ICG Globe
Immigration and Corporate Group

FREE GUIDE · UPDATED OCTOBER 2026

Canada PR Readiness Checklist 2026

A practical, step-by-step checklist to get your Express Entry profile ready, including what changes on November 3, 2026, the documents to gather now, and the mistakes that cost applicants time.

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General information only, not legal advice. Facts checked against official IRCC pages on October 27, 2026. Immigration rules change often: always confirm on canada.ca before you act. No outcome can be guaranteed.

1 Express Entry and CRS basics

Express Entry is IRCC's online system for three federal economic programs. You create a profile, get a Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score out of 1,200, and IRCC invites top-ranked candidates in regular draws.

Check which program fits you

- [ ] **Federal Skilled Worker:** foreign skilled work experience, education and language
- [ ] **Canadian Experience Class:** at least 1 year of skilled work experience in Canada
- [ ] **Federal Skilled Trades:** qualified trades with a job offer or certificate
- [ ] Check if you fit a **category-based draw** (e.g. French, healthcare, trades)

Know how your score is built

- [ ] Core factors: age, education, language, Canadian work experience
- [ ] Spouse or partner factors (if they come with you)
- [ ] Skill transferability (education/foreign work + language)
- [ ] Additional points: provincial nomination **(600)**, strong French, sibling in Canada, Canadian study

⚠ What changes on November 3, 2026

- A new **Labour Market Integration** factor awards up to **150 points** for *either* Canadian work experience (with extra points for eligible high-wage occupations) *or* a qualifying job offer in an eligible high-wage occupation (up to 100 points), not both.
- An **LMIA is no longer required** for a job offer to qualify, and having one gives no extra points. Officers still check that the offer is genuine.
- IRCC will recalculate every profile automatically, which may take **up to two weeks**. Invitation rounds are paused during that time.

Source: IRCC, "2026 changes to points for Canadian work experience and job offers" (canada.ca). Details, point tables and the eligible occupation list can change: check IRCC before you update your profile.

Labour Market Integration points (from Nov 3)

You can score with	With spouse	Single
Canadian work experience (length + high-wage)	up to 140	up to 150
Qualifying job offer, high-wage occupation	50 to 100	50 to 100

IRCC counts whichever option gives you more points.

Before and after November 3

- [ ] Have a job offer? Check whether the occupation is on IRCC's eligible high-wage list
- [ ] Follow IRCC's instructions for entering a job offer without an LMIA in your profile
- [ ] Don't compare cutoffs from before the change with draws held after it

3 Language tests

IRCC accepts only these tests for Express Entry:

CELPIP-General · IELTS General Training · PTE Core · TEF Canada · TCF Canada

- [ ] Results must be **less than 2 years old** when you create your profile and when you apply
- [ ] Know your program minimum (e.g. CLB 7 for Federal Skilled Worker)
- [ ] Plan a retake: each CLB level can add points
- [ ] Consider a French test: strong French adds up to 50 extra points

✓ Education (ECA)

For education completed outside Canada, get an Educational Credential Assessment from a designated organization, such as:

WES · ICAS · IQAS · CES (U of T) · ICES (BCIT)

- [ ] Your ECA must be **less than 5 years old**
- [ ] Doctors use the Medical Council of Canada; pharmacists may need PEBC
- [ ] Assess each credential you want points for (two degrees can earn more)
- [ ] Order early: transcripts sent by your school can take weeks

4 Proof of funds

Needed for Federal Skilled Worker and Federal Skilled Trades. Not needed for the Canadian Experience Class, or if you are authorized to work in Canada and have a valid job offer.

Family members	Funds you need (CAD)
1	$15,263
2	$19,001
3	$23,360
4	$28,362
5	$32,168
6	$36,280
7	$40,392
Each extra member	+ $4,112

IRCC table updated July 7, 2025 (current as of Oct 27, 2026). IRCC updates it every year.

Funds checklist

- [ ] Count your **whole family**: spouse and dependent children, even if they are not coming with you
- [ ] Official letter from **each** bank on letterhead with account numbers, opening dates, current and 6-month average balances, and debts
- [ ] Money must be yours and accessible: **no borrowed funds**, no property equity
- [ ] Keep the balance above the minimum until your PR visa is issued
- [ ] Large recent deposits? Keep proof of where they came from

5 Documents to gather early

- [ ] Valid passport (check the expiry date) for you and each family member
- [ ] Language test results (less than 2 years old)
- [ ] ECA report(s) and degree certificates and transcripts
- [ ] Reference letters for each job: title, duties, hours per week, salary, dates, signed on company letterhead
- [ ] Pay slips, tax documents or contracts that back up your work history
- [ ] Police certificates for each country where you lived 6+ months since age 18
- [ ] Upfront medical exam (when IRCC asks, through a panel physician)
- [ ] Proof of funds letters (see section 4)
- [ ] Marriage or common-law proof, birth certificates for children
- [ ] Certified translations of anything not in English or French

After an invitation (ITA) you usually have 60 days to submit a complete application, so start collecting before you are invited.

6 Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) options

Most provinces and territories run their own programs. A nomination through an Express Entry-aligned ("enhanced") stream adds 600 CRS points. Base streams are applied for outside Express Entry.

- [ ] **Ontario (OINP):** Human Capital Priorities, French-Speaking Skilled Worker and Skilled Trades streams
- [ ] **British Columbia (BC PNP), Alberta (AAIP), Saskatchewan (SINP), Manitoba (MPNP):** Express Entry and occupation-targeted streams
- [ ] **Atlantic provinces**: provincial streams plus the Atlantic Immigration Program
- [ ] Create an Express Entry profile and select the provinces you are interested in, then watch each province's official draw page

Provincial streams open, pause and change often. Always check the province's official website.

Quick readiness self-check

- [ ] My language test results are valid and meet my program's minimum
- [ ] I have an ECA (or a Canadian credential) for my highest education
- [ ] I have at least 1 year of skilled work experience I can prove
- [ ] I know my NOC code and TEER level, based on my duties
- [ ] I can show the settlement funds for my family size, or I'm exempt
- [ ] I have reference letters for every job I plan to claim
- [ ] I know how the November 3, 2026 changes affect my score
- [ ] I've checked which provinces may want my occupation

7–8 ticks: you may be ready to create or update your profile. **4–6:** close the gaps above first. **0–3:** talk to an RCIC about other routes, such as study, work permits or provincial streams.

7 10 common mistakes to avoid

1. **Wrong NOC code.** Choose it from your actual duties, not your job title.
2. **Expired test or ECA.** A result that expires while you are in the pool can make you ineligible.
3. **Leaving out family members.** Undeclared dependants can cause problems later.
4. **Gaps in history.** Explain every period of your personal and work history, with no unexplained gaps.
5. **Weak reference letters.** Missing duties, hours or salary is a common reason for refusal.
6. **Claiming points you can't prove.** Misrepresentation can lead to a 5-year ban.
7. **Low or borrowed funds.** Balances must meet the minimum and be yours.
8. **Not updating your profile.** Update it when your age, job, test scores or family change, and before the Nov 3 recalculation if you have a qualifying job offer.
9. **Waiting for the ITA to start.** 60 days goes fast when police certificates take weeks.
10. **Trusting unlicensed advice.** Only authorized representatives, such as RCICs and lawyers, can charge you for immigration advice. Check the CICC register.

8 Your next steps

01
Estimate your score

Use IRCC's official CRS tool and compare it with recent draws of the same type (general, category or PNP).

02
Close the gaps

Book your language test, start your ECA and request reference letters now. Each one can take weeks.

03
Get a professional review

Have a licensed RCIC check your program fit, points strategy and documents before you submit.

Want a second pair of eyes on your PR plan?

Book a one-on-one consultation with our RCIC-led team. We'll review your profile, explain how the November 3, 2026 changes affect you and map out realistic options, including provincial programs.

Book a consultation

Start the online assessment

Consultations: $60 / 30 min · $85 / 45 min · $110 / 1 hour

Important: This checklist is general information, not legal advice, and does not create a consultant-client relationship. It reflects official IRCC information checked on October 27, 2026. IRCC and the provinces can change rules, point values, draw types and fees at any time, so please confirm on canada.ca before you act. No consultant can guarantee an invitation, a nomination or a visa; decisions are made by IRCC and provincial governments. Consultation fees are non-refundable; rescheduling is allowed with at least 24 hours' notice.

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