



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Entrepreneur Immigration Pocket Guide

BC Provincial Nominee Program

Immigration Programs Branch

Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development
and Competitiveness



Contents & Overview

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In the event of any discrepancy between the Pocket Guide and the BC PNP program guides, the information in the program guides shall be considered correct. Please check our [website](#) regularly to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the applicable program guide.

The information in this guide is effective January 29, 2020.

Introduction

This pocket guide provides general information about the Entrepreneur Immigration stream's categories, their requirements, and the general processes.

For complete information, please review the full program guides at [WelcomeBC.ca/PNP](https://www.welcomebc.ca/PNP).

Overview of the Entrepreneur Immigration stream

The British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program's (BC PNP) Entrepreneur Immigration stream offers immigration pathways for experienced entrepreneurs who want to actively manage a business in B.C.

The BC PNP selects and nominates foreign entrepreneurs for permanent residence who have successfully developed and actively managed businesses that provide significant economic benefits to British Columbia. Nominees are eligible to apply for permanent residence.

At a glance

Categories at a glance

The Entrepreneur Immigration stream offers categories that address different economic priorities for British Columbia. Each category has specific objectives, criteria, and processes. You are encouraged to review the information for each category to determine the category that suits you best:

- **Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category:** choose this option if you want to establish a new business or buy and develop an existing business anywhere in British Columbia.
- **Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot:** choose this option if you want to establish a new business in a regional community outside of a major population centre of British Columbia. The BC PNP works with participating local communities under this pilot. You must obtain a community referral before you submit a registration.

At a glance

Criteria comparison

	EI – Base Category	EI – Regional Pilot
Eligible communities	Any community across B.C. No requirement for exploratory visit or meeting with community.	Population of fewer than 75,000 and not near a large population centre. Refer to WelcomeBC.ca/PNP for a list of enrolled communities. Applicant must visit community and obtain a referral
Applicant investment	Minimum \$200,000	Minimum \$100,000
Applicant job creation	At least 1 full-time equivalent for a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada	
Applicant net worth	Minimum \$600,000	Minimum \$300,000
Language proficiency requirement	Minimum of CLB 4 equivalent. Must submit copy of valid language proficiency test at final report (if not previously submitted)	Minimum of CLB 4 equivalent. Must submit copy of language proficiency test at registration
Applicant residency requirement	Residence must be within 100 km of proposed B.C. business	Business and residence must be within supporting community
Eligible type of business	Successions (purchase of existing businesses) and start-ups in any sector	New business start-ups only, consistent with community's priority economic development industry subsectors
Applicant ownership of business	Minimum 33 1/3% of business in B.C.	Minimum 51% of business in B.C.
Work permit period	May submit a final report 18-20 months after arriving on a valid work permit	May submit a final report at least 12 months after arriving on a valid work permit
Applicant management of business	Applicant must demonstrate active and ongoing management of the business in B.C.	

General process

Overview

All Entrepreneur Immigration categories follow the same general process as outlined below. Any category-specific processes are detailed in their respective sections.

1. **Preparation and research:** in order to apply to the Entrepreneur Immigration stream, you must first determine your eligibility to the various categories. For complete information, carefully review the full program guides available on [WelcomeBC.ca/PNP](https://www.welcomebc.ca/PNP).
2. **Registration to the BC PNP:** create a profile and submit an [online registration](#) to the BC PNP. The registration includes details about your work and/or business experience, education, language ability, your net worth, and information about your proposed business in British Columbia.

After your registration is scored, the BC PNP will invite the highest-scoring registrants to submit full applications to the BC PNP.

Registrations are typically scored within **six weeks**. You have four months from the date of your invitation to submit your application.

3. **Application to the BC PNP:** submit a complete application to the BC PNP. You may be invited to attend an in-person interview in Vancouver to discuss details of your application. If your application is approved, you must sign a performance agreement that outlines all of the requirements you must meet in order to be nominated. Applications are typically assessed within **four months**.



1. Preparation

2. BC PNP
Registration

3. BC PNP
Application

4. **Work Permit period:** you must arrive in B.C. with a valid work permit so you can begin to implement your business plan, make your investments, and create jobs. Your spouse or common-law partner is eligible for an open work permit for the same duration.
5. **Nomination:** In order to be approved for nomination, you must demonstrate you have met the terms and conditions of your performance agreement by submitting a final report (i.e. application for nomination) to the BC PNP. Final reports are typically assessed within **four months**.

When the BC PNP is satisfied that you have met your performance agreement terms, you will be required to sign a Conditions of Nomination declaration. Once your signed Conditions of Nomination declaration has been received by the BC PNP, you will be issued a confirmation of nomination as a provincial nominee.

6. **Application for permanent residence:** As a provincial nominee, you may then apply to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to become a permanent resident of Canada under the Provincial Nominee Class. For permanent residence application processing times, please refer to the [IRCC website](#) (Economic Immigration→ Provincial Nominees).

**The EI – Regional Pilot has additional processes.
Please refer to page 16 for details.**



EI – Base Category

Overview

The **Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category** is designed for experienced entrepreneurs who propose to establish and actively manage new businesses or buy and develop existing businesses anywhere in B.C.

Your declared information will be scored at the registration stage and will be assessed by the BC PNP at the application stage. For complete information, refer to the Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category Program Guide available at [WelcomeBC.ca/PNP](https://www.welcomebc.ca/PNP).

Requirements

Experience: within the last **10 years**:

3+ years of experience as an **active business owner-manager**

OR

4+ years of experience as a **senior manager**

OR

a combination of 1+ year of experience as an active business owner-manager and 2+ years of experience as a senior manager.

Education: you must have either a post-secondary credential OR experience as an active business owner-manager with 100% ownership of the business for at least 3 of the past 5 years.

Minimum personal net worth: you must have a minimum personal net worth of **\$600,000**. Your net worth includes all assets minus any liabilities of you and your spouse or common-law partner. You must make a complete declaration of your net worth and source of funds.

Business proposal: Eligibility: you must provide a plan to establish a new, eligible business or purchase and expand an existing, eligible business in B.C.

The business must be operated for the primary purpose of earning profits by providing products and/or services. Additionally, the business must have strong potential for sustained commercial success.

Certain business types are not eligible to the BC PNP, such as bed and breakfasts, hobby farms, home-based businesses, real estate development/brokerages, insurance or business brokerages. For a complete list, please refer to the Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category Program Guide.

If you choose to purchase an existing business, you must identify the specific target business in your registration. You must describe your improvement/expansion plan in your registration.

The target business you intend to purchase must have been owned and operated by the same owner for at least 5 years.

The BC PNP does not pre-approve or endorse any business proposal.

Ownership percentage: you must own a minimum of **one-third (33.33%)** of the proposed business in B.C.

Eligible Investment: you must make a minimum eligible personal investment of **\$200,000** in your proposed business.

Eligible investments include business-related expenses such as equipment, leasehold improvements, furniture and office supplies, marketing and advertising, etc.

The BC PNP will also consider regular operating expenses such as wages, rent, utilities, and ongoing marketing for up to 6 months if you are establishing a new business or 3 months if you are purchasing an existing business (or establishing a new franchise location). The BC PNP will consider investments towards start-up inventory for no more than 3 months.

EI – Base Category

Requirements (continued)

Eligible Investment (continued):

If you are purchasing an existing business, the BC PNP will only consider up to a maximum of \$150,000 of the business purchase price towards meeting the minimum investment requirement. You must also invest at least \$50,000 towards the upgrade, improvement, and/or expansion of the business. Business expansion investment includes purchasing new equipment, leasehold improvements, wages for additional staff, etc. Business expansion investment does not include regular operating expenses.

The BC PNP will not consider as eligible investments such as cash, working capital, wage payments to yourself or family members or business co-owners, or real estate. The BC PNP will not consider as eligible any investments made prior to the date you receive an invitation to apply.

Job creation: you must create at least **one full-time equivalent job** for a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada.

A full-time equivalent (FTE) job means a position of at least 30 hours per week on average and 1,560 hours per year, worked by one or more employees under continuous employment. FTEs must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada.

If you are purchasing an existing business, you must commit to maintain the number of existing jobs in the business and pay your employee(s) a wage that is commensurate to their skill level.



Active management: in order to be approved for nomination, you must demonstrate that you have actively managed your business in B.C. Active management means you are accountable for the day-to-day operations of the business. Active management must occur at the place of business in B.C. The BC PNP will make this assessment when you submit a final report.

Residence: in order to be approved for nomination, you must demonstrate that you reside within 100 kilometres of the business you operate in B.C., and that you have lived in B.C. for at least 75% of the time while on a work permit. The BC PNP will make this assessment when you submit a final report.

Language proficiency: By the time you submit your final report, you must have valid language test results to demonstrate a minimum language ability equivalent to Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 4 in English or French. Test results will be considered valid for the two years from the date of issuance.

Registration scoring

You must submit an online registration to the BC PNP by providing information about your background and experience, and details about your business concept in B.C.

Points are assigned based on the information you provide. The business concept is scored by the BC PNP.

Maximum points for each section are shown below. For a complete score grid, please refer to the [Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category Program Guide](#) available on the BC PNP website.

Your registration will be automatically disqualified if your business concept score is below 32 points.



EI – Base Category

Self-declared	Maximum points available
Business owner-manager or senior manager experience	20
Business ownership (100% for 3 of last 5 years)	4
Declared personal net worth	12
Total personal investment	20
Total jobs created (and maintained, if applicable)	20
Regional District of B.C. (based on population size)	12
Adaptability: Official language proficiency	4
Adaptability: Education level	8
Adaptability: Age	8
Adaptability: Business exploratory visits to B.C.	4
Adaptability: Work, business, or studies in Canada	8
Self-declared subtotal score	120
Business concept	
Commercial Viability: Business model	10
Commercial Viability: Market and products/services	4
Commercial Viability: Eligible personal investment	4
Commercial Viability: Assessment of proposed investment	6
Commercial Viability: Ownership percentage	4
Commercial Viability: Risk factors	2
Transferability of Skills (based on 3-digit NAICS)	20
Economic Benefits: Key sector / significant economic benefits	12
Economic Benefits: Jobs assessment	6
Economic Benefits: High-skilled jobs (NOC 0, A, B)	4
Economic Benefits: B.C. development region	8
Business concept subtotal score	80
Total points available	200

EI – Regional Pilot

Overview

The **Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot** is designed for entrepreneurs who propose to establish and actively manage new businesses in regional communities in British Columbia outside of major population centres.

Communities that are eligible under the EI – Regional Pilot and have enrolled with the BC PNP are listed on our website. Each enrolled community has identified priority economic development industries and will refer prospective applicants to the BC PNP.

Your declared information will be scored at the registration stage and will be assessed by the BC PNP at the application stage.

The Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot Program Guide is available at [WelcomeBC.ca/PNP](https://www.welcomebc.ca/PNP).

Requirements

Community referral: you **must** obtain a referral from an enrolled community before you can register. **We ask interested parties to respect and follow a community's specific process.**

To obtain a referral, you must:

- Learn about the enrolled communities and their priority industry subsectors, listed on our website at [WelcomeBC.ca/PNP](https://www.welcomebc.ca/PNP)
- Arrange an exploratory visit to the enrolled community to learn about the business conditions, local market, support services, etc.
- Propose and develop a business concept that aligns with a priority industry subsector identified by the enrolled community
- Meet with the designated community representative to discuss your business concept
- Request a referral from the enrolled community so you may submit an online registration with the BC PNP

EI – Regional Pilot

Requirements (continued)

Experience: within the last **5 years**:

3+ years of experience as an **active business owner-manager**
OR

4+ years of experience as a **senior manager**
OR

a combination of 1+ year of experience as an active business owner-manager and 2+ years of experience as a senior manager.

Education: you must have either a post-secondary credential **or** experience as an active business owner-manager with 100% ownership of the business for at least 3 of the past 5 years.

Minimum net worth: you must have a minimum personal net worth of **\$300,000**. Your net worth includes all assets minus any liabilities of you and your spouse or common-law partner. You must make a complete declaration of your net worth and source of funds.

Business proposal: eligibility: you must provide a plan to establish a new, eligible business in B.C. The proposed business must be listed in your referral form from the enrolled community.

The business must be operated for the primary purpose of earning profits by providing products and/or services. Additionally, the business must have strong potential for sustained commercial success.

Certain business types are not eligible to the BC PNP, such as bed and breakfasts, hobby farms and home-based businesses, real estate development/brokerage, insurance or business brokerage. For a complete list, please refer to the Regional Pilot Program Guide.

The BC PNP does not pre-approve or endorse any business proposal.

Ownership percentage: you must own a minimum of **51%** of the proposed business in B.C.

Eligible Investment: you must make a minimum eligible investment of **\$100,000** into your proposed business.

Eligible investments include business-related expenses such as equipment, leasehold improvements, furniture and office supplies, marketing and advertising, etc.

The BC PNP will also consider regular operating expenses such as wages, rent, utilities, and ongoing marketing for up to six months if you are establishing a new business or three months if you are establishing a new franchise location. The BC PNP will consider investments towards start-up inventory for no more than three months.

The BC PNP does not consider as eligible investments such as cash, working capital, wage payments to yourself or family members or business co-owners, or real estate. The BC PNP will not consider as eligible any investments made prior to the date you receive an invitation to apply.

Job creation: you must create at least **1 full-time equivalent job** for a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada.

A full-time equivalent (FTE) job means a position of at least 30 hours per week on average and 1,560 hours per year, worked by 1 or more employees under continuous employment. FTEs must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada.

Language proficiency: You must demonstrate you possess minimum English or French language proficiency, equivalent to the [Canadian Language Benchmark \(CLB\) level 4](#) or higher. You must submit a copy of a valid language proficiency test result from a designated testing agency in order to register.

Active management: in order to be approved for nomination, you must demonstrate that you have actively managed your business in B.C. Active management means you are accountable for the day-to-day operations of the business. Active management must occur at the place of business in B.C. The BC PNP will make this assessment when you submit a final report.

EI – Regional Pilot

Requirements (continued)

Residence: in order to be approved for nomination, you must demonstrate that you reside within the community of the business you operate in B.C., and that you have lived in B.C. for at least 75% of the time while on a work permit. The BC PNP will make this assessment when you submit a final report.

Pilot-specific processes

Before you register, you must:

- Arrange an exploratory visit to the enrolled community to gain information
- develop a business proposal based on one of the community's priority economic development industry subsectors
- meet with the designated community representative to discuss details of your business proposal and the community
- request a referral from the community to be able to register with the BC PNP
- complete a language proficiency exam

At registration, you must:

- submit a copy of your referral
- submit a copy of your official language test results

Registration scoring

You must submit an online registration to the BC PNP by providing information about your background and experience, and your details about your business concept in B.C.

Points are assigned based on the information you provide. The business concept is scored by the BC PNP.

EI – Regional Pilot

Maximum points for each section are shown below. For a complete score grid, please refer to the [Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot Program Guide](#) available on the BC PNP website.

Self-declared	Maximum points available
Business owner-manager or senior manager experience	22
Business ownership (100%)	2
Declared personal net worth	6
Total personal investment	10
Total jobs created	15
Community population	6
B.C.'s regions	12
Adaptability: Minimum language proficiency	23
Adaptability: Education level	16
Adaptability: Age	16
Adaptability: Family in community of proposed business	4
Adaptability: Work, business, or studies in Canada	8
Self-declared subtotal score	140
Business concept	
Commercial Viability: Business model	12
Commercial Viability: Market and products/services	4
Commercial Viability: Eligible personal investment	4
Commercial Viability: Assessment of proposed investment	8
Commercial Viability: Ownership percentage	2
Transferability of Skills (based on 3-digit NAICS)	15
Economic Benefits: Significant economic benefits	5
Economic Benefits: Jobs assessment	10
Business concept subtotal score	60
Total Points Available	200

Immigration representatives

Use of a representative

The BC PNP is designed so you can submit a registration or application on your own. However, you may choose to use the services of a representative, such as an immigration consultant or lawyer, to provide advice or help with the process. A representative is authorized to act on your behalf with the BC PNP. **The BC PNP assesses all applications equally. Using a representative will not give you special attention or faster processing and does not guarantee a better outcome.**

If you pay someone to act as your representative, they must meet the requirements for authorized paid representatives.

Authorized Paid Representatives

In selecting a paid representative, it is highly recommended you confirm that the representative is in good standing with their professional organization.

Paid representatives must be:

- immigration consultants who are full members in good standing of the [Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council \(ICCRC\)](#)
- lawyers who are members in good standing of the [Law Society of British Columbia](#) or another Canadian Law Society, the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society, or the *Chambre des notaires du Quebec*.

Unpaid Representatives

You may use the services of an unpaid representative to act on your behalf. Unpaid representatives may include immigration consultants or lawyers (see above), family members, friends and members of a non-governmental or religious organization. Unpaid representatives do not charge fees or receive any other compensation or benefit for providing immigration advice or related services.

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