

Alert: Changing Immigration laws that you need to know about

Whether you are a permanent resident, a temporary worker, a refugee claimant, an immigrant, or have no documents – new immigration changes will affect you. The media has been very quiet on these issues or are not covering the whole story. Please read the information below and pass on to others that need to know.

(1) Family Sponsorship: Adopting children or bringing husbands, wives or a parent has been made very difficult. Staff in the family sponsorship office has been cut which has increased processing time up to 12 years. Arranged marriages and same-sex partnerships are under increased inspection and Immigration officers now have more powers to deny sponsorship.

(2) Permanent Residency: Under new laws few people can get permanent residency as skilled workers. Only people in 38 professions are considered useful while all others have to wait decades to get in. The list of 'preferred' professions is created by the Immigration Minister which favours rich, western-style educated people while discriminating against people from the Third World, women and people with disabilities.

(3) Refugee System: See the information on the back.

(4) Temporary Work: Canada needs immigrants. While ways to get permanent residency or get full rights are being cut, more and more people are coming in as Temporary Migrant Workers. Migrant workers have few rights, often face abuse, work long hours with little pay and are deported at the employers whims. Under new laws, some migrant workers work up to four years and are then banned from the country for the next six years.

The laws and policies that shut out Immigrants in Canada go along with military and economic foreign policies that are making it harder and harder for Third World People to live with dignity. Canadian police and military in Haiti and Afghanistan, Canadian mining companies in Papua New Guinea to Congo, Canadian trade agreements with Mexico, Israel and Columbia all work together to keep people poor, harass, intimidate and exploit women, queer folk, disabled people and children.

As a result millions of people come to Canada looking to survive. Those that gain citizenship live in poverty, children pushed out of schools, the last hired and the first fired. In Ontario, 47% of children of new immigrant families live in poverty. Many others are either deported or, in the case of 500,000 people living without status, live in daily fear and always threatened with deportation.

It is now obvious that neither the Canadian government or any of the political parties are able to defend the interests of Migrants. Only when communities begin to work together to raise their own concerns, protesting and taking to the streets can we achieve justice.

On May 1, International Workers Day, No One Is Illegal-Toronto with support of dozens of allies is calling for a Day of Action for Status for All. The struggle for Status is the struggle for freedom of movement, good food, jobs, healthcare, education, shelter, justice and dignity for all people – with or without immigration status. Join Us!



no one is illegal
toronto
nooneisillegal.org

March on May 1 for Status for All!
St. Jamestown @1pm
Wellesley St. & Ontario St.

The Conservative Attacks on the Refugee System: Why Immigration Minister Jason Kenney is Lying



Kenney Says:

Canada's asylum system is crippled by long delays and a cumbersome process. This results in claims taking years to resolve.

We Say:



When the Tories took power in 2005, the backlog was zero and the processing time was 11.5 months. It has now gone up to 19.5 months and the backlog is in the thousands. Kenney created this 'crisis' to push through these vicious changes.

The Government-Assisted Refugees Program will be expanded over time by up to 500 places. An additional 2,000 places will be added to the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

In December 2009, Kenney cut refugee quotas from 29,000 to 12,000. That's a cut of 17,000. Even with a 2500 person increase, that still means a 14,500 person cut. The 2000 private sponsorships put an unnecessary burden on private individuals and takes away Canada's responsibility to settle people that it displaces.

We will abolish hearings and replace them with an administrative evaluation. We will revoke the Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA) application because it's an unnecessary safety net used by refused asylum seekers to stay in the country.

There are no fair hearings without independent judges! Refugees will no longer be allowed to write down their own stories. Instead, a civil servant will conduct an oral interview and will have full power to deny status. The PRRA, though limited was the only way for people facing risk upon deportation to stop their removal - removing it means denying the simplest of protections.

We will establish a list of "safe countries" in order to expedite claims. But we will ensure all asylum seekers have a fair hearing and we will introduce an appeal process.

The Immigration Minister has refused to specify which countries will be on the 'safe' list. Establishing such a list will create a two-tiered system based on nationality. Any country could be deemed safe and claimants from those countries would be treated differently. Poor women, queer and trans survivors of violence have little means of entering Canada outside of the refugee system. This change will slam the doors on those people's ability to immigrate. Also, though the rest of the changes will be implemented immediately, the Appeals system is scheduled to be setup in 2-3 years. The Liberals promised the same a few years ago but then got rid of it a year later.

For more info:
check out www.nooneisillegal.org, or email nooneisillegal@riseup.net