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IPL Question #5

Needed by: no need by

Question:

I want to move to Canada and I'm wondering how possible it is for a US citizen to move there and find a job.

What are the policies about Americans working in Canada?

Would I have to become a Canadian citizen in order to apply for work? What is the process for that?

location: Washington

area: Government

reason: to decide whether or not to move

school: No

sources\_consulted: none - don't know where to start looking

Greetings from the IPL! Your question on laws related to living and working in Canada as a US citizen led me to some interesting sources. I will address both the possibilities for working in Canada as a US citizen, and the possibility of applying for Canadian citizenship, in case you would like to move to Canada permanently.

In order to find the most authoritative answers, I decided to start my search with the official Canadian Government website, located at

<http://www.canada.gc.ca/>

You can find this website by searching Google:

<http://www.google.com>

for the keywords 'Canadian Government' without the quotes. The official site above is the first link listed.

As a Canadian site, it is available in either French or English – I selected English in order to continue. From there, I selected ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ from the menu on the left. On this page, one of the several questions listed is ‘Immigrating to Canada’.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/index.asp>

On this page, they describe the ways to apply for Canadian citizenship, and the different categories of applicants (whether you have certain skills or experience, or Canadian relatives, or are self-employed, etc.). You would have to determine which category would fit you best, and read the appropriate application procedures.

Also on this page, I noticed a link on the left-hand menu titled “Work Temporarily”.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/index.asp>

This page says that in order to work in Canada as a non-Canadian citizen, you may need a work permit, but not for all jobs or occupations. Here is a list of jobs or occupations for which a work permit is not required:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who-nopermit.asp>

More detail on ‘Who can apply’ for a work permit is available here:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who.asp>

This page says that, depending on your job or occupation, you may also need a temporary resident visa. The page where you can apply for this is located here:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/apply-how.asp>

In order to be eligible to apply for a work permit from outside Canada, there is a list of requirements which can be found here:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who-eligible.asp#outside>

These include a job offer from a Canadian employer, as well as paperwork that you and the employer must complete. They may also require a medical exam and/or a criminal background check.

There are also special job categories that have their own eligibility requirements:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who-special.asp>

Workers in these categories may “not require a work permit, or they may have work permits approved more quickly.”

In order to easily work through the requirements, the Canadian Government has created an online tool that will walk you through discovering the requirements and the procedure for your particular job or occupation. The site is located here:

<http://workingincanada.gc.ca/welcome.do?template=cic&lang=en>

This helpful tool will also assist in determining if your profession is regulated in Canada, and if there are jobs for foreign workers in your industry available in any particular province.

Overall, it appears that you need to find a job in Canada first. The Canadian government site also offers a job bank with many listings:

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/lifeevents/job.shtml?cs>

A large non-government website that lists jobs available in Canada is Workopolis:

[http://www.workopolis.com/work.aspx?action=Transfer&View=Content/JobSeeker/JobSearchView&lang=EN&s\\_kwcid=TC|7918|jobs%20in%20canada||S||4053851439&gclid=CI\\_E6P32oZ4CFRcjawodCUUo1A](http://www.workopolis.com/work.aspx?action=Transfer&View=Content/JobSeeker/JobSearchView&lang=EN&s_kwcid=TC|7918|jobs%20in%20canada||S||4053851439&gclid=CI_E6P32oZ4CFRcjawodCUUo1A)

This link is very long and may break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience:

<http://tinyurl.com/yjpkvq2>

I located this site by searching Google

<http://www.google.com/>

for the keywords ‘Canada jobs Americans’ without the quotes. This is a commercial site, and I include it as an example of other possible job resources – if you do the Google search I referenced, there will be many more listings of sites that may assist you with your job search. I hope you can find a job at one of these sites which would make it possible to apply for your work permit before going to Canada. It also would be possible to go to Canada as a visitor, and apply for your work permit when you find a job:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/apply-who-eligible.asp#inside>

The requirements for this are more involved, however, since you would have to get a temporary residency permit first (proving that you had the means to live in Canada for a while without a job), and then satisfying a number of requirements including “Satisfy an immigration officer that you will leave Canada at the end of your work permit.”

Government paperwork is always complicated and confusing, but I hope that this information helps you to make your decision about whether or not to move to Canada. If you have any further questions about this or any other subjects, please don’t hesitate to email the IPL again!