

MOVE

MOBILITY

VOICE

EQUALITY



for
migrant
workers

Ending Migrant Worker Exploitation

a toolkit for action in May & June 2016

Coalition for Migrant Worker Rights Canada

Launched in October 2015, the Coalition for Migrant Worker Rights Canada is the unified voice of migrant workers in Canada. Our aim is simple: to re-build the immigration system to ensure basic dignity and fairness for everyone. Our members represent hundreds of thousands of Canadian-born, and migrant workers. Together we know that we need an economy that works for everyone, not one that forces us to fight each other for scraps.

Coalition for Migrant Worker Rights Canada Members

- [Cooper Institute](#) in PEI
- [Migrant Workers Alliance for Change*](#)
- [Migrant Worker Solidarity Network](#) in Manitoba
- [Migrante Canada](#)
- [Radical Action with Migrants in Agriculture](#) in Okanagan Valley
- [Temporary Foreign Workers Association](#) in Quebec
- Temporary Foreign Workers Coalition in Alberta
- [Vancouver Committee for Domestic Workers and Caregiver Rights](#)
- [West Coast Domestic Workers Association](#) in Vancouver

*Migrant Workers Alliance for Change includes:

- Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (Toronto)
- Asian Community Aids Services (Ontario)
- Caregivers Action Centre (Ontario)
- Fuerza Puwersa (Guelph)
- Industrial Accident Victims' Group of Ontario
- Justicia for Migrant Workers (Ontario, BC, Mexico)
- Legal Assistance of Windsor
- Migrante Ontario
- No One Is Illegal – Toronto
- Parkdale Community Legal Services
- Social Planning Toronto
- UNIFOR (Canada)
- South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
- United Food and Commercial Workers (Canada)
- Workers United (Canada)
- Workers' Action Centre (Toronto).



This document has been adapted from toolkits developed by the Cooper Institute, Income Security Advocacy Centre, Arthritis Society and FreeGrassy.net

Migrant Workers and Leadership

Migrant workers are constructed as vulnerable as a result of legal restrictions that are placed on their employment in Canada. Economic insecurities coupled with racism and xenophobia is driving a wedge between migrant workers and Canadian citizens. Migrant workers are not stealing jobs, driving down wages. We hope that this toolkit provides the resources to challenge these discriminatory ideas and to build solidarity with migrant workers.

In spite of the obstacles migrant workers are organizing. Migrant workers are organizing in farms, in communities, in processing sites, in homes all across Canada. Migrant workers are leaders, are organizers, are heroes. The role of allies is to walk alongside workers, as migrant workers strive for justice.

CMWRC's goal in creating this toolkit is to provide resources to build collective strength amongst migrant workers and their allies to strive towards migrant workers social, legal, racial, gender and economic justice.

We have prepared this toolkit to advocate for permanent immigration status on landing for migrant workers, and open work permits in the context of the review of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program that begins on May 11, 2016.

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ACTION PLAN – We must act now!

We have a very small window for immediate action and we are interested in building a long-term movement. Here are a few simple and easy steps you can take right now which could make the difference between winning and losing major reforms for migrant workers in the upcoming review and will connect you with organizations across the country to be part of the ongoing struggle.

1. Go online and takes these simple social media actions.

- a. Go to www.migrantrights.ca and sign our petition. Make sure to opt-in to our announcements list.
- b. Join us on facebook at www.facebook.com/MigrantRightsCA and twitter at www.twitter.com/MigrantRightsCA
- c. We will be posting infographics, breaking news and analysis and worker testimonies. Make sure to turn-on notifications and boost the shares.
- d. Feel free to develop your own memes and share those with us.

2. Next set up a meeting with your Members of Parliament – they will be in their ridings May 21-29

- a. We have developed a tool to help you do just that.

3. Get in touch with a member of CMWRC in your region to be part of upcoming actions.

- a. Alberta: Marco Luciano - migrantecanada@gmail.com
- b. British Columbia: Natalie Drolet - natalie@wcdwa.ca
- c. Manitoba: Diwa Marcelino - diwa.marcelino@gmail.com
- d. Ontario: Syed Hussan - hussan@migrantworkersalliance.org
- e. Prince Edward Island: Josie Baker - josie@cooperinstitute.ca
- f. Quebec: ATTET - attetquebec@gmail.com

4. Join/Organize public events during the #StatusNow Week of Action

- a. From May 28th to June 5th – We will be organizing actions across Canada. Visit www.migrantrights.ca for details of upcoming events or organize your own.
- b. To organize your own, contact info@migrantrights.ca and read the tool kit below. We have developed petitions, backgrounders, media kits and flyers for you to use.

5. Writing letters to newspapers

- a. Take a few minutes right now and send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. We have attached a sample you can use.

What is the Temporary Foreign Workers review?

In May and June 2016, the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA) will be reviewing the Temporary Foreign Workers Program. Details of the scope and timeline of the review have not been finalized.

Here is the timeline of the review

- May 11: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers - Ministers and Departmental Officials will present
- May 16: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers - witnesses
- May 18: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers - witnesses
- May 21 – 29: Members of Parliament will be in their riding
- May 30: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers - witnesses
- June 1: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers - witnesses
- June 8: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program - distribution of draft report
- June 13: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program - consideration of draft report
- June 15: Study of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program - adoption of report

Our priorities for this review are:

- **Ensure the migrant workers are part of the discussion and through this process win reforms that further the human and labour rights for migrant workers**
 - This means ensuring that migrant workers are witnesses to the committee.
 - Ensure that migrant workers are speaking at public events and in the media during the course of the review telling their own stories.
 - If you are a migrant worker, or work with migrant workers, get in touch with us so we can coordinate your participation.
- **Facilitate a cross-Canada conversation on migrant worker rights**
 - Organize in-person (street actions, public events) and social media interactions to show the value and worth of migrant workers
 - Change some of the common misperceptions about migrant workers and build solidarity among all residents of Canada
- **Strengthen a migrant worker led movement for immigration reform in Canada**
 - Building bridges and alliances between migrant worker groups and their allies across Canada to organize joint actions.

TOOL 1: BACKGROUNDER: Who are migrant workers and what do they need?

We've prepared a backgrounder that you can use in your own community. Print the next three pages and

- Give to your Member of Parliament (MP) in your meeting with them;
- Provide it as background for a reporter or other media person you are working with; and
- Give to people in your community to take action.

Migrant Workers in Canada



Migrant workers refer to Temporary Foreign Workers on tied or closed work permits. There are three key streams with very different access to rights and services.

	Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program	Temporary Foreign Workers – Low Waged	Caregivers Program
Type of Work	Mostly men from Mexico and the Caribbean countries who come to Canada to grow our food. They work in farms, fields, and food factories.	Racialized women and men working in retail, food, agriculture, hospitality, fisheries and similar industries doing backbreaking work.	Mostly women from the Philippines, Indonesia and Latin America who take care of children, elderly and people with disabilities.
Worker recruitment.	In this bilateral government program, worker recruitment is coordinated between the Ministry of Labour in sending countries and FARMS Canada. Workers may be forced to pay local officials to get into the program.	Employers must pay \$1,000 processing fees for Labour Market Impact Assessments. These fees are often downloaded to workers. Many workers pay recruiters thousands of dollars to get jobs in Canada. Recruiters are not federally regulated.	
Permit type	Can only work for the employer listed on their permits. It's nearly impossible to change jobs, or speak out when facing abuse. They are not allowed to take on additional work to supplement their income, or upgrade their skills and get an education by enrolling in university.		
Length of permits	Can work in Canada for a maximum of 8 months per year. Some workers have been coming every year for more than 40 years.	Can work and live in Canada for a maximum of 4 years. They are then barred from working in Canada for the next four years.	
Labour rights	Are generally excluded from many basic employment standards, such as overtime pay. In practice may receive less than minimum wage. Can be black listed from the program for speaking up and asserting their rights.	Often are denied the rights set out in their contracts and in the law, including being denied minimum wage, overtime pay or vacation pay. Face reprisals, including termination and threats of deportation, for speaking out.	
Housing	Must stay in employer provided housing	May be forced to stay in employer provided housing depending on the type of program.	May be forced to stay in employer provided housing depending on their year of arrival.
Permanent Residency	Cannot get Permanent Resident status in Canada under Federal programs. Very small numbers of TFWs in the low-waged stream can get permanent residency through provincial programs (except in Ontario and Quebec).		There are caps on how many caregivers can receive permanent residence. This means they must work for a minimum two years for their employers but no longer know when they enter the program if that will allow them to access permanent residence.

Three steps to ensure rights and build a better economy

Over the last five decades, migrant workers in all programs have expressed a litany of concerns about being employed under Canada's temporary foreign workers schemes. In this section, we are providing you with an overview of the three key demands that the Coalition for Migrant Worker Rights – Canada is putting forward to address some of these concerns. These are easy, pragmatic solutions to expand human and labour rights of immigrant workers in Canada.

I. Equality - Robust permanent immigration system

Migrant workers in Canada deserve permanent immigration status. Future immigrant workers coming to Canada in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, the Temporary Foreign Workers Program and the Caregivers Program should arrive with permanent immigration status.

Migrant workers are important: Migrant workers work in farms and factories, taking care of children, the sick and the elderly. Agriculture, caregiving, food production, construction are important industries that require specialized skills that migrant workers have. Our society cannot function without the critical contributions that migrant workers make.

Migrant workers are not temporary: Some migrant workers have been coming back to Canada to work for eight months of the year for over forty years. Others have been here permanently for up to four years if not more. These friends and family members of ours have laid roots, built lives and contributed to Canada. They deserve permanent residency status to continue to live here with dignity.

Permanent residency makes economic sense: Migrant workers help grow businesses. It hurts employers to have to retrain new workers every few years. Providing migrant worker with permanent residency would ensure a stable workforce and build a better economy for us all.

Permanent residency ensures services: Many labour rights, and basic services in Canada like healthcare and post secondary education are tied to permanent immigration status. Even if migrant workers wish to return home eventually, permanent resident status is the only way to ensure access to these services now. On top of that, migrant workers pay for all these services already – they deserve access to them.

Permanent residency is the norm: Most immigrants – refugees, spouses, high-waged immigrants - arrive in Canada with permanent residence immigration status which gives them peace of mind, the ability to re-unite with their families and the tools they need to lay deeper roots and build our society further as soon as they arrive. Migrant workers should not be excluded.

Permanent residency means family reunification: Migrant workers deserve to have their families join them. Measures need to be put in place to allow migrant workers to have their families visit them or for them to be able to visit their families. That's just fair.

II. Mobility - Work permits should not be tied

Migrant workers can only work for the employer listed on their work permit – this is called a tied or closed work permit and is unfair. Migrant workers should have open work permits

Tied work permits allow abuse: It is very difficult, sometimes impossible; to change jobs because of tied work permits. Employers know this and it gives bad bosses the ability to exploit workers.

It is a matter of choice: Each of us deserves the choice to walk away from a bad boss, or a job that makes us sick. This is not a privilege; it is a basic right that migrant workers are denied.

Tied permits divide us: Tied work permits divide the workforce, and create a group of workers that are more vulnerable than the rest. This impacts all workers.

III. Voice - Undo the Harm

We need to end Harper-era restrictions that deny migrant workers their voice, human rights, and decent health.

End the four-year limit on work permits: Rather than value their contributions, current policy forces migrant workers to leave after four years. This uproots long-term workers who have built lives and relationships here and helped build local businesses.

End the Caps: Work sites with over 10 full time workers are subject to progressive “caps” on the percentage of migrant workers in their total workforce each year. It’ll be 10% in July 2016. Migrant workers are being forced out of jobs they have held for years.

Allow workers to change jobs: No new permits are being issued in food, and retail sector in regions with unemployment greater than 6%. This has effectively locked workers already here into those jobs, greatly increasing the chances of exploitation.

Remove LMIA fees: A \$1,000 fee has been placed on Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) applications that employers are downloading to workers. Migrant workers shouldn’t have to pay to work.

Restore Caregivers’ guaranteed right to permanent residence status, reverse November 2014 changes: Now only a small quota of Caregivers can apply for permanent residency, and must meet a very restrictive criterion even after working here for two years.

Restore portable EI benefits: Allow Seasonal Agricultural Workers and other migrant workers access to pensions, parental benefits, EI and supports after injuries even after they leave Canada.

Regulate recruiters: Migrant workers have to pay tens of thousands of dollars to unregulated recruiters to get a job in Canada. To do so, they take on tremendous debt and so they arrive in the country unable to assert their basic rights. The Federal government can encourage provinces to regulate recruiters, and create inter-provincial agreements so that recruiters don’t switch provinces to avoid accountability.

TOOL 2: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. Who are migrant workers?

Migrant workers come from Jamaica, Philippines, Mexico and other countries working in farms, fields, factories or taking care of children, sick or the elderly. Migrant workers are largely racialized, and often working class people from the Global South.

Officially, migrant workers are divided into ‘Seasonal Agricultural Workers’, ‘Caregivers’ and ‘Temporary Foreign Workers’. These three groups lived under slightly different rules but what’s common in all of them is that they are all on ‘tied’ or ‘closed’ permits. That means that they can only work for the employer listed on their work permits and have a very difficult time changing jobs. Bad employers know this and make migrant workers work harder, in more dangerous jobs and for longer hours with less pay because they know migrant workers can’t leave them.

2. Don’t migrant workers have the same rights as everyone else?

No. Most immigrants - like refugees, spouses, and richer immigrants - come to Canada permanently, and their families can visit them. But migrant workers - even though they go through the same strenuous testing that other immigrants do - come here without their families. Other than Caregivers, most of them cannot even apply to stay here permanently through a federal program. Some workers in agriculture come to Canada for eight months of the year for 35 to 40 years but they still can’t live here permanently.

Many migrant workers in agriculture are excluded from minimum wage laws and domestic migrant workers are excluded from occupational health and safety laws.

Many of our parents or grandparents came to Canada and worked in low-paying jobs. Today, they would have come as migrant workers. We need a single tier system and laws should not deny people their families, basic services and dignity simply because they make less money.

3. There is so much unemployment in Canada, why are there migrant workers? Does this mean that migrant workers are stealing Canadian jobs?

Temporary foreign workers find employment in Canada legally. When we use the word “stealing” to describe how a migrant acquires a job we are falsely criminalizing them.

Migrant workers make up less than 0.005% of the labour force. There are at least 1.3 million unemployed Canadian citizens and approximately 100,000 migrant workers in Canada. Most migrant workers are in regions with relatively low unemployment, and working in industries where there are few Canadian citizens. Even if there were no migrant workers, there would still be 1.2 million unemployed Canadian citizens.

A lot of us are suffering from unemployment and precarious jobs and we need to deal with that. This has to be done through improving Employment Insurance, raising the minimum wage, providing training, more accessible education and giving people the skills that the job market needs. Migrant workers are not the problem.

4. Many people in Canada already don't have healthcare/housing/food/pensions, etc - can we afford to give those to migrant workers?

If anything, migrant workers actually subsidize the welfare system, not the other way around. Migrant workers pay into pensions and employment insurance but most don't receive it. Similarly they pay all federal and provincial tax (HST) but in most provinces don't get full health care, worker's compensation, social assistance, subsidized housing or post-secondary education. According to one report, just in 2008, migrant workers and their employers poured in \$300million into Employment Insurance that they did not access!

We need to deal with people draining our social programs and to do that we should start with the wealthy elites in Canada who are now hoarding a record \$170 billion in offshore tax havens.

5. Migrant workers chose to be treated this way. If they are being treated this badly, why don't they just go home?

Migrant workers have to pay an equivalent of two-year salaries to come work in Canada to recruiters. Charging recruitment fees are illegal in many places in the country but most provinces simply don't enforce these laws. These recruiters make many promises to migrant workers, but migrant workers arrive to conditions different from what they were promised. Even if wages are sometimes higher, migrant workers are away from their families and support system and facing a lot more pressure.

For many people, migration is not a choice. Migrant workers are forced to come to Canada is because there are few jobs in their countries. Multinational corporations go into countries in the Global South creating sweatshops and dangerous extraction and infrastructure projects that reduce access to good jobs and decent quality of life. To ensure that people aren't forced to leave their homes to come toil here, we need to challenge trade agreements like the TPP, force corporations to not create sweatshops which created tragedies like the Rana Plaza where approximately 1,200 Bangladeshi workers died making clothes of North American and European consumers, and pass laws that hold Canadian corporations accountable for crimes committed in developing countries.

At the same time, because of global poverty, the Temporary Foreign Workers Program is the only way for some people to send their kids to school, put food on the table, and secure shelter and housing for their families. Some migrant workers are choosing to come to Canada, they are not choosing to be exploited and abused.

6. Many migrant workers are happy, not all employers are bad!

Migrant workers like everyone else want to be with their families, they want to change jobs that are dangerous or making them sick, they want to be able to go to a doctor when they are sick, they want to take time off for vacations, they want to be able to negotiate their contracts. These are very basic rights and Canadian laws deny them.

There are good employers who do bad things and bad employers who do good things. At the end of the day, the responsibility is with federal and provincial governments to pass better laws and enforce existing laws. We all need to work together to ensure that migrant workers have permanent immigration status, open work permits and a decent life.

Tool 3: MEETING WITH YOUR MPs

A sample 4-step plan to meet your Members of Parliament. MPs will be in their constituencies from May 21 to May 28. Remember these priorities:

- a. Permanent immigration status for migrant workers in Canada, and permanent immigration status for new workers arriving in Canada
- b. Open work permits for all migrant workers
- c. Undoing the harm: Stop the 4 and 4 rule, remove the caps, allow caregivers permanent residency rights, and reverse Harper's harmful changes.

I. The Letter / Email

Start off by writing an email to the MP requesting a meeting. See the "Template email to request a meeting" (Tool 3A) that you can use. Letters should be e-mailed, but can also be sent by mail, faxed or hand-delivered. See Tool 3B to see which MPs are our priorities – but please meet whichever MP you can.

II. The Telephone Call

Follow up with a telephone call to your MP to request a meeting. Explain your purpose for the meeting (to talk to them about reforms that are needed to improve the working and living conditions of temporary foreign workers), and make sure to be clear about who will be attending. See Tool 3C for a sample phone script. When you speak on the phone to someone in your MP's office, you may be passed around or get a voice mail message. Be persistent and make sure you continue to call till you speak to someone who is capable of scheduling a meeting with your MP.

III. The In-Person Meeting

You should always bring a family member, friend or colleague with you to the meeting for support and to have a second opinion on how the meeting went. Having a support person can help you organize your thoughts prior to the meeting and assist you in any follow-up work that needs to be done to achieve your goal. Perhaps most importantly, a support person can help you to remain calm and relaxed in an unfamiliar or intimidating environment. When meeting with MPs, it is useful to have someone who lives in that constituency to be present in the meeting. See Tool 3D for more details on how to prepare for and conduct a meeting with your audience.

IV. The Follow-Up

If you had a meeting, send a thank you letter to the people you met with, and include any follow-up information that you promised to gather. Follow up again in a couple weeks to see if there has been any progress on the issue, including any commitments made by both you and your audience in your meeting. Continue to follow up with your audience at regular intervals for progress reports. Be persistent, but respectful.

Tool 3A: Template email to request a meeting

MP Address	The Honourable (Full Name), MP Constituency Office Find your MP at http://bit.ly/mpbypostalcode
Salutation	Dear Minister, / Dear Mr./Ms. (Name)
State your main issue	I would like to meet with you to discuss Temporary Foreign Workers in Canada in the context of a review taking place in Parliament right now. For far too long migrant workers have been denied equal rights in Canada. It's time for urgent action. Our economy needs two quick fixes to work permit rules to relieve pressure on migrant workers. There are two easy steps the Federal government can take right now and then move towards building a secure and permanent immigration system.
Your personal story and how it connects.	I/we have been personally affected by this issue and it is a major concern in our region (<i>brief summary of your personal experience with the main issue – here you should talk about how you are affected</i>)
Facts supporting your concern.	Low-waged migrant workers (Seasonal Agricultural Workers, Caregivers and Temporary Foreign Workers) are restricted to only working for the specific employer listed on their work permit. Changing employers is extremely difficult. This allows bad bosses to lower salaries and hold workers hostage to poor working conditions. Many live in fear deportation and don't speak out abuses. These practices lower standards for everyone in the labour market.
Specify how your audience can make a difference	It's time for the federal government to (a) Untie permits so workers have can leave employers who exploit them. (b) Remove restrictions on migrant workers including the 4-in/4-out rule that forces migrant workers to leave Canada after 4 years of living and working in our communities and caps on migrant workers ability to change jobs or apply for permanent residency. It's time to undo years of damage and commit to real change. Following these first two steps, we need to ensure permanent immigration status on arrival for migrant workers. We need an immigration system that values people, supports families and rejects divisiveness. The time for change is now.
Final remarks	I look forward to meeting with you to discuss these matters further. A detailed proposal from Coalition for Migrant Worker Rights Canada will also be sent to you.
Sign off and contact information	Sincerely Your name, Phone number and/or email

Tool 3B: Priority Members of Parliament to meet

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA) is where the review will take place.

Current members of HUMA (as of May 6, 2016)

Name	Email	Constituency office phone number	Riding	Party	Role
Bryan May	Bryan.May@parl.gc.ca	519-624-3517	Cambridge	Liberal	Chair
Bob Zimmer	Bob.Zimmer@parl.gc.ca	250-787-1192	Prince George — Peace River — Northern Rockies	Conservative	Vice Chair
Niki Ashton	niki.ashton@parl.gc.ca	204-677-1333	Churchill — Keewatinook Aski	NDP	Vice Chair
Gérard Deltell	Gerard.Deltell@parl.gc.ca	418-842-5552	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Conservative	Member
Wayne Long	Wayne.Long@parl.gc.ca	506-657-2500	Saint John — Rothesay	Liberal	Member
Yves Robillard	Yves.Robillard@parl.gc.ca	450-622-2992	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Liberal	Member
Dan Ruimy	Dan.Ruimy@parl.gc.ca	604-466-2761	Pitt Meadows — Maple Ridge	Liberal	Member
Ramesh Sangha	Ramesh.Sangha@parl.gc.ca	(613) 992-9105	Brampton Centre	Liberal	Member
Filomena Tassi	Filomena.Tassi@parl.gc.ca	905-529-5435	Hamilton West — Ancaster — Dundas	Liberal	Member
Mark Warawa	mark.warawa@parl.gc.ca	604-534-5955	Langley — Aldergrove	Conservative	Member

As the responsibility for the laws governing migrant worker lives extends between immigration and employment, it is important to also be in communication with the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. Its current members as of May 6, 2016 are:

Name	Email	Constituency Office Number	Riding	Party	Role
Borys Wrzesnewskyj	Borys.Wrzesnewskyj@parl.gc.ca	416-249-7322	Etobicoke Centre	Liberal	Chair
David Tilson	david.tilson@parl.gc.ca	519-941-1832	Dufferin — Caledon	Conservative	Vice Chair
Jenny Kwan	Jenny.Kwan@parl.gc.ca	(604) 775-5800	Vancouver East	NDP	Vice Chair
Shaun Chen	Shaun.Chen@parl.gc.ca	416-321-2436	Scarborough North	Liberal	Member
Ali Ehsassi	Ali.Ehsassi@parl.gc.ca	416-223-2858	Willowdale	Liberal	Member
Michelle Rempel	Michelle.Rempel@parl.gc.ca	403-216-7777	Calgary Nose Hill	Conservative	Member

Randeep Sarai	Randeep.Sarai@parl.gc.ca	604-589-2441	Surrey Centre	Liberal	Member
Bob Saroya	Bob.Saroya@parl.gc.ca	905-470-2024	Markham — Unionville	Conservative	Member
Marwan Tabbara	Marwan.Tabbara@parl.gc.ca	519-571-5509	Kitchener South — Hespeler	Liberal	Member
Salma Zahid	Salma.Zahid@parl.gc.ca	416-752-2358	Scarborough Centre	Liberal	Member
Mark Warawa	mark.warawa@parl.gc.ca	604-534-5955	Langley — Aldergrove	Conservative	Member

Ministers and Critics of Immigration & Employment (as of May 6, 2016)

Name	Role	Email	Constituency Office Number	Riding
MaryAnn Mihychuk	Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour	MaryAnn.Mihychuk@parl.gc.ca	204-984-6322	Kildonan — St. Paul
Rodger Cuzner	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour	rodger.cuzner@parl.gc.ca	902-842-9763	Cape Breton — Canso
John McCallum	Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship	john.mccallum@parl.gc.ca	905-479-8100	Markham — Thornhill
Arif Virani	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship	Arif.Virani@parl.gc.ca	416-769-5072	Parkdale — High Park
G�rard Deltell	Conservative Party Employment, Workforce and Labour Critic	Gerard.Deltell@parl.gc.ca	418-842-5552	Louis-Saint-Laurent
Michelle Rempel	Conservative Party Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship critic	Michelle.Rempel@parl.gc.ca	403-216-7777	Calgary Nose Hill
Niki Ashton	NDP Employment, Workforce and Labour Critic	niki.ashton@parl.gc.ca	204-677-1333	Churchill — Keewatinook Aski
Jenny Kwan	NDP Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship critic	Jenny.Kwan@parl.gc.ca	(604) 775-5800	Vancouver East

Tool 3C: Sample phone call guide to book a meeting

Follow up your email with a phone call. Here's a script to help you organize your thoughts. Remember: keep calling till you get someone on the phone. And if they refuse to set up a meeting with the MP, push for a meeting with their Parliamentary staff.

Introduce yourself

Hello, my name is _(your name)_ and I am calling regarding the upcoming Temporary Foreign Workers review taking place in Parliament right now. Identify if you are constituent or if you are a migrant worker, or have direct experiences with the issue.

Explain why you are calling

I'd like to discuss scheduling a meeting with ___(MP Name)__. I care deeply about the treatment of migrant workers in Canada and the need for them to get permanent immigration status on landing and I would like to discuss this issue with him/her.

Ask for a response

Is there a time that ___(MP)___ is available to meet before the House rises?

OR, if leaving a message:

Please let me know when ___(MP)___ is available in the next few weeks. You can contact me by (phone or email).

Say Thank You

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the meeting on ___(Date/time)___ (or) speaking to ___(Name)___ on ___(Date/time)_____.

If leaving a message:

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Tool 3D: Meeting your MP face-to-face

Know how long the meeting is scheduled for and make an agenda that is appropriate to the length of the meeting. You can use the Step-by-step tool.

- Review any information about your MP
 - Is your MP part of the HUMA committee? Are they a member of the government (Liberal) or Opposition (Conservative, BQ, Green or NDP)? Do they have a portfolio that connects to migrant workers?
- Review your goal and the background documents attached here
 - Your goal is to get them to understand the need for permanent immigration status, and open work permits for migrant workers.
 - Review the Backgrounder (Tool 1) and FAQ (Tool 2)
- Plan on taking someone with you and make sure you decide when each person will speak, leaving time for the MP and their staff to speak

Before your meeting:

- Send along the Backgrounder (Tool 1) to the MP and bring this information in printed form to the meeting. You can download the Backgrounder from our website www.migrantrights.ca
- Contact the person you are meeting with 1-2 days before your scheduled meeting to confirm.
- Review the agenda that we have developed below.

At the meeting:

- Arrive at the meeting 10 minutes early
- Be passionate and respectful, not argumentative or confrontational
- Pay attention to body language - yours and theirs
- Provide specific examples with specific solutions – read the Backgrounder for more
- Take notes; this can be done by the person accompanying you
- Leave them with any appropriate information documents
- Thank them for their time and indicate when you plan to follow up

After your meeting:

- Send a thank you letter to the people you met with, and include any follow-up information that you promised to gather. Please cc info@migrantrights.ca so we know that you met them.
- Follow up again the following weeks to see if there has been any progress on the issue, including any commitments made by both you and the MP at your meeting
- Continue to follow up at regular intervals to ask for progress reports.

Steps	What to say
Step 1 Introductions	Introduce yourself and the other attendees
Step 2 Small talk - building the relationship	Talk about something you might have in common with the MP, but watch your time: -Did you read something about him/her in the newspaper? -Have you worked in the same industry? This conversation will help you gauge their motivation.
Step 3 Talk about your MP about the issue	- Acknowledge what your MP has done on issues related to Temporary Foreign Workers and thank them. - Mention how the Greens, Liberals and NDP have all publicly called for some form of permanent immigration status.
Step 4 What does your audience know about your issue?	- Ask your audience what they know about migrant workers - Explain the injustices migrant workers are facing outlined in the backgrounder and the FAQs. - Use stories as examples
Step 7 – KEY ASK What do you need?	Tell your MP what you need: - Tell them to advocate for changes in their party for open work permits, and permanent immigration status on landing.
Step 8 Ask for a commitment	What is the MP prepared to do to help? What will they do next and when? What can you do to help the MP – try to get as specific as possible - Ask them to write a letter and speak directly to the Minister or Critic of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour and Immigration, and encourage them to advocate for permanent residency status on landing, open work permits and undoing restrictions on migrant workers as outlined in the Backgrounder.
Step 9 Sum up the meeting	Remind your MP about what he/she said she would do to help and when: -Acknowledge what you have committed to do and thank them for their time. Book another meeting if it's appropriate.
Follow-up after the meeting	Write a brief email note thanking the MP and including what action both you and your audience have promised to take and when -Follow-up if agreed-to actions are not taken in agreed times. - Let us know what happens.

Tool 4: Letter to the Editor

Lots of people read the letters to the editor. Even if they are short, letters are a good way of reaching the public with your issues or concerns. They are a good way to encourage people to discuss issues and respond to them.

Tips for writing letters to the editor:

- Focus on one issue
- The best time to write a letter is when there is a news story about migrant worker issues already in the papers but right now we need as many stories as possible
- Keep it short – 100-200 words maximum – check your local newspaper for their word length.
- Use words and language that people easily understand
- Make sure it's clear why you think this is an important issue
- Sign your name and give your address and a contact telephone number
- You can send letters by email
- You can find the letter to editor email address on the website of the newspapers. If you're having trouble, get in touch with us and we will work with you to find it.

Sample Letter

Many people think that the main problem with the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP) is that there are too many foreign workers taking jobs from Canadians. Fact is there are less than 100,000 migrant workers and 1.3 million unemployed citizens. Blaming migrant workers for unemployment is a red herring.

There are real problems: Migrant workers are tied to their employer and can't change jobs. Their families can't visit them, and even those that have come back to Canada for forty years can't live here permanently. The previous government made it harder for Caregivers to get permanent residence and took away paternity benefits from agricultural workers.

Right now the federal government is reviewing the Temporary Foreign Workers Program. It's time to make things fair. That means permanent immigration status, open work permits and basic dignity for all. See www.migrantrights.ca for more.

First Name, Last Name

Address, City, Postal Code, Telephone Number

Tool 5: Organizing Public Events

One thing that we can do is create spaces for public conversation. Public events can be of various types. They can be dinner discussions, panels or workshops, movie screenings or even protest and rallies.

Before organizing the event, answer the following questions.

- **What is the goal of the event?**
 - An event may have one or some of these goals:
 - Raise awareness
 - Gather people for discussions
 - Get petition signatures
 - Get into the media
 - Pressure politicians to take action

- **When is a good time?**
 - Depending on your goals, you may want to do your event at 12pm (lunch hour), or 6pm (after work).
 - You may want to do it on a weekend (when perhaps more people can come), or on a weekday during the day (when decision makers are likely to be in their office). If you are trying to get petition signatures, the best time would be when people most likely to sign the signatures are in the same place (for example at a Farmer's Market or a local community event)

- **Where?**
 - Depending on your goals, here are some possible locations:
 - Library, university or community space (for a film screening or workshop)
 - Outside a farmer's market or in a mall with a lot of migrant workers (for petition signatures and flyer)
 - Outside a government building or an MP office (if you are organizing a media event)

- **Who needs to be involved?**
 - Can you partner with a community organization or a union local or settlement agency in the area? Are there migrant worker groups that can be part of your effort? Can you connect this issue to environmental, food sustainability or other social justice organizations?
 - It is best to organize in coalitions and with groups that can support you.

Tool 5A: Organizing a public event

Here is a step-by-step guide to organizing events

3 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT

- Select a date and time for event
- Select a venue for the event. You can plan a movie night, or panel or workshop in your own home. Its easy, and it's a great way to gather your friends and family together. If you'd like to get more members of your community involved, think about asking a local school, community center, church, movie theater, union hall, bookstore or concert venue to let you hold the event. If you are doing a media action, you may consider doing it outside a government building.
- Reach out to organizations in your community that may be interested in supporting, co-sponsoring or attending.
- Draw up a list of potential guests. Remember to over-invite as not everyone will be able to attend.
- Decide who will be speaking – this could be a local migrant worker organization, or community activist versed in the issues, as well as supporters from different types of organizations who are there to support your ask.
- Get in touch with us and let us know you are organizing an event.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT

- Confirm the location and time of your event.
- Make sure you have all the equipment you need: audiovisual equipment, banners, placards, posters, petitions and flyers (get in touch with us and we will email you objects you can print).
- If the event is in a community space make sure you can serve refreshments there and organize refreshments.
- Confirm the speakers and the facilitators at the event.
- Send out an email invitation to family, friends, group list serves and/or other concerned activists. Try to get an RSVP so you know how many people to expect. Get in touch with us if you want sample language to use.
- If you are doing a community-wide event, look into posting the announcement on community event websites, Indy Media websites, Craigslist, local papers or ask local groups to advertise on their website/list serve. Start a facebook event page, but make sure you are relying on methods other than just social media. You can refer people to the website www.migrantrights.ca for more information.
- If your event is public, fill in the blank at the bottom of the posters we'll send you with the date, time and location of your event, and put them up around town on community bulletin boards, coffee shops, storefronts (make sure to ask permission) and outdoor spaces.
- If you would like media at the event, follow the steps to getting media (Tool 5B)

ONE WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT

- Send out a reminder email to your guests.
- If you are trying to get media, send out a media release. See Tool 5B.II for how to draft one.
- One or two days before the event call people who RSVPed to confirm that they'll attend and send out a reminder email about the movie night. Include a map link or directions to the location if necessary.
- Look over the factsheets and backgrounder in this package.

DAY OF

- Make sure to have brochures, fact sheets, and the petition visible and readily available – you can download them at www.migrantrights.ca
- If you are planning to invite the media, make sure you call them in the morning, see Tool 5B.III.
- Introduce people to each other at the start if you can.
- If it's a public event, invite your speakers and have them speak one at a time. If you are getting petition signatures, discuss the key talking points (from the Backgrounder and FAQ) with everyone and distribute copies of the petition. If you are showing a film, play the film.
- Take some pictures! If you are using Twitter or Facebook use #StatusOnArrival and #MigrantRightsCA
- Don't forget to ask all attendants to sign the petition before they leave!

FOLLOW-UP

- Send us an email and let us know how it went.
- Mail us a copy of your signed petition or scan and email them to us.
- Email us your pictures of the event so we can post them on our website.
- Send out a thank you email to all those who attended.

TOOL 5B: Getting media coverage

Getting your local media coverage is a critical strategy for any campaign. Whether the story is coverage of your MP delegation visit or your public education event, or getting a more general story about the changes migrant workers need, using the media is an important forum to get your message out. Again, if you need help with your media work, give us a call.

I. Getting a Story in Your Local Media

Here are some tips for how to get your local media interested:

- If you don't know which media outlets serve your local community, get in touch with us and we will help you generate a list.
- Do some research to see which particular journalists have covered the issue previously. For example, look at news archives or use Google to find out who has reported on this issue. Reporters who have covered this issue may be looking to include your viewpoints in another story.
- Contact local media to see if there is a reporter that covers social or social justice issues. Also develop relations with ethnic/alternative and online news services.
- Send them a media release before the event.
- Use the backgrounder (Tool 1) to help educate local media on why this issue is important to the community. If they understand the issue properly chances are they will be able to convey your message to the general public.
- Even media outlets that are generally not sympathetic on these issues may have journalists who may provide favourable coverage. Don't count them out.
- Even if your story does not get reported, don't give up. The reporter may have submitted the story but it didn't get accepted. It might get picked up later. Keep developing your relationship with them. We are in this for the long haul.
- Media outlets are going to ask to interview migrant workers. This should be handled carefully. Before you approach the media to cover your story, work with your coalition to see if someone is interested in acting as a media spokesperson. And work with them to make sure that they are well prepared. Discuss the impacts on the broader migrant workers and make sure they are prepared to talk about our campaign objectives. If they want to remain anonymous, make sure they understand that their anonymity may not be guaranteed but work closely with the media to ensure that they respect the request for anonymity. Or, if they are OK with not being anonymous, make sure that they understand that their name or picture may appear in the local media.
- Take steps to make sure that media spokespeople do not get tokenized: their role is not to simply tell their 'sad story' but to ensure that they can also spell out what laws need to change. As organizers, our role is critical to ensure that media relations are managed and that those impacted do not become vilified or the focus of community resentment. Work with your media spokespeople and others in your coalition to develop a checklist to trouble shoot concerns that may arise – such as how to protect anonymity and what to do if there is a backlash.
- If there is no migrant worker willing to speak, let the media know this but offer yourself or your local coalition's designated spokesperson to share more generalized experiences and impacts, and to talk about why it's important that migrant workers get permanent resident status, open work permits and an end to Harper era harms.

II. How to Write a Media Release

A media release should give reporters, editors, and producers a written document about an issue or event, so that they will write a story or produce a show about that issue or event. It should give journalists the basics of the issue – the “who, what, where, when, and why” - allowing them to follow up for a more detailed article. But it should also be written as though it is a newspaper article itself – some newspapers, especially in smaller communities, will publish an entire media release verbatim, if it’s written in the right way. Make sure the release is written in a way that catches attention. Get in touch with us and we will help.

Format – What should a media release look like? All media releases follow a specific format. This makes it easier for journalists to understand your story.

- Get in touch with us and we will provide you with a release you can use.
- Keep it concise. Be sure the whole release fits on one - two pages!
- Put your group or organization’s logo or letterhead at the top.
- Indicate the date that you’re issuing the release.
- The headline / title goes next. It should be centered on the page and in bold type.
- Next is the body of the release.
- When the body is finished, type “### ” in a separate, centered line at the bottom. This tells journalists that it’s the end of your media release.
- If you’re providing background information as an attachment, write “Background information attached” at the bottom.
- Make sure to include a contact name and phone numbers (twitter or email if you have it) so journalists can get contact you for more information. And make sure to check your voicemail, and email when you share the information!

For samples press releases, see: <http://migrantrights.ca/en/press/>

Content – What should the media release say?

The Headline: A headline should be catchy enough to get the attention of the journalist so that they read the whole media release and, hopefully, cover your story. It should also be short and succinct – no more than 10 words. But it should also state the exact reason for the release.

The Body: Keep the body of your media release short - about four or five short paragraphs, with no more than four sentences per paragraph.

The first paragraph should state the “who, what, where, when, and why” of the issue or event. Use it to get to the point as quickly as possible – don’t leave the important information for the end of the media release – put it in the first paragraph.

- So, instead of: On July 6, the Director of the Local Community Information Centre announced that her group will be hosting an event on changes needed for migrant workers
- Write: Human and labour rights for migrant workers need to be central to change, says Barb Smith, the Director of the Local Community Information Centre.

The rest of the body should give more details, explain the issue or event, and emphasize your key points. Think of your media release as a triangle, with the most important information at the top and less important information at the bottom.

Using a quote in the second paragraph adds local flavor and allows you to state your group or organization's opinion about your issue right off the top. Quote yourself, someone who is going to be impacted, or some other member of your group.

Intersperse statistics and quotes into the media release to support your key points. Make sure that any information you provide is clear, complete, and accurate. Provide sources for statistics and names and titles for people you quote.

Keep the tone relatively formal, but conversational and informative.

Where to send the media release

Think about which newspapers, radio stations, or other media outlets you want to cover your issue or event, and target your media release to them. Send by email:

- the editor of the newspaper or a reporter who covers these issues;
- the producers of local radio talk or call-in shows; and/or
- the news department of the radio station.

Pitch-call after sending the media release

Follow up your email with a friendly phone call to encourage the media to cover your story. Make sure you call on the morning of your event. Here is a sample script you can use.

- Introduce yourself: Good morning my name is ____
- Tell them why you are calling: I am following up to see if you received a media release about a (public demonstration / press conference / event) that I am helping to organize around the issue of temporary foreign workers in our community.
- Confirm they got the release and if not send it to them: Did you receive the media release, and are you sending someone to cover our event? If you have not received the media release, is there an e-mail I can resend it to (be on your computer and send it right then – ask them if they have received it)
- Tell them why it will be a great story: There is a temporary foreign worker review taking place in Ottawa right now and this event brings that conversation home. It is something we all care about and your readers / viewers will be really interested.
- If they say they can't attend: If you are not able to send someone to cover the event today, can I follow up by sending a short summary and photos, audio and video of what transpired?
- Thank the: Thank you kindly!