



Caregiver Connections

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Newsletter Volume 3 Issue 1

COALITION DEMANDS LANDED STATUS WITHOUT CONDITIONS FOR CAREGIVERS

Caregiver Connections joined forces with other non-profit organizations such as Workers' Action Centre, Caregiver Action Centre, Parkdale Community Legal Services, to name a few to form the **Coalition for Change: Live-in Caregiver and Temporary Foreign Worker Programs**. The goals and objectives of the coalition is to push for changes in the temporary foreign worker program and the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) allowing workers to come as Permanent Residents instead of as temporary workers. The failure of the Federal and Provincial governments to adequately address the gaps in Canadian immigration and labour policy has led to the systemic discrimination and exploitation of migrant workers including caregivers under the LCP and others under the Temporary Foreign Workers Program

The following are the Points of Unity of the Coalition's demands:

- **A Right to Landing Status** be granted upon arrival for caregivers and other TFW; they must not be tied to one employer, be required to live-in their employer's home, or subject to further medical examination;
- **A Right to Equal Access** for all social programs, including Employment Insurance, health care, settlement services, social services and Worker's compensation;
- **A Right to a Fair Appeal Process** for caregivers and other TFW prior to pre-removal order, and a stop to deportations until this process is in place;

A right to full protection under the Provincial Employment Standards Act and Regulations currently enjoyed by Canadian Citizens and Permanent Residents, including **no fees** for any work placement

If approved, caregivers will no longer be burdened by the 24/36 months requirements before they can apply for Permanent Residence status. The option of "living-in or living-out" the employers' house will be the caregivers' choice. This will undoubtedly lessen the continuous existence of abuses surrounding the LCP. It is known that the current LCP has many loopholes for abuses and fails to protect the rights of a caregiver both as human being and as an employee.

In connections with this, the coalition is also gathering signatures from different provinces to push the above changes and recommendations .

CAREGIVER CONNECTIONS DEPICTING AN (A TO A) AIRPORT TO AIRPORT CASE AT THE COALITION RALLY

			
<p>Newly arrived caregiver being interrogated by an Immigration Officer at the Airport (<i>documents being checked</i>)</p>	<p>Immigration Officer found out that the caregiver has no real employer at all (<i>her baggage contains burden of debts and loans</i>)</p>	<p>She was sent back home without setting a foot outside the airport (<i>caregiver heading to the departure area</i>)</p>	<p>Caregiver Connections' Heroes of the Skit</p>

FACETS OF ABUSES

It is sad that some people cannot comprehend the abuses committed in the LCP and react indifferently when these are being discussed publicly. The following are the possible source of continuing abuse that a caregiver is subjected to:

FOREIGN AGENCIES

Extreme poverty drives people mostly women from developing countries to approach an agency who assures them job in Canada but for exorbitant fee. The agency provides them quasi employers who **release the caregivers upon arrival.**

EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES WITHIN CANADA

Once in Canada, after finding out that they really have no employers at all, caregivers will again be at the mercy of agencies to find employers for them. If an employer was secured, the agency, in collaboration with the employer, use several months of probationary period before they start processing the immigration papers. The caregiver, with a popular saying, “kapit sa patalim” would accept the arrangement just to have an employer in order to complete the 24/36 months LCP requirement. The sad part is if the caregiver did not pass the probationary period, the agency replaces the caregiver with another caregiver who will also be in a probationary period. Meanwhile, every probationary period will cost a caregiver months of reduction from their 24/36 LCP requirements, which if not completed would cause her to be sent back home.

EMPLOYERS

If the employer is satisfied with the services provided to them by the caregiver after months of probation, papers will be processed. In the meantime, the caregiver is already in a very critical situation due to lost months of the probationary period. Running out of time to complete the 24/36 months requirements, caregivers tend to accept any work arrangement or treatment from their employers. When employers realize how badly the caregivers depend on their employment, abuse, exploitation and threats to terminate the employment happen. The caregivers on the other hand, afraid to lose the job and not able to complete the 24/36 requirements; afraid that they will not able to send money to the family who are depending on them, have no choice but to accept anything such as:

- Accepting below the salary that was stated in the signed contract.
- Working long hours without pay - 24 hours on call
- Verbal and emotional abuse from employers and their family, physical abuse and even sexual harassments.

FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The federal and provincial governments have no mechanism in place to protect the caregiver from exploitations and abuses.

Dear Ate Nitz...

Q. *It has been almost a year since I received my Permanent residence status but until now my family has not been issued visas to come to Canada. We were processed together and when I received my Confirmation of Permanent Residence, I was told that CIC will email Manila to issue immigrant visas to my family members. I was advised by my friends not to make any follow-up at the Canadian Embassy in Manila because it will further delay the issuance of the above-mentioned document. What should I do?*

A. Usually visas are issued to family members of live-in caregivers within two to three months after receipt of Confirmation of Permanent Residence by the principal applicant in Canada. It is about time that you make a follow-up on the status of your family's immigrant visas. State in your letter the date you received your permanent residence status and attach a copy of confirmation of your permanent residence. Request for immediate issuance of their immigrant visas so they could travel to Canada and be reunited with you the soonest possible time.

Q. *My husband is in Alberta on temporary work permit and I am moving there to join him. My relatives and friends had arranged for possible employment for me under the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) and hopefully complete the requirements for permanent residence under this program. Will my 11 months of employment under LCP in Ontario be included in the twenty four months requirement? Can my husband be processed for permanent residence as my dependent in Canada?*

A. Definitely YES! LCP is a federal program which means its policies and regulations apply to all provinces in Canada except in Quebec where there are some slight differences. Ask for your Record of Employment (ROE) from your employer in Ontario and keep your Notice of Assessment for income tax you filed to Revenue Canada under this employer. Include these documents as proof of your employment in your application for permanent residence.

Regarding your husband, he can be processed for permanent residence in Canada but he has to have valid immigration status while waiting for approval.

Q. *While I was still in LCP, I fell in love with a guy and gave birth to his son. My partner and I broke up and he vanished with his promise of marriage and spousal sponsorship. I was left in the dark without any valid immigration status, with the task of having to provide for our child by myself.*

My situation turned from bad to worst when I received deportation order from CIC. They advised me to process for a Canadian passport for my child or else they will send me home without him. What should I do?

A. I don't know if you applied for permanent residence on Humanitarian and Compassionate considerations but being on deportation order that is in effect, CIC wants you to leave Canada the soonest possible time. However, for so called "humanitarian reasons", they don't want your child to be separated from you that is why they want him to have a Canadian passport so he can travel with you to your country of origin and he can come back to Canada anytime being a Canadian citizen.

You need to consult an immigration lawyer regarding your situation. Look for the nearest Legal Aid office in your area and try to apply for Legal Aid Certificate; particularly you are a mother of a Canadian born citizen.

For further assistance and information call 416-656-5778 and ask for a counselor.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



A very successful Fundraising Dance held at Scadding Court on April 28th. Thanks to the board who organized the said event.



Representatives from Caregiver Connections joined the temporary workers, various organizations and labour unions in the street to voice out changes needed in the current Employment Insurance policy.



No thunderstorm in the morning nor extreme heat in the afternoon had stopped this beaming group of cherry pickers on July 11th.

TRAININGS AND EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS

Caregiver Connections have successfully completed the second batch of the seven series Leadership and Advocacy Training which started on February 21st to May 9th, 2009. The next batch is scheduled in the Fall.

The organization will also provide workshops on office training and how to make a customized resume. Many believe they are either under qualified or overqualified for the job they are targeting and that their skills and experiences will not fit in the required two-page resume. The strategy is to customize the resume according to the qualifications required by the employer.

This is a two hour workshop focused only on preparing resumes. For more info and to register, call 416-656-5778 or contact one of the board members.

ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

CAREGIVER CONNECTIONS WILL SOON TO HAVE A NEW OFFICE!!!

Membership's Corner (an email)

Kumusta na po kayo. I printed the flyer, ibibigay ko kila Tess and Ate Jho. sila nalang po ang makaka-sama. Actually, mas naunang nag inbita yung friend ko na mag cherry picking the same date as yours. But when I read your e-mail about the cherry picking they said that they prefer to join your group.

A million thanks for the support you extended to my sister. Finally, she will receive her work permit extension in the mail in a couple of days. Most of the time I pity my sister coz' she gone through a lots of trials and challenges, wala kaming peace of mind because of her situation. Anyhow, we will always be connected with the Caregiver Connections. Your Logo is amazing, very meaningful.

Mabuhay ang Caregiver Connections!

Regards,

Gil

Membership Form:

Membership Fee: \$10.00

Name: _____

(First Name)

(Last Name)

(Initial)

Address: _____

(Street no. & name)

(Apt. No.)

(City)

(Prov.)Postal Code

Phone Numbers: _____ / _____ / _____

(Home)

(Work)

(Cell)

Email: _____

Mail it to: Caregiver Connections c/o 1 – 1843 Dufferin St., Toronto, ON., M6E 3P5