



Good day,

As you are aware, given the unprecedented demand for the Start-Up Visa (SUV) program, the misalignment between the volume of applications received and the number of applications Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) can process each year, SUV applicants currently face lengthy processing times. In addition, given that the SUV work permit is only valid for up to one year, eligible entrepreneurs have to renew their permit each year while they wait for their application for permanent residence to be processed.

To help address this issue, the Minister has approved changes to the SUV work permit, which come into effect today, October 3, 2024.

The new SUV work permit, a facilitation measure, will be available for a duration of up to three years, rather than one year, reflecting current processing times for SUV permanent residency applications. This work permit will only be available to entrepreneurial team members who have been deemed ‘essential’ by the designated entity supporting their application.

Furthermore, recognizing that founders may need to supplement their income by working for an employer to support themselves and their family in Canada while also working on their business during the early stages of a new start-up venture, the new SUV work permit is an “open” work permit.

Should entrepreneurs who have already submitted a work permit application prior to October 3, 2024, wish to apply for the new work permit, they must first withdraw their previous work permit application before applying for the new open work permit. Note that this will not impact their application for permanent residence.

Questions and answers are included in this email, and should address any questions you may have. For further enquiries, please communicate with the Dedicated Service Channel: IRCC.DSC-SUV-MSR-PVDE.IRCC@cic.gc.ca.

We thank you for your ongoing commitment to the Start-up Visa program, and look forward to a collaborative future in the SUV program.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Q1. The former Minister had announced changes to the SUV work permit in June 2023. Why did it take so long to implement these changes?

Since June 2023, the Department has looked at the growth in the number of temporary residents in Canada and announced a number of reforms aimed at reducing the population of temporary residents in Canada. Prior to moving ahead with changes to the work permit for Start-up Visa program, the proposed reforms were re-assessed as part of the Department's review of various temporary resident streams.

Q2. Are you concerned about increasing the number of temporary workers in Canada with this policy change?

Since these changes were announced in 2023, IRCC has reviewed how they might impact its overall goal of reducing the number of temporary residents over the next three years. The number of work permits issued to SUV applicants is small – typically only a few hundreds each year. Any increase would be manageable and wouldn't significantly affect our goals.

Furthermore, when initially announced in June 2023, planned changes included making all members of an entrepreneurial team included in an SUV permanent residence application eligible for a work permit, rather than only the essential members of a team.

Q3. Why would an entrepreneur working on their own start-up business need other sources of income?

IRCC has heard from applicants that making this work permit 'open' would help them support their needs and the needs of their family by taking on additional work while working on their own start-up business as well.

Q4. Will this change be applied to anyone who has already submitted an SUV work permit application, or would an entrepreneur need to re-apply to get the new open work permit?

Applications received before October 3, 2024, will be processed under the former policy, a 1-year, employer-specific work permit. Applicants who have already submitted an application for an employer-specific work permit and would like to receive an open work permit, must withdraw their previous application, and submit a new work permit application.