Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
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Archived: June 3, 2025 8:46:11 AM
From:
Sent: May 20, 2025 12:13:33 PM
To: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC)
Subject: FW: 2025 Follow-Up on PDU Correction: Inquiry regarding Athletes and Coaches Guidance --REP-2023-2174 -- REP-2024-0343 -
Importance: Normal
Sensitivity: None
Attachments:
2025 April 2 - Athletes and coaches [R186(h)] – Authorization to work without a work permit – International Mobility Program - Canada.ca.pdf;

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the Government of Canada. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.
ATTENTION: Ce courriel provient de l'extérieur du gouvernement du Canada. Ne cliquez pas sur les liens et n'ouvrez pas les pièces jointes sauf si vous reconnaissez l'expéditeur et sachez que le contenu est sûr.

Dear Officer,

I hope this message finds you well. I am following up regarding the inquiry below about the modification to the guidance regarding Polo Grooms. We note that as of today the guidance has not yet changed on the following website: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/work-without-permit/authorization-work-without-work-permit-athletes-team-members.html. Last summer, we had a client who encountered issues as the typo remains and indicates "***As essential members of a team, polo grooms may be authorized to work with a work permit under R186(h)***", as the Canada Border Services Officer was following the website guidance, and only allowed our client to enter once we shared the email from your offices indicating it is a typo.

If possible, we respectfully request that it be updated in the near future as the Polo Season is fast approaching and our clients [redacted] the Program Delivery [redacted] to support their request for [redacted] to [redacted], I [redacted] attached the relevant excerpt with highlights. If there is another office that we should reach out to for the correction to be implemented, please let me know.

We greatly appreciate your assistance in this request.

Best regards,

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
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From: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC) <IRCC.ImmigrationRepresentatives-Representantsimmigration.[redacted]
Sent: [redacted] 1, 2024 3:18 PM
To:
Cc: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC) <IRCC.ImmigrationRepresentatives-Representantsimmigration.[redacted]
Subject: TR: Re Follow Up: Inquiry regarding Athletes and Coaches Guidance --REP-2023-2174 -- REP-2024-0343 -- DUE 27-Mar-24

Dear

[redacted] request and your continued patience.

We appreciate the questions and concerns you have raised. Please be assured that we are actively reviewing the situation to implement the necessary adjustments. We are committed to addressing this matter thoroughly, and any updates or changes will be communicated through our official website.

We encourage you to regularly consult the IRCC program delivery updates site for the latest information.

[redacted] understanding and trust.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

The Immigration Representatives Mailbox

From:
Sent: February 27, 2024 3:22 PM
To: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC) <IRCC.ImmigrationRepresentatives-Representantsimmigration.IRCC[redacted].gc.ca>
Subject: FW: Re Follow Up: Inquiry regarding Athletes and Coaches Guidance --REP-2023-2174

Dear Sir or Mdm.,
I hope this message finds you well. I am following up regarding the inquiry below about the modification to the guidance regarding Polo Grooms. We note that as of today the guidance has not yet changed. If possible, we respectfully request that it be updated in the near future as the Polo Season is fast approaching and our clients will rely on this PDI to support their request for [redacted] to [redacted] I [redacted] the [redacted] with highli[redacted].

We greatly appreciate your assistance in this request.

Best regards,

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
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From: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC) [mailto:IRCC.ImmigrationRepresentatives-Representantsimmigration.IRCC[redacted]
Sent: December-20-23 11:25 AM
To:
Subject: FW: Inquiry regarding Athletes and Coaches Guidance --REP-2023-2174

Good morning,

[redacted] to our attention and we'll correct it in the relevant PDI.

Thank you,

The Immigration Representatives Mailbox

From: [redacted]
Sent: December 5, 2023 12:35 PM
To: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC) <IRCC.ImmigrationRepresentatives-Representantsimmigration.[redacted]
Subject: Inquiry regarding Athletes and Coaches Guidance

Dear Officer,

I am writing with respect to guidance that is posted on Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's website, specifically on this page: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/work-without-permit/authorization-work-without-work-permit-athletes-team-members.html . There is an important sentence, highlighted in the attached PDF, which references Polo Grooms: "As essential members of a team, polo grooms may be authorized to work **with** a work permit under R186(h)."

We believe that this is a typographical error. Given that *IRPR* R186h contemplates that a foreign national may work in Canada without a work permit, and Polo Grooms are exempt from work permits, the bolded word should be '**without**'?

Could you please arrange for the published guidance on the above-mentioned website to be updated so that it can be shared with IRCC and CBSA officers for the 2024 summer season?

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Please note, I have submitted a similar inquiry through the IRCC feedback website, file reference CFM 2023-208889.

[redacted] your assistance.

Best regards,

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
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Athletes and coaches [R186(h)] – Authorization to work without a work permit – International Mobility Program

This section contains policy, procedures and guidance used by IRCC staff. It is posted on the department's website as a courtesy to stakeholders.

Paragraph R186(*h*) allows foreign nationals to participate in sports activities or events in Canada without a work permit as athletes, coaches or trainers, either as

- individual participants
- members of a professional or amateur foreign-based team
- members of a Canadian amateur team

It also allows foreign nationals who are essential members of the foreign team to participate at sports activities or events held in Canada.

Note: Occupations essential to the team's participation are those that provide a service benefitting only the foreign-based team or team members, or the Canadian amateur team (on a seasonal basis), and do not compete directly with the Canadian labour market, or enter it.

Examples of individual participants in sports activities or events in Canada:

- amateur players on Canadian teams (includes major junior A level and lower teams) (e.g., athletes authorized to enter Canada under this category for a whole season should be documented on a Visitor Record);
- foreign pet owners entering their own animals in a show (e.g., dog handlers);
- jockeys racing horses from foreign-based stables (see also information on Foreign freelance horse jockeys);
- racing car drivers;
- persons attending professional team tryouts.

Examples of persons who would qualify as members of a team:

- individuals that have the necessary combination of team role, skills and qualifications that make them essential members of the team (see note);
- full- or part-time coaches or trainers of foreign athletes;

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- polo grooms.

For **professional and semi-professional coaches and athletes working for Canadian-based teams**, see also: Reciprocal employment

Spouses

Professional athletes are classified under TEER 3 in the National Occupational Classification (NOC), and, as such, their spouse is eligible for a labour market impact assessment (LMIA)-exempt work permit pursuant to R205(*c*)(ii), exemption code C41.

Specific guidance: Polo grooms

Polo grooms are captured under NOC 84120 as specialized livestock workers. The main duties for groomers that work with thoroughbred horses and who are an essential member of a team, such as polo grooms, are quite different from pet groomers (NOC 65220). As essential members of a team, polo grooms may be authorized to work with a work permit under R186(h).

Polo groomers and other team members associated with taking care of the horses participating on a recognized team should be considered as being an essential part of the team. Similarly, physicians or chiropractors who specialize in horses are also essential to the team as they know the health history of the horse or pony of the foreign polo team.

The Canadian Polo Association confirms that there is a shortage of experienced polo groomers in Canada as this is not a common sport in Canada and very few Canadians would be interested in learning a trade with such time-limited employment period given the seasonal nature of the sport.

“There are approximately 16 Polo Clubs in Canada (not all are registered with Polo Canada). Each team varies in ability and typically consists of a mixture of amateurs and professionals playing together.

Grooms are absolutely an integral part of the team. Their expertise is very specific to the players and horses they manage.” (POLO Canada)

Date modified:
2023-02-02