

May 16, 2025

Hon. Rebecca Alty M.P.

Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Hon. Caitlin Cleveland

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

Re: Immediate Action Needed on Expiring Work Permits in the Northwest Territories

Dear Minister Alty and Minister Cleveland,

We are writing to express our urgent concern regarding the imminent expiry of work permits for a significant portion of Yellowknife's and the Northwest Territories' workforce. Local businesses are facing staffing shortages, and without swift intervention to extend work permits for those currently working in the territory, we risk losing critical workers in the coming weeks and months.

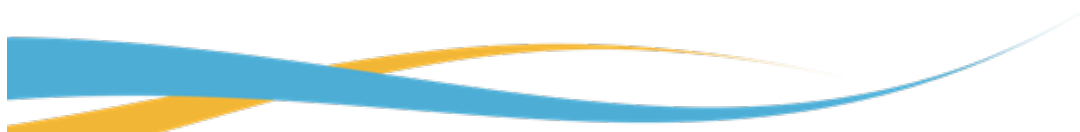
Employers across multiple sectors — retail, construction, aviation, hospitality, healthcare, trucking, essential services and more — depend on skilled international workers. We have heard directly from several members whose employees are on expiring work permits as early as this month. Without the ability to retain these workers, many businesses face service disruptions, reduced hours, or outright closure. As the unemployment rate in the Northwest Territories remains among the lowest in the country, there is limited local workforce available to fill these gaps.

We are therefore requesting:

Immediate federal approval for a two-year extension of work permits for eligible foreign nationals currently living and working in the Northwest Territories, supported by the Government of the Northwest Territories through the issuance of letters of support.

Other jurisdictions have acted decisively:

- **Yukon** has offered letters of support for two-year extensions of work permits for eligible individuals living and working in the territory.
- **Manitoba** recently announced federal approval for a two-year extension of work permits to address the immigration cuts, as well as similar retention and processing delays.



We strongly urge the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government to ensure the same flexibility is granted to foreign nationals working in the Northwest Territories with expiring permits.

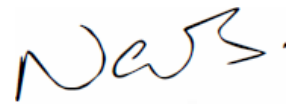
The Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce and our community partners have repeatedly raised the need for increased immigration allocations and the development of a long-term strategy that meets the unique needs of communities in the Northwest Territories. While this remains essential for the long-term health of the NWT economy, the issue of expiring work permits is an immediate crisis that demands urgent attention. Addressing the current situation is a critical first step in ensuring that our communities and businesses are positioned for future growth and resilience.



Matthew Haliday
Executive Director
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce



Francois Afane
Directeur Général
CDETNO



Newton Grey
President
NWT Chamber of Commerce

