

Good afternoon,

I am writing to inform you of an administrative change in the treatment of documents submitted as proof of language proficiency under the Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) category and Canadian Experience Class (CEC). Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) understands that this change may affect the advice immigration representatives provide to their clients. With this in mind, we would ask that you kindly inform your members of the following administrative change.

Effective April 10, 2010, visa officers will only consider the evidence of language proficiency provided at the time of application. Currently, if a written submission does not satisfy the visa officer that the applicant has demonstrated the level of language proficiency claimed, the applicant is offered the opportunity to undergo and submit the results of a designated language test. Under the new directive, visa officers will no longer offer the applicant a second chance to prove their language proficiency when the written evidence does not support their claim. This will apply to all FSW and CEC applications received on or after the effective date.

This change is another improvement which supports the *Action Plan for Faster Immigration*. A survey of missions abroad revealed that a substantial proportion of applicants worldwide are providing written submissions as evidence of language proficiency, and a sizeable majority of these submissions do not support the level claimed. Offering these applicants a second chance not only lengthens the processing of their applications, but also adds to the overall processing burden for all FSW applications. Consequently, removing this extra step in the process will improve processing times.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that the option of providing a written submission as proof of language proficiency is only recommended for those for whom English or French is a first language, as they are able to easily demonstrate a high level of proficiency. Application kits provide guidance on the types of information that should be included. For others, providing the results of a language test by a designated language testing agency ensures a higher degree of reliability and transparency. FSW applicants will know from the outset how many language points will be awarded on the selection grid, and CEC applicants will know whether they meet the minimum language requirement. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that these applicants have language test results before application.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

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