

QAs – OINP Regional Immigration Pilot

How do I know if my business/employee would qualify for an application to the Regional Immigration Pilot?

The Regional Immigration Pilot works within the **existing** streams of the OINP. With the exception of the identified community boundaries, there is not a separate set of eligibility criteria for the pilot. If your business qualifies for any of the Employer Job Offer streams and is located within one of the pilot communities, then you may qualify for the pilot.

The pilot communities include Chatham-Kent, Cornwall, and Quinte West/Belleville.

How is the Regional Immigration Pilot different from the Employer Job Offer streams?

To qualify for the Regional Immigration Pilot, the applicant must meet the requirements of an EJO stream and have a full-time permanent job offer in one of the pilot communities.

The pilot offers a dedicated intake avenue for applicants applying to the Regional Immigration Pilot.

As part of the pilot, the OINP is working with municipalities and community partners to increase awareness of the program and encourage uptake among local employers. Additionally, the OINP is offering employers within pilot communities access to the OINP business services team to help answer any questions they might have about the program and accessing foreign talent to meet their local needs.

When did intake to the Regional Immigration Pilot open?

Intake to the pilot opened on July 9th, 2020.

Why was intake to the pilot not open prior to July 2020?

Due to global events related to COVID-19, the OINP made the decision to delay opening intake to the Regional Immigration Pilot until July 2020.

Delaying the opening of application intake to the pilot provided pilot communities with the necessary time to respond to the impact of COVID-19 on their community and local economy.

While intake to the pilot was closed, employers and applicants in pilot communities were welcome to support or submit applications to the program streams of the OINP that were open.

During this time, the OINP also continued to work with community working groups on other pilot efforts, including educating employers and prospective applicants about the OINP, so that employers and applicants were application-ready once pilot intake opened.

Will opening intake to the pilot interfere with local retraining efforts for existing workers who may have been laid off due to COVID-19?

It is not expected that the pilot will interfere with local retraining efforts. The pilot will allow employers in the pilot communities to leverage the OINP to target skilled labour that is not available locally.

The OINP has heard from stakeholders in the pilot communities who have expressed that employers continue to have labour gaps post COVID-19 where the skills and experience needed are not available locally.

How do I apply to the pilot (from an applicant)?

Applicants to the Regional Immigration Pilot must:

- Have a full-time and permanent job offer from an employer located in one of the pilot communities (Chatham-Kent, Cornwall or Quinte West/Belleville), and
- Meet the criteria for one of the streams of the OINP's Employer Job Offer category (criteria can be found on the OINP [webpage](#))

To apply for the pilot, applicants must complete an intake form and submit the form by email to regionalimmigration@ontario.ca. To access the intake form please follow the link on the [Regional Immigration Pilot](#) webpage.

When submitting the intake form, applicants must complete the form in its entirety as incomplete forms will not be accepted.

Note that completion of the Regional Immigration Pilot intake form does not mean you have a completed application for the OINP. If all the information in your completed form is confirmed as accurate, you will receive further notification on how to submit an application to the OINP Employer Job Offer Category.

How do I apply to the pilot (from an employer)?

As an employer, you can **support** a foreign worker's application to the pilot.

In order to support an application to the pilot, you must:

- Be located in one of the pilot communities (Chatham-Kent, Cornwall or Quinte West/Belleville), and

- Made a full-time and permanent job offer to a foreign worker who meets the criteria for one of the streams of the OINP's Employer Job Offer category (criteria can be found on the OINP [webpage](#))

The applicant (foreign worker) must complete an intake form and submit the form by email to regionalimmigration@ontario.ca. A link to the intake form can be found on the [Regional Immigration Pilot](#) webpage.

When the applicant submits the intake form, they must complete the form in its entirety as incomplete forms will not be accepted.

Note that completion of the Regional Immigration Pilot intake form does not mean that the applicant has completed an application for the OINP. If all the information in the completed form is confirmed as accurate, the applicant will receive further notification on how to submit an application to the OINP Employer Job Offer Category.

At that point, you as the employer will be asked to complete an Employer Form that will be submitted as part of the foreign worker's application.

I'm an employer located in one of the pilot communities. How can I get involved with the pilot?

In addition to the dedicated intake avenue for applications to the Regional Immigration Pilot, the pilot also includes outreach, education and awareness efforts. The OINP is working with municipalities and community partners to increase awareness of the program and encourage uptake among local employers.

If you are interested in contributing feedback or working with other local stakeholders on the outreach/awareness component of the pilot, you may wish to reach out to your municipality or local economic development organization.

How many nominations will be set-aside for the Regional Immigration Pilot?

The OINP is allocating approximately 150 nominations for the pilot through the OINP Employer Job Offer Category.

Note: if there are specific follow-up questions about how the nominations will be allocated per community, the response can be given that the 150 is for use by all communities and we will monitor as we go to ensure that employers from all three communities have access.

I'm not in one of the pilot communities but I want to participate.

The OINP will be monitoring the success of this two-year pilot and outcomes from the pilot will help the OINP continue to support regional immigration across the province.

My business is located outside of the pilot communities but it is close by (e.g. 20 min/30min drive). Can I still participate?

The exact geographic parameters of the pilot communities can be found on the [Regional Immigration Pilot webpage](#). If your business is located outside of the established parameters, you may not participate in the Regional Immigration Pilot at this time; however, you may support an application to the OINP's Employer Job Offer streams when they are open to intake. Please monitor the OINP's program update page for information on stream openings.

Who are the communities participating in the pilot and how/why were they chosen?

The OINP Regional Immigration Pilot is a made-in-Ontario approach. In addition to stakeholder feedback, statistical analysis was used to identify potential communities using population size (20,000 to 200,000), newcomer settlement, newcomer settlement infrastructure and economic characteristics.

Through this process, we identified a diverse sample of Ontario communities well-positioned to receive newcomers and with a demonstrated need for foreign labour to fill local labour market gaps. The communities selected are:

1. **Chatham-Kent** – a unique rural and small urban environment for newcomers with a highly integrated “welcoming community.”
2. **Cornwall** – an opportunity to work with a very engaged Francophone community with high employment needs for English and French employers.
3. **Belleville/Quinte West** – a regional approach to an area with a high-level of regional engagement and coordination among economic development and immigration stakeholders.

Is the OINP Regional Immigration Pilot different from the federal Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot?

Yes. The Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot is run by the federal government, and the OINP Regional Immigration Pilot is run through the province and is part of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program.

Under the federal pilot, partnering communities are responsible for establishing and assessing candidates against their own criteria.

The OINP pilot works within the existing program streams to assess candidates, and communities are not responsible for endorsing candidates. As part of the pilot, the OINP will also be working with municipalities and community partners to increase awareness of the program and encourage uptake among local employers.

The OINP is also offering employers within pilot communities access to the OINP business services team to help answer any questions they might have about the program and accessing foreign talent to meet their local needs.

Where can I find more information about the Regional Immigration Pilot?

Information is now available on the OINP website.

I am an employer located in a rural/Northern/small community. Can the OINP put me in touch with foreign workers who might be interested in working for me?

The OINP does not do job matching for applicants or employers.

We are happy to provide you with general information about the immigration system and process of recruiting or retaining foreign workers.

Will applications submitted to the Regional Immigration Pilot be processed at a faster rate than other OINP applications?

No. Applications to the Regional Immigration Pilot will be processed at the same speed as applications to the the OINP's Employer Job Offer streams, which currently range from approximately 60-120 days, depending on the stream.

What is the current total allocation with the increase from the Federals government this year?

The province's 2020 allocation is 7,350 plus an additional 250 nominations specifically for temporary foreign workers in intermediate skilled occupations (National Occupation Classification [NOC] – Skill Level C).

How many people were nominated under the OINP in 2019?

The OINP has issued a total of 7350 nominations to successful applicants across all streams in 2019, including the 700 additional nominations received through an in-year reallocation. An additional 41 nominations were issued for temporary foreign workers in intermediate skilled occupations (National Occupation Classification (NOC) – Skill Level C) through the federal government's NOC C initiative.