

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

January 1994



(INTERCEDE)

QUESTION AND ANSWER ON IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES

Q. I arrived in Canada in June 1992, does my new employer have to get a validated Offer of Employment from the Canada Employment Centre or can she write a letter through exemption code E92 that I can attach to my application for a new work permit?

A. On April 27, 1992 the Foreign Domestic Movement Program (FDM) was replaced by the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP). If you arrived in Canada after April 1992 but your application was assessed under the guidelines of the FDM you are considered an FDM participant.

FDM participants have the choice to enter into 6 occupations, baby-sitter, child nurse, domestic worker-servant, housekeeper, nanny and parents' helper. And, similar to LCP participants, they only have to complete two years of domestic work within a three year period from entry to Canada to be eligible to apply for Permanent Residence.

E92 allows FDM applicants to apply directly through Immigration for a new work permit providing they obtain a written job offer detailing the job title, occupation, duties, term of employment, wages, working conditions and that its a live-in position. This letter must be attached to your application for a new employment authorization in addition to the other documents required and be submitted to Immigration.

Q. When I applied to come to Canada under the FDM I did not declare that I had a husband and two children. I am in the process of filling out my

application for Permanent Residence, will I be deported if I tell the truth?

A. No, Immigration allows domestic workers to correct misrepresentations regarding their marital status and number of dependents. You are advised to do this before or at least when you apply for Permanent Residence or before Immigration has launched an inquiry. Make sure to attach a letter of explanation asking that this information be corrected and keep a copy of it.

You should also enclose, or state that you will be submitting, the marriage license and the birth certificates of your children. Contact INTERCEDE for assistance.

When you receive your landing document make sure that the information has been corrected. If it is not, do not sign or leave the office before notifying the Immigration officer.

Q. I am applying for Permanent Residence. Can my dependents be processed at the same time as my application or do I have to wait to sponsor them once landed?

A. Yes, your dependents can be processed at the same time as your application provided the correct documents and fees are submitted and the necessary qualifications are maintained throughout the entire process.

However, it may be in your best interest to secure your status in Canada as a Permanent Resident first and then sponsor your dependants after you have received your landing. Please contact INTERCEDE for further counselling.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

Come to INTERCEDE's monthly meeting on Sunday, January 9, 1994, 3-5 p.m. at Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street, south of College & Spadina

2-3 p.m. New member application and renewals. Members with ID numbers 93-0001 to 93-0063 must renew or be dropped from membership list.
3-5 p.m. **HEALTH-RELATED NEEDS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS**

Q. My Aunt would like to sponsor my sister from the Philippines to come to Canada as a domestic worker under the Live-In Caregiver Program. Can relatives offer employment?

A. Yes. However, it will be necessary for them to prove that this is a bona fide offer. Once they submit an application to the Canada Employment Centre they will have to show that there is no other Canadian or legal worker here that is available for the job, that they really need a live-in caregiver to look after either young children, someone elderly or a person with a handicap, etc.

If the application is approved your sister would be notified by the Canadian Embassy in the Philippines to file an application under the Live-In Caregiver Program to determine her eligibility.

Please advise your relative to tell the truth regarding her relationship to the prospective employer if asked.

GOOD FEELINGS AT DECEMBER PARTY

by Carol Salmon

About 100 members and friends joined INTERCEDE's annual Christmas Meeting to celebrate each other. We sang Christmas Carols, exchanged gifts, ate and were entertained by the dancing of the Spanish speaking group and the singing of the Caribbean domestic workers, Chinese and Filipino workers.

Guest Speaker, Honor Ford Smith, founding director of SISTREN Theatre group used various drama exercises to help us break down the isolation we sometimes feel as individuals from various cultures and to connect us to our commonalities as domestic workers, as women.

We talked about where we are from, how we define ourselves individually, our best times, our worst times, our coping strategies, our dreams.

It is that time of year when we think about the challenges ahead and reflect on the choices we have made, the roles we live as a housecleaner, nanny, baby-sitter, teacher, cook, launder, housesitter, dog trainer, gardener, mother, wife, sister, friend, counsellor, student, etc.

Replenish yourselves spiritually and by connecting with family, friends, other domestic workers. Keep fighting to improve your rights, join groups, take classes, do crafts, volunteer, keep a journal,

laugh, cry, sing,...

Take pride in your strength to survive the obstacles you have faced over the years. Rejoice in your strong spirit and remember that there is no one in the world like you and that you are special.

Happy New Year from the staff of INTERCEDE.

INTERCEDE'S NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

Starting in January 1994, all domestic workers who are applying for membership for the first time will receive their membership card only after attending a full-day orientation meeting.

As in the past, membership applications, and annual renewals of membership are open to those who are currently engaged in domestic work. Applications from former domestic workers and non-domestic workers are subject to Board approval.

Application must be made in person and only during the monthly Sunday general meetings, held at the Cecil Community Centre from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The next monthly meeting where one can file an application for new membership or for a membership renewal will be on Sunday, January 9, 1994, at 58 Cecil Street, from 2 - 3 p.m.

Renewal cards will be issued right away. However, new member applicants will not get a membership card immediately; instead, they will need to attend the orientation meeting on Sunday, February 20 to do so.

No applications are processed at INTERCEDE's office at 489 College Street and any application that is sent by mail will not be honoured.

INTERCEDE holds orientation meetings every two months where information is given out about immigration requirements under the Live-in Caregiver Program.

These orientation sessions also cover immigrant and workers' rights, health protection and hu-

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

man rights, as well as other topics relevant to newcomers.

Orientation meetings are usually held on a Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Announcements about the next scheduled orientation are made through the newsletter, *Domestics' Cross-Cultural News*.

"Those who are not able to apply for membership in person or who cannot attend an orientation meeting are advised to subscribe to the newsletter instead because members are expected to participate in INTERCEDE's activities and to attend monthly meetings," said Eva Jacob, staff member in charge of membership processing.

Eva clarified that one does not have to be a member of INTERCEDE in order to receive individual assistance, information, counselling, or to avail of any other client service.

"INTERCEDE client services are free and confidential," Eva added, "and they are open to all domestic workers."

MEMBERS AND CLIENTS SAID:

Service was . . . "great and wonderful" . . . "immediately given" . . . "excellent and very necessary" . . . "always informed us about new regulations" . . . "terrific" . . .

Counsellors . . . "showed a lot of concern" . . . "were approachable and understanding" . . . "just being there to listen to my problems was more than enough to enlighten my mind for I had encoun-

DID YOU CHANGE ADDRESS?

Please inform us by phone or mail so that you can continue getting your newsletter and we don't waste postage expenses for returned mail!

tered the biggest problem in my life in a foreign country!... "they were knowledgeable" ... "patient and professional" ... "kind and reliable" ... "can be counted upon" ...

Support groups.... "share new ideas and update us about what's happening" ... "gave me a sense of happiness to know there is a place to go and meet with people with whom I can share some of my ideas and problems" ... "made me feel better about myself as a domestic worker in this country" ... "reduced stress and broadened my knowledge" ... "gave us opportunity to socialize" ...

Most important topics were... "sexual abuse" ... "immigration regulations and updates" ... "health and stress reduction" ... "labour laws" ... "women's rights" ... "English classes with other domestic workers" ...

INTERCEDE... "phone number should be given out by Immigration Canada to nannies and employers" ... "Hope that you will continue to serve and help those people who are in need of your help who got problems like me. Thank you and God bless you all!" ... "must continue to fight for our rights" ... "work against long hours - up to 12 hours everyday" ... "a terrific and super-do organization..." "THANK YOU".

WATCH OUT FOR LOAN SCAMS!

Think twice before going to a Loan Broker to apply for a loan!

This advice is being given by the Credit Counselling Service of Metropolitan Toronto, a non-profit agency that assists people who need advice on how to manage their debts.

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TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS since January 1993 (Does not apply to current members)

INTERESTED TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER? SEND THE FORM BELOW WITH PAYMENT.
IF NO RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION BY END OF JANUARY, WE'LL REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION NEW SUBSCRIPTION CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

Please send *DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS* to:

NAME : _____

ADDRESS : _____

CITY/PROVINCE : _____

POSTAL CODE : _____ TELEPHONE : _____

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES :

INTERCEDE Members :	FREE	Non-member Domestic :	\$20.00
Non-Profit Organizations:	FREE	Others	\$25.00

The agency finds that more and more people are seeking Loan Brokers in their attempt to seek or consolidate loans or clear up their debts.

Unfortunately, these people end up paying a lot of money to Loan Brokers without getting neither a loan nor a refund.

Several domestic workers have called INTERCEDE to relate their unhappy experience with Loan Brokers that advertise fast loans. They ended up paying fees of up to \$300 for "processing" and being asked to find a loan co-maker who would shoulder the loan - which is not at all an easy thing to do.

Before making any call about any "fast loan" advertisement, call Credit Counselling Service of Metropolitan Toronto, 593-7434, or call INTERCEDE.

GROUP MEETINGS: AN OCCASION FOR SHARING AND EXCHANGE

In 1994, INTERCEDE group meetings were held regularly by Caribbean, Chinese speaking, Spanish speaking and Filipino members. Each group averaged an attendance of 15 to 20, meeting every two months.

Topics were varied: stress exercises, INTERCEDE organizing, sexual harassment... and so were activities including pot lucks and movie outings.

Caribbean workers met almost every month to share experiences and discuss issues in both educational and social settings. They focused on topics relating to Immigration, Black History, Roles and Stress Reduction and providing support for one another. They celebrated the end of the year with a festive potluck dinner filled with good food, music and company.

The Chinese-speaking domestic workers began the year with a new year lunch in February and went on to hold several English as a Second Language sessions with volunteer, Rebecca Chong

**INTERCEDE WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS
at monthly meetings and in the
office to help in newsletter mailing.**

Call 324-8751 for dates.

in Scarborough's L'Amoreaux centre.

Meanwhile, the Grupo Hispana composed of women from Peru, Chile, Argentina, Mexico and Colombia got to know each other and discussed topics such as Assertiveness, Career Upgrading, Immigration and Labour. Resource speakers from the Spanish community agencies volunteered their time with the Grupo which ended the year with a potluck party of mouthwatering dishes and an array of talents.

The Filipinas group identified their interest in topics such as INTERCEDE's organizing, nomination and election process, structural adjustment and migration, and workers' cooperatives.

In 1994, health issues will constitute an important focus of these group meetings.

ORIENTATION MEETING

Sunday, February 20, 1994

10 a.m. - to 4 p.m.

"About Immigration and Labour Rules"

Register first, 324-8751
and pay \$5 registration fee
(which will be refunded
if you are present on Feb. 20)

INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

Place: 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ont.
Time: Monday-Friday, 9 am - 4 pm
Tel: (416) 324-8751 Fax: (416) 324-8790

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c/o INTERCEDE

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FIRST CLASS