

Frequently Asked Questions on the Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC)

1. What is the reason an Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC)/OFW Clearance is required?

The OEC is proof of the legal documentation of an OFW. It serves as an exit permit to be presented to immigration authorities at the airports and to other government agencies to avail of all the incentives and privileges being afforded to OFWs. As such, the OEC affords protection to OFWs and provides access to support services and assistance programs provided by the Philippine government.

The OEC is equivalent to the OFW Clearance, which is defined in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 11641, otherwise known as the Department of Migrant Workers Act as a document issued to an OFW by the Department attesting to the regularity of his/her recruitment, documentation and registration as an OFW, which makes him/her eligible to clear immigration controls for overseas employment travel under Philippine immigration laws, and enables him/her to avail of the privileges granted to OFWs.

2. Who needs an OEC?

In general, Filipinos who are working or have active employment abroad and are not yet considered permanent residents in the host country, need to secure an OEC. This is based on the definition of OFWs provided for under Section 3.g of Republic Act 11641 to wit: refers to a Filipino who is to be engaged, is engaged, or has been engaged in remunerated activity in a country of which he or she is not an immigrant, citizen, or permanent resident or is not awaiting naturalization, recognition, or admission, whether land-based or sea-based regardless of status; excluding a Filipino engaged under a government-recognized exchange visitor program for cultural and educational purposes.

For Filipinos coming or returning to Canada, the following need to have an OEC:

- ✓ Filipinos who fall under the various special immigration programs of Canada as listed in the DMW Advisory No. 09, Series of 2024; and
- ✓ Filipinos who fall under other Canada's immigration programs not mentioned in the DMW Advisory No. 09, Series of 2024 but are holding work permits and are currently employed or to be employed. These include:
 - International students who already have Post Graduate Work Permits (PGWP)/Open Work Permits (OWP) and **are working or employed.**
 - Spouses/partners of international students who have OWP and **are working or employed.**

3. Who do not need an OEC?

The following do not need an OEC when returning to Canada:

- ✓ International students still studying or under a study permit and not yet PGWP/OWP holders, regardless if they are not working or working part-time. They will need to present their valid student permit to the Philippine Immigration officer at the airport when they return to Canada;
- ✓ International students who are awaiting the decision of their PGWP application or are already PGWPs holder but are not working or unemployed. They will need an Affidavit of Support or any document to prove thereof or any document consistent with the requirements of the Bureau of Immigration when they return to Canada;
- ✓ Spouses/partners who have Open Work Permits but are **NOT** working or are unemployed. They would need to present an Affidavit of support or any document consistent with the requirements by the Bureau of Immigration when they return to Canada; and
- ✓ Permanent Residents (PR) of Canada. They would need to show their valid PR card when returning to Canada.

4. What are the requirements and procedures for getting an OEC if you are still in Canada and going home to the Philippines for vacation or for whatever reason?

- a) Have your work documents verified by the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) Toronto if your worksite is in any of the following Provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Nunavut. The following are the requirements:
 - 1) Employment contract or Job Offer
 - 2) [Addendum to the employment contract \(link\)](#)
 - 3) Passport, Visa and Work permit
 - 4) Proof of employment (certificate of employment or 1 month pay stub)
 - 5) [Sinumpaang Salaysay \(link\)](#)
- b) Submit complete documentary requirements to MWO-Toronto for verification. You have two (2) options for filing:

Walk-in

Go to the Migrant Workers Office (MWO)-Toronto at the 2nd floor, 160 Eglinton Avenue East, Toronto, Ontario M4P 3B5 for submission and verification of complete documents. Applications will be accepted from Monday to Friday,

9:00 am to 4:00 pm, except holidays. Processing time is 1 to 2 working days upon receipt of complete documents.

Mail/Courier

Send by mail using Canada Post or any courier service to the aforesaid address. Include the payment and a self-addressed return envelope preferably an Xpresspost Canada Post envelope (regional if within Ontario and national if outside Ontario). Incomplete submissions will not be processed until applicant submits all necessary documents. Verified documents will be sent back using the self-addressed prepaid return envelope provided. Processing time is 2 to 3 working days (not including mailing time) upon receipt of complete documents.

The verification fee is CAD\$11.50 which may be paid in cash, bank draft or postal money order payable to the Migrant Workers Office.

- c) Set and get an appointment at <https://onlineservices.dmw.gov.ph>. Select the nearest Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) office in the area where you will be staying in the Philippines;
- d) Go to the chosen DMW office in the Philippines on the date of the appointment and present the verified employment contract;
- e) Once the OEC is issued, know that it is free and valid for 60 days upon date of issuance; and
- f) During your return to Canada, present the OEC with your passport to the Philippine Immigration Officer at the airport.

5. If a PGWP submits his/her employment documents to MWO Toronto for verification, will he/she be required to be an OWWA member?

Payment of OWWA membership is mandatory for insurance and social benefits coverage and should be paid during the contract verification process. If the OWWA membership is still valid during the contract verification process, worker does not need to pay the OWWA membership. However, they are advised to renew their OWWA membership 3 months before its expiration through walk-ins or by sending an email request to toronto@owwa.gov.ph. OWWA Toronto shall give instructions through email on the requirements and payment method.

OWWA membership fee is CAD\$32.00 and valid for two years upon date of payment.

6. I am already in the Philippines and was not able to have my employment documents verified by the MWO Toronto. What should I do to get an OEC?

If your worksite is in any of the following Provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Nunavut, please send an email to mwo_toronto@dmw.gov.ph for instructions.

For further queries and concerns, you may contact MWO Toronto through the following:

Telephone: (416) 975.8252

Hotline: (647) 992-7656

Email- official: mwo_toronto@dmw.gov.ph

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MWOToronto>