

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

August 1990

(INTERCEDE)

PREPARING FOR IMMIGRATION ASSESSMENT

At the end of two years, the domestic worker under the Foreign Domestic Movement program (FDM) is called for an interview by Immigration. This is called the "assessment" and will determine whether the foreign domestic worker will obtain landed or immigrant status.

In this assessment, the foreign domestic worker is assessed on the basis of seven criteria: language, skills upgrading, experience, financial security, social adaptation, personal suitability and dependents.

If the result of the assessment is positive, the foreign domestic worker will be given an open work permit. After a security check has been made on her, she will receive permanent residence status. At this point, she can begin to sponsor family members to join her in Canada.

If the result of the assessment is negative, her work permit will be renewed for one more year, at the end of which she must leave Canada.

Skills Upgrading

When going to an Immigration office for assessment, or for any other reason, make sure to know the name of the Immigration officer interviewing you. This will make it much easier for you to refer back if you need to in the future or if INTERCEDE or a legal counsellor will need to follow up with the same officer later.

At the assessment, it is very important to show the Immigration officer that you have given some serious thought to your future plans in Canada. Immigration likes to see that you have a realistic over-all plan for when you finish the FDM. This plan should include what occupation you intend to pursue and what training you have been undergoing to gain the necessary skills for that occupation. This plan may, of course, include continuing your occupation as a domestic worker.

It is becoming common for Immigration to recommend that the worker go to Canada Employment Centre (CEC) and explore various career opportunities other than domestic work at the time that an open work permit is granted. It is advisable to go through the CEC interview if one has been scheduled for you.

At the assessment, tell the Immigration officer what your plans are after you finish the FDM (for example, that you want to become a nurse, a secretary, an accountant, etc.), then show what you have been doing and what courses you have been taking to satisfy those plans (health care courses, word processing, business courses etc.). Remember that these courses should relate to the occupation you are planning to pursue after the FDM.

Bring to your assessment interview all your certificates, diplomas, school receipts pertaining to the courses you have been taking.

Come to INTERCEDE's monthly meeting on Sunday, August 12, 1990 from 3 to 5 p.m at the Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street.

David Leitch, Director and lawyer of Toronto Workers' Health & Safety Legal Clinic will discuss Health Hazards to Domestic Workers.

CLASP Legal Clinic will be open but there will be no INTERCEDE counselling.

Experience

To be considered for permanent residence, you need two years of satisfactory employment as a domestic worker in Canada.

Bring letters of reference from your present as well as past employers. If you were forced to leave an employer because of any problem and the employer did not give you a reference letter, be prepared to discuss the circumstances with the Immigration officer. It is more advantageous and will save more time for you to volunteer information than have the officer ask you many questions to extract information.

Financial Security

At your assessment, you must show the Immigration officer that you are capable of managing your financial affairs. Immigration wants evidence that if you are granted permanent residence status, you will be able to support yourself and any dependent you intend to sponsor.

Bring information that would demonstrate your ability to save money such as bank statements (computer print-outs not handwritten) showing when you made deposits. What would interest the officer is not so much the amount of money saved as the regular pattern of deposits into your savings account.

Also bring cancelled cheques, receipts or proof of any money sent to your family or relatives in your home country. This is evidence of your ability to manage your finances and is not seen

as a negative factor. It shows that you are able to support or assist others as well as yourself. Keep a record of all money used for this purpose.

You can also bring receipts of any large purchases you have made in Canada, such as furniture, television, insurance etc. This will help account for your money and will show that you have spent it well and wisely.

Be prepared to discuss any special reason why you have not been able to save money. It is better to volunteer this information than for your interviewer to think you have been wasteful with your money.

Social Adaptation

Social adaptation can't be explained in exact terms but does refer to your efforts to get involved in the community. Almost anything you do outside of your domestic work can be considered evidence of social adaptation. Doing volunteer work in hospitals, libraries, senior centres, (for which you should get proof such as certificates or letters), is seen as a serious effort to adapt to your new society. Getting involved in your Church, in community organizations such as INTERCEDE, in recreational and cultural groups, should impress an Immigration officer that you are a good candidate for permanent residence.

Social adaptation can also mean engaging in recreational and social activities such as sightseeing around Toronto and surrounding places, visiting museums, joining sports

We wish to thank the Employment and Immigration Canada (Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program); Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Women's Program); Ontario Ministry of Citizenship; Ontario Women's Directorate; the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Community and Social Services); and the City of Toronto for their continuing support.

NEW SUBSCRIPTION:

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

MAIL TO: INTERCEDE, 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A5

Please send DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS to:

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Intercede Members:	FREE	Non-member Domestic	\$ 5.00
Non-Profit Organizations	FREE	Others	\$10.00

Preparing for Assessment (cont'd)

leagues etc. What is important is that you demonstrate you have been developing social ties in the community.

Bring letters from groups or individuals you have been involved with (parish priest, principal librarian, etc.); bring membership cards and library cards. For example, INTERCEDE volunteers who have attended facilitation workshops and received certificates can show these. Feel free to relate to the interviewing officer your community, social, cultural and self-development activities.

Dependents

Your number of dependents is relevant to whether or not you will be positively assessed at the end of your two years in Canada. You should be able to show that if you get your permanent status, you will be qualified to work at a job that will pay sufficiently to cover your dependents' and your own living expenses.

Inquire with INTERCEDE about sponsorship requirements and how many dependents you can bring into Canada.

(Summary of presentations in the July 8, 1990 meeting made by CLASP law students: Jeffrey Abrams, Henry Moyal, and Julie Ann Barrett)

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Q: Can a foreign domestic worker who arrived in Canada in 1990 still qualify to become a landed immigrant?

A: Yes, a foreign domestic worker who arrived in Canada in 1990 under the FDM has the right to become a landed immigrant after two years as long as s/he meets the criteria for landing.

Q: Can I visit my home country if I have an open permit?

A: You are doing so at your own risk because you technically are without status (not in the FDM and not a landed immigrant). Contact Canada Immigration before making travel plans or call INTERCEDE.

Q: Why do I have to live-in with my employer? I am not allowed to cook food that I want to eat in my employer's house.

A: The Foreign Domestic Movement program requires that domestic workers live-in the house of their employer. Being able to choose what you want to eat, specially if different from what your employer normally eats, is often a problem and will have to be negotiated with your employer. Your deductions include food and lodging. You can try negotiating not to be deducted for food (\$1.90 per meal to a maximum of \$39.90 per week) and buy your own provisions with that money.

TRIP TO NIAGARA FALLS

ALL DAY SUNDAY - AUGUST 12, 1990

9:30 A.M. ASSEMBLY at Cecil Street corner Spadina

BUS SEATS RESERVED ONLY FOR PAID MEMBERS.

10:00 A.M. SHARP BUSES WILL LEAVE

PLEASE BE ON TIME. NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE.

REMEMBER TO BRING :

- **YOUR RECEIPTS FOR \$10 PAYMENT**
- **YOUR OWN LUNCH.**

COCO'S CALENDAR

Hello again and thank you...

Effie Henry, for remembering us and sending a very generous donation. We are always happy to hear from long-time members.

Hugs and Congratulations...

to Thelma Coolen, dear Board Member and a former placement student at INTERCEDE, who has successfully completed the course on women and child abuse education at George Brown College.

and reminding...

all diligent participants of the Facilitators' Workshop, the next one is on Saturday, Aug. 18 at the same place, 10 a.m. sharp.

and thank you again...

to Elaine Prescod and the Coalition of Visible Minority Women for letting us use their boardroom for the Facilitators' Workshop

JOIN

THE CARIBANA FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 4, 1990

Parade starts at 11 a.m. from Wellington St. and ends at Queen's Park

Assembly for INTERCEDE members will be at corner Bay and Wellington

Look for INTERCEDE banner

Join the festival tradition, wear a costume that you made or your national costume.

want to contribute to the relief drive for phil. earthquake victims?

Make Your Cheques Payable To:
**PHILIPPINE EMERGENCY RELIEF
KABABAYAN COMMUNITY CENTRE**
1444 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario
M6K 1M2

For info call Fely or Coco 324-8751
Tax receipts for donations of \$10 and above.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Canada Immigration Centre	973-4444
Employment Standards Enforcement	326-7160
Revenue Canada (Taxation)	869-1500
Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre	656-8933
Educ & Skills Training Ctr, Labour Council	971-5893
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre (24-hour line)	597-8808

LEGAL SERVICES

Parkdale Community Legal Services	531-2411
CLASP (Osgoode Law School) Legal Clinic	736-5029
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Serv.	363-0304
Metro Tor. Chinese & SE Asian Legal Clinic	971-9674

EMERGENCY HOUSING

Nellie's Hostel	461-1084
Evangeline's	762-9636

Unemployment Insurance	730-1211
Ontario Human Rights Commission	326-9511
OHIP	965-1000
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	367-1388

INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

Place: 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario
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FIRST CLASS