

The Impact of Restrictions on the Temporary Foreign Worker Program: Real Quotes from Real Businesses

"A lot of employees are going to be affected. It does not only affect the company's operations but the health and well-being of our employees. They are constantly stressed with the uncertainties of their status in Canada. If they are contributing to our economy, meaning they are working and companies are willing to keep them for the long term, they should be given the chance to apply for permanent residency. At this point, it doesn't matter whether they are low earners or big earners; fact is, companies operate with their help. They give us the stability, skills and competencies we needed."

- Manufacturing business in Alberta

"I have 3 TFW cooks right now that I desperately need to keep my restaurant running. Two of them are not able to renew and I am having a difficult time finding replacements. I might have to close down a couple days of the week."

- Hospitality business in British Columbia

"Our vision includes franchising across Canada and the US. However, this growth depends on maintaining a team of highly skilled barbers in our flagship location in Vancouver, able to train future recruits. Despite our best efforts, including partnerships with local schools, opening a farm shop, and recently created barbering academy, we face an ongoing shortage of qualified Canadian barbers in Vancouver that meet the standards of a high-end barbershop. Vancouver lacks specialized trade schools for barbering, which makes it especially challenging to find local talent."

- Personal Services business in British Columbia

"I live in a remote town that has limited options for specialized labor, not having an option to hire temporary workers put us in a very tough spot as we have not been able to recruit locally or nationally despite our efforts."

- Manufacturing business in Ontario

"As the owner of a daycare with 2 educators and 1 cleaner on staff, I find the new measures highly concerning. I'm afraid I won't be able to renew their contracts, which would be very upsetting for the children whom they spend most of their time with. Not only would they be incredibly difficult to replace, I dread having to tell the children that their educator has to leave for political reasons. I might not have to close my business, but I'll definitely have to close a group or temporarily stop offering services. I wouldn't be able to accommodate all the children who have registered with my daycare. This was a frequent occurrence before I found my current employees. Closing a daycare group means 15 parents will be unable to work. The ramifications go far beyond my business."

- Social Services business in Québec

"I am still struggling to fill low wage positions. If they restrict the number of low-wage workers further, I will consider closing down my business."

- Manufacturing business in Nova Scotia

"We have 4 very talented foreign workers who have recently joined us. There are significant soft and hard costs to the employer with the TFW program, such as establishing affordable housing, tooling, clothing, logistics etc., so a 20% increase in the high wage category is prohibitive. The program is a great benefit, both to the foreign workers and to our business and we were looking forward to welcoming additional workers in the future based on the issues we've faced trying to source the skilled tradespeople we need to manage our business volumes."

- Retail business in Ontario

“For years we struggled to find reliable employees willing to work in our location. Since we have been able to bring in TFWs it has allowed us to have better productivity and staff that stays long term and it has positively impacted our work environment for them and our existing staff. All of our TFWs have already started the process for permanent residence and they have become an important part of our work family.”

- Manufacturing business in Saskatchewan

“We won’t be able to keep our doors open without our foreign workers. We need them to be able to serve our customers. I’m considering selling or significantly reducing business hours. Although our business is very successful, not having access to foreign workers in a rural area is CATASTROPHIC.”

- Hospitality business in Québec

“In our very low supply/high demand labour market in the Bow Valley (Banff, Canmore, Lake Louise) MANY businesses rely on TFW program for fulfilling our hiring needs. It is incredibly important that the government keep in mind that pockets of high tourism such as ours need the support of these programs to be able to provide goods and services to keep our businesses open, sustainable and successful.”

- Retail business in Alberta

“We currently have two employees who have been with us for approximately three years. Due to the high English language requirements, they’re unlikely to qualify for Permanent Residency. As a result, we have to renew their LMIA and reapply for their work permits every two years, but it’s likely they’ll eventually have to return to their home countries. If qualified local candidates were available, we would absolutely hire them, but this workforce simply isn’t there. Our temporary foreign workers are experienced and qualified; losing them would be a significant setback for our company.”

- Manufacturing business in British Columbia

“TFWs make up about 30% of our current workforce. We manufacture complex parts in very small quantities for the aerospace industry. Automation is not an option. We’re constantly seeking skilled workers in Canada, but it’s very difficult. Most of our products are exported. We have plans to grow our business and make significant investments, but they won’t be possible without TFWs. If current restrictions remain in effect, our business will be losing revenue by this time next year and we will have to lay off Canadian employees.”

-Manufacturing business in Québec

“We do NOT get resumes or applications from any Canadian workers. The use of TFW's and foreign students is the major part of our business and it needs to stay. They are not taking jobs that Canadians want. Also, closing off new ones from entering is one thing but making people that have helped us through tough times in our industry leave, while they have brought their families and are paying taxes goes against everything this country believes in. They need to be able to stay and work at jobs no one locally wants but are needed to make our companies survive and hopefully flourish.”

- Hospitality business in Ontario

“We hire TFWs as mechanics for heavy-duty vehicles and truck drivers. The mechanic positions are especially difficult to fill. We’re hoping to at least be able to keep the TFWs we currently have on staff by renewing their work permits when the time comes. Having to send them back to their country would be heartbreaking and would jeopardize our mechanics department.”

- Transportation business in Québec