



June 2, 2021

Hon. Monte McNaughton
Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
14th Floor, 400 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 1T7

Re: Position of Cook Under the Ontario Immigrant Provincial Nominee Program (OINP)

Dear Minister McNaughton,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me recently during the Restaurant Foodservice Working Group, along with Minister Lisa MacLeod, on the subject of the “Cook” position under the Ontario Immigrant Provincial Nominee Program (OINP). I appreciate you listening and conveying your on-going support for the tourism and hospitality industry.

As a follow up to our discussion, I’m writing to you today regarding the *Ontario Regulation 422/17, a Minister’s Regulation made under The Ontario Immigration Act, 2015*. On January 1, 2018, the Act was proclaimed and its regulations came into force. The Act introduced a regulatory framework to respond to Ontario’s responsibilities in the immigration sector. The Act also formalizes in law the requirements of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP).

ONTARIO IMMIGRANT NOMINEE PROGRAM (OINP)

Ontario recognizes that employers play a critical role in economic success. For many hospitality employers, newcomers to Ontario are a valuable source of skilled labour. If you are an Ontario employer having difficulty finding the workers you need, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) could be an opportunity for owners and operators to staff their restaurants and hotels.

Fortunately, most provinces and territories in Canada can nominate immigrants through the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). These immigrants must have the skills; education and work experience to contribute to the economy of that province or territory and must want to live there. Currently, each province and territory’s streams, eligibility requirements and nomination guidelines for their PNP can change without notice.

The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) is an economic immigration program designed to help Ontario meet its labour market and economic development priorities. The program allows Ontario to nominate individuals for permanent residence who have the skills and experience to contribute to Ontario’s economy, and assists employers in recruiting and retaining foreign workers. The OINP is designed in part to assist employers who are having difficulty recruiting qualified, skilled workers in Ontario.

LABOUR SHORTAGE ISSUE

The hospitality industry has entered a critical period where the occupation of a cook is the highest needed position in the foodservice industry. However, the economic growth and the rising appeal of culinary tourism both bring a challenge of fulfilling these positions.

While the hospitality industry is facing critical shortages in many positions, the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) is noting that food and beverage services are expected to see the largest increase in labour shortages across Canada with 19,619 cook positions projected to be unfilled by 2030. According to the Conference Board of Canada, by 2035 Ontario will experience 6,520 cook jobs and 4,282 chef jobs being unfilled, inclusive of both food and beverage services as well as the accommodation industry.

Culinary jobs in a kitchen environment are skill-based but are not yet viewed as such by the OINP, although similar positions in processing food fields are allowed. Furthermore, at this time, other Canadian Provinces do include cook occupations under the INP, thus attracting international students graduating from our own Ontario hospitality schools.



ORHMA RECOMMENDATION

We recommend expanding the Ontario Immigrant Provincial Nominee Program (OINP) to include cooks to address the shortage of labour in the hospitality industry in Ontario. This will assist our industry in seeking much needed labour and allow employers to grow their businesses and contribute to the provincial as well as local economies.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, we look forward to hearing further from you. We also look forward to continuing our work together to support evidence-based policies that strengthen Ontario's business competitiveness and economic prosperity.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elenis", is positioned below the text "Yours truly,".

Tony Elenis
President & CEO
Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA)