional trade in Alberta are not required to be certified under the Qualification Certificate Program; however, certification would provide the person with an official document that will be recognized throughout Alberta and may be recognized throughout all of Canada. Refer to the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training website for information on Alberta's compulsory and optional trades.

Useful Websites:

Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training: www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) – Career section: www.alis.gov.ab.ca/js/job-seeker.html

Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program: www.red-seal.ca

Temporary Foreign Worker Qualification Certificate application for foreign nationals: www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca

Work permit application form: www.cic.gc.ca/English/information/applications/work.asp

Job Websites

Alberta First: www.albertafirst.com/opportunities/employment.asp

Alberta Job Banks: www.alis.gov.ab.ca/employment/jp/jobbanksab.asp

Jobs in Alberta: www.AlbertaCanada.com/jobs

National Job Bank of Canada: www.jobbank.gc.ca



The step-by-step description below outlines how a foreign worker can become a certified tradesperson via the Qualification Certificate Program:

1. Find an employer in Alberta to hire you as a temporary foreign worker.
2. Complete the Temporary Foreign Worker Qualification Certificate application. Applications are available from the AIT website www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca. Each application includes:
 - An application form, and
 - Confirmation of Work Experience forms.
3. Your application for the Alberta Qualification Certificate Program must:
 - Include a completed Temporary Foreign Worker Qualification Certificate application form.
 - Provide the required documentation for verification of work experience or work experience and training in the trade.
 - Include payment of the required non-refundable fee(s).

With your application, you are required to:

- a. Provide original copies or certified true copies of letters signed by your employer or previous employer(s) which detail your work experience in the trade (hours/months/ tasks performed in the trade); or provide original or certified true copies of "Confirmation of Work Experience" forms completed by your employer or previous employer(s).
- b. Any attached documents written in a language other than English must be translated into English by an approved translator. Names of translators may be available from a translator's association in your home country. Names of translator associations are also available from the International Association of Translators Federation (FIT) website at www.fit-ift.org.
- c. Pay the Verification of Competency fee; this fee includes one attempt at the theory examination. All fees must be paid in Canadian funds with a certified cheque, money order, VISA, American Express or MasterCard. Certified cheques and money orders are to be made payable to the Minister of Finance, Government of Alberta.

4. AIT will verify your work experience or work experience and formal training in the trade. When the verification is completed, AIT will notify you in writing as to whether your application has been accepted.
5. Within seven days of your arrival in Alberta, you and your employer must submit your Alberta mailing address and date of arrival to the Apprenticeship Initiatives office.
6. You or your Alberta employer are required to contact AIT to schedule your required examination(s) when you arrive in Alberta. The certification process must be underway within 180 days of your arrival in order to maintain your foreign worker status in Canada.
7. It is expected that within 90 days of your arrival in Alberta you and your employer will have taken steps towards achieving the requirements for certification including:
 - a. Scheduling your practical examinations.
 - b. Challenging theory and/or practical examinations, successfully or unsuccessfully.
 - c. Attending an employer or union sponsored training program, including trades refresher programs, technical English and trade terminology training.

If you have not acquired trade certification within 180 days, you may be granted an additional 180 days to become certified, provided you and your employer can show that positive steps have been taken towards certification and that a formal training plan is in place.

If you and your employer have not shown progress towards qualifying for certification within 180 days of your arrival in Alberta, your TFW Qualification Certificate application will be cancelled, and you will no longer be eligible to work in the trade in Alberta. Your employer and workplace owners will also be advised of your ineligibility to work in the trade.

Please remember to keep your work permit valid throughout your entire stay in Alberta.