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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2015JTST0044-000430  
March 31, 2015

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

### **Improved application process coming to BC PNP program**

VICTORIA – B.C.'s labour market and economic development priorities will be front and centre in a redesigned Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) that will help to attract the skilled workers and investment-ready entrepreneurs needed to grow our economy, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour Shirley Bond announced today.

Effective today, the B.C. government is implementing a 90-day pause on new applications to most categories of the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). The PNP will begin accepting new applications in July 2015 with an improved application process and updated program criteria.

The PNP will continue to accept applications under the Express Entry stream as well the Health Care Professional and Northeast Pilot Project categories during the temporary pause. Applications that are in the PNP application system as of March 31, 2015, will continue to be processed during the 90-day pause which runs April 1, 2015, to July 1, 2015. Ministry staff will be reaching out to applicants to communicate the details of the PNP temporary pause.

The PNP is an economic immigration program designed to attract and retain foreign workers and entrepreneurs to meet B.C. labour market and economic development needs. The program offers an accelerated pathway to permanent residency for skilled workers, qualified entrepreneurs, and their family members who intend to settle in B.C.

Recent changes to federal immigration programs, including the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Immigrant Investor Program, have increased demand for nominee programs across the country, with reforms also underway in other provinces, including Saskatchewan and Manitoba. During the pause B.C. will engage program stakeholders and undertake a PNP redesign to improve operating efficiency and better meet B.C.'s skilled labour needs in a diverse and growing economy. A redesigned program will enable the PNP to better utilize the annual nomination allocation by aligning it with B.C.'s labour market and economic development priorities.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour –**

“The PNP is an important program for B.C. and a key pathway to permanent residency for workers who want to come and live in B.C., raise a family and contribute to building our province. The redesign of the PNP and streamlined application process will support B.C.'s economic growth by attracting high-demand skilled workers and investment-ready entrepreneurs.”

“The redesigned PNP will be focused on supporting B.C.'s labour market and economic development priorities for a strong economy. The Province’s 2015 PNP allocation from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is 5,500 nominations and is over-subscribed. We continue to work with the Federal Government to secure flexibility in the number of high-demand skilled workers and investment-ready entrepreneurs we need to keep the economy diverse, strong and growing.”

A Soundcloud audio clip of Bond’s quotes can be downloaded at:

<http://ow.ly/L0oAs> and <http://ow.ly/L0oJ5>

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) is the Province’s only direct economic immigration tool for bringing in new British Columbians. It supports B.C.’s economic growth by allowing the province to nominate high-demand skilled workers and investment-ready entrepreneurs for permanent residency.
- Since the 2001 inception of the program, more than 26,000 workers and entrepreneurs have been attracted to the province through the PNP.
- Forces driving changes to the PNP include:
  - i. Economic growth and demographics
    - In 2016, B.C. hits a tipping point – fewer young people will enter the workforce than older people leaving it – B.C. needs workers.
    - A diverse, strong and growing economy like B.C.’s needs high-demand skilled workers to fill labour market gaps to keep our economy moving forward. And the whole province benefits from investment-ready entrepreneurs who support innovation and help grow family supporting jobs.
  - ii. Recent changes to the federal government’s immigration programs, including the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Immigrant Investor Program have increased the number of applications to the B.C. PNP.
- The PNP redesign will update program criteria and put in place a streamlined PNP application process to help B.C. attract the skilled workers and qualified entrepreneurs we need to grow a diverse and strong economy.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **The Provincial Nominee Program**

The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) is the Province's only direct immigration tool for bringing in new British Columbians who help keep our economy diverse, strong and growing. It supports B.C.'s economic growth by allowing the Province to nominate in-demand skilled workers and qualified investment-ready entrepreneurs for permanent residency.

### **Temporary 90-day pause on PNP applications intake**

Effective, April 1, 2015, the B.C. government is implementing a 90-day pause on new applications to most categories of the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). The PNP will begin accepting new applications July 2015 with an improved application process and updated program criteria aligned with B.C.'s labour market and economic development priorities.

During the 90-day pause the PNP will continue to accept applications under the following streams:

- All Express Entry British Columbia categories including:
  - Express Entry British Columbia – Skilled Worker
  - Express Entry British Columbia – Health Care Professional
  - Express Entry British Columbia – International Graduates
  - Express Entry British Columbia – International Post Graduates
- Skills Immigration:
  - Health Care Professional
  - Northeast Pilot Project

**PNP applications will not be accepted under other categories of Skills Immigration or the Business Immigration stream during the 90-day pause, which runs April 1, 2015, to July 1, 2015.**

Skills Immigration or Business Immigration applications will only be accepted during the temporary pause if they are post marked for delivery by March 31, 2015 or hand delivered in-person to the PNP offices by noon on March 31, 2015.

For more information on the B.C. PNP: [www.welcomebc.ca/pnp](http://www.welcomebc.ca/pnp)

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