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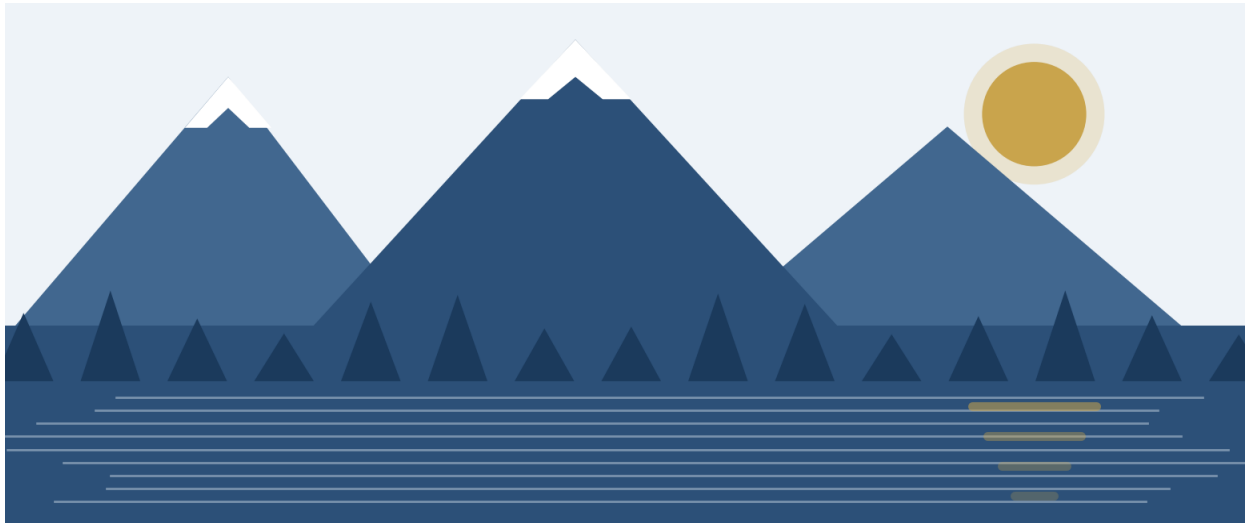
*Canadian Immigration & Refugee Law*

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BRITISH COLUMBIA PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAM

## Entrepreneur Immigration Regional Stream

*Requirements and Process*



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### Client Information Guide

Prepared August 2026

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*This guide is for general information only and does not constitute legal advice.*

# Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Stream

## Client Information Guide – Requirements and Process

Prepared by Kabir & Alam Lawyers | August 2026

### 1. Overview

The Entrepreneur Immigration (EI) – Regional stream of the BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) is a pathway to Canadian permanent residence for entrepreneurs who establish a new business in a smaller British Columbia community, outside the Metro Vancouver Regional District. It is deliberately more accessible than the Base stream – the financial thresholds are half the Base stream's – in exchange for a genuine commitment to a participating regional community.

Two features define this stream. First, the community is a decision-maker: before you can even register, you must complete an exploratory visit to your chosen community and obtain a referral from its designated representative, who assesses whether your business concept meets a real local need. Second, the stream is for new businesses only – unlike the Base stream, purchasing an existing business does not qualify. Successful candidates come to B.C. on a work permit supported by the province, operate the business under a Performance Agreement, and are nominated for permanent residence once its terms are met.

|                                  |                                      |                                                  |                                                |                                        |                                                 |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| \$300,000                        | \$100,000                            | 3 years                                          | 1 job                                          | CLB 4                                  | <75,000                                         |
| Minimum personal net worth (CAD) | Minimum eligible personal investment | Owner-manager experience within the last 5 years | New full-time job for a Canadian citizen or PR | Minimum language level at registration | Community population; referral + visit required |

Figure 1: Core requirements at a glance.

### 2. Eligibility and Requirements

To qualify under the Regional stream, you must meet all of the following criteria:

| Requirement               | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal net worth</b> | Minimum CAD \$300,000, legally obtained and verifiable – half the Base stream's threshold. Full net worth must be disclosed and is independently verified by a BC PNP-authorized accounting firm after an invitation to apply. |

| Requirement                | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Personal investment</b> | Minimum eligible personal investment of CAD \$100,000 in the business. As with all entrepreneur streams, this is a program minimum; the capital actually required to establish and operate the business may be higher.                                                                    |
| <b>Business experience</b> | At least 3 years of experience as a business owner-manager within the last 5 years – note the Regional stream's experience window is more recent than the Base stream's.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Business type</b>       | Establish a new business in a participating community outside the Metro Vancouver Regional District with a population under approximately 75,000. Purchasing an existing business is not permitted under this stream, and the business must not fall within the ineligible business list. |
| <b>Community referral</b>  | A completed referral form from the host community's designated representative is mandatory before registration. The community reviews your concept against its local priorities and decides whether to refer you.                                                                         |
| <b>Exploratory visit</b>   | A visit to the host community is mandatory and must be completed before registration – the referral process is built around it.                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Job creation</b>        | Create at least one new full-time job for a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Language</b>            | Minimum Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level 4 in English or French, with valid test results at registration.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Immigration status</b>  | Must have, or be eligible for, legal immigration status in Canada, and be admissible under Canadian immigration law.                                                                                                                                                                      |

*The authoritative source is the BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Program Guide published on WelcomeBC.ca; requirements are assessed under the Provincial Immigration Programs Act and Regulation. Individual communities may pause intake or change their priority sectors at any time.*

## 2.1 How the community referral works

Participating communities each designate a representative who receives business concepts from prospective applicants. The process typically involves submitting your concept to the community, an initial discussion, and the mandatory in-person exploratory visit, after which the community decides whether to issue the referral. The community is assessing one question above all: does this business fill a genuine local gap? Concepts that duplicate existing local businesses, or that show little research into the community's actual market, are commonly declined at this stage – before the BC PNP ever sees the file.

## 2.2 Registration scoring

Referred candidates register through the BC PNP Online User Portal and are scored on the same 200-point framework as the Base stream, covering human capital factors and the business concept. Regional stream invitation cut-offs have historically run meaningfully lower than Base

stream cut-offs, and more remote regions of the province earn additional location points. Registration does not guarantee an invitation, and only one active BC PNP entrepreneur registration is permitted at a time.

### **3. Ineligible Businesses**

The Regional stream uses the same ineligible business list as the Base stream, including:

- Immigration-linked investment schemes, investments with a redemption option, or passive investments
- Bed and breakfasts, hobby farms, and home-based businesses
- Payday loan, cheque cashing, money changing, and cash machine businesses; pawnbrokers
- Tanning salons, DVD rental stores, coin-operated laundries, and automated car washes
- Scrap metal recycling and businesses selling used goods (unless value-added services are provided)
- Real estate development, real estate brokerage, insurance brokerage, or business brokerage
- Goods trading businesses (e.g., import/export), unless value-add is demonstrated

## 4. The Application Process, Step by Step

### BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Stream: Process Overview

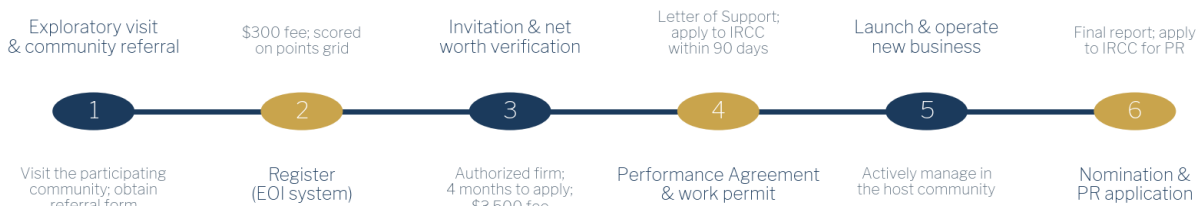


Figure 2: Process overview.

1. **Choose a community and complete the exploratory visit:** Research participating communities and their priority sectors, develop a business concept that answers a demonstrable local need, and complete the mandatory in-person visit. Meet the community's designated representative and present your concept.
2. **Obtain the community referral:** If the community is satisfied that the business would benefit the local economy, its representative completes the referral form – the gateway document for this stream.
3. **Register with the BC PNP:** Submit a registration through the Online User Portal (\$300 fee) with the referral in place. Your registration is scored, and eligible registrations enter the pool.
4. **Invitation, verification, and application:** If invited in a draw, arrange the net worth verification report from a BC PNP-authorized accounting firm and submit the complete application within four months, with a detailed business plan and the \$3,500 application fee. An interview may be required.
5. **Performance Agreement and work permit:** If approved, sign a Performance Agreement with the Province and receive a Letter of Support for a work permit. Apply to IRCC within 90 days and arrive in B.C. within 12 months of the permit being issued.
6. **Launch, operate, and report:** Establish the new business in the host community, make the qualifying investment, create the required employment, and actively manage the business day-to-day. Submit the final report demonstrating the Performance Agreement has been met (18–20 months after arrival, as under the Base stream framework).
7. **Nomination and permanent residence:** On satisfying the Agreement, you receive a Confirmation of Nomination supporting a permanent residence application to IRCC under the Provincial Nominee Class for you and your dependent family members.

## 5. Fees and Costs

| Item                                         | Cost                   |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Registration                                 | \$300                  |
| Application                                  | \$3,500                |
| Request for review                           | \$500 (non-refundable) |
| Net worth verification (authorized firm)     | Applicant's cost       |
| Travel for the mandatory exploratory visit   | Applicant's cost       |
| IRCC fees (work permit; permanent residence) | Federal fees apply     |

*Fees are paid through the BC PNP Online User Portal and are refunded only if the application is withdrawn before assessment begins.*

## 6. How This Compares to the Base Stream

British Columbia operates two entrepreneur streams for individual applicants. The key differences:

| Criteria                           | Regional Stream                                  | Base Stream            |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Net worth</b>                   | \$300,000                                        | \$600,000              |
| <b>Minimum investment</b>          | \$100,000                                        | \$200,000              |
| <b>Business location</b>           | Community under ~75,000, outside Metro Vancouver | Anywhere in B.C.       |
| <b>New business or purchase</b>    | New business only                                | Either                 |
| <b>Community referral</b>          | Mandatory                                        | Not required           |
| <b>Exploratory visit</b>           | Mandatory, before registration                   | Recommended only       |
| <b>Experience window</b>           | 3 years within last 5                            | 3 years within last 10 |
| <b>Typical invitation cut-offs</b> | Lower                                            | Higher                 |

## 7. Practical Considerations

- The community is effectively an additional decision-maker. Approach the referral process the way you would approach an investor: with a researched concept that solves a problem the community actually has. Some communities have paused entrepreneur intake during 2026, so confirm your target community is accepting concepts before booking the visit.
- Because only new businesses qualify, entrepreneurs interested in acquiring an established operation should look at the Base stream (or other provinces' succession-friendly programs) instead.

- The lower financial thresholds do not lower the documentation standard: net worth must still be fully disclosed, legally accumulated, and traceable, and is verified by an authorized accounting firm.
- Remote location earns points, but the business plan must be viable in that market – small communities punish generic concepts quickly. Budget working capital well beyond the \$100,000 minimum.
- Plan the timeline realistically: visit, referral, registration, draw, verification, application, work permit, and an operating period – the full cycle to permanent residence commonly runs two to three years or more.

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### **Important Notice**

This guide is provided for general information only and does not constitute legal advice for any specific case. It summarizes the requirements of the BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional stream as published by the Province of British Columbia (WelcomeBC.ca) as of August 2026. Program criteria, participating communities, invitation score thresholds, fees, and processing times change from time to time and should be verified against the current Entrepreneur Immigration Program Guide before any step is taken. Please contact our office to discuss how these requirements apply to your circumstances.

### **Kabir & Alam Lawyers**

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## YOUR LEGAL TEAM

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