

## **ICCRC – What it Means to You: The Consultant**

Canada's Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism has designated the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC/the Council) as the new regulatory body for immigration consultants as of June 30, 2011.

### **Changes in Regulation**

A new regulatory body means important changes for your practice and the profession as a whole. The Council is excited to bring positive changes to the regulation of this sector. Its objective is to do so fairly and effectively, guided by the principles of accountability, transparency and good governance.

The Council is establishing a positive, proactive relationship with consultants. This will enable the Council to connect with its members, provide them with information and resources, and support them in providing the highest quality of services to their clients.

### **Accountability**

The Council is committed to operate as an organization accountable to the public, its members and stakeholders. The Council is guided by bylaws developed with this principle in mind. Members will be able to access the bylaws through the Council's website.

The Council functions as a responsible and ethical organization and is open and receptive to the needs of members and stakeholders, through various measures of transparency and accountability.

### **Transparency**

The Council has in place transparency mechanisms that will allow the public and other stakeholders to access important information on the workings and activities of the organization. Members can have access to:

- Annual Reports and audited financial statements
- Corporate records
- Schedule of Board meetings with agenda
- Summary of the Board's work after each meeting
- Compensation paid to directors, executives and top managers (while respecting privacy laws)
- Directors' fees and expenses
- Consultation documents and discussion papers prior to major decisions being taken
- Full staff listing

Annual meetings will be held in person (with the option to attend online). This will allow all members to participate and will offer members the possibility to raise issues and provide increased transparency.

### **Good Governance**

All members of the Board of Directors will be elected and held accountable to members. The election will be monitored by external scrutineers, and members will have access to a report on this process. The option to run for election as a Director will be open to all members in good standing.

The Council is currently guided by a Board of Directors and a President and CEO representing all aspects of the industry, with significant experience in immigration and governance.

At the first General Meeting, the members will elect a regionally representative Board of Directors. This meeting will be held no later than March 31, 2012. The Board will consist of fifteen directors, including three Public Interest Directors. The three Public Interest Directors will be nominated by organizations outside of the industry that have a background in consumer protection.

The geographical representation for the remaining twelve elected directors will be:

- Ontario: 4
- Québec: 2
- Western Canada: 4
- Other: 2

### **Fairness**

The Council will work hard to gain the respect of the consultant community, and we understand that this means treating members with respect. The Council has put in place fair and effective protocols for interacting with members.

Compliance audits, complaints and discipline processes and administrative dealings with members will be clear and straightforward. Audits will be done with a goal to help and provide support to members to remedy issues they may have with their practice. All complaints will be handled expeditiously to ensure a fast resolution while preserving consumer protection.

To learn more about membership application procedures, audits and the Complaints and Discipline process, please refer to our "*Consultants' Guide to ICCRC.*"

## **Advancing the Profession**

One of the Council's objectives is to gain public confidence in immigration practice by continually advancing the profession. The Council is working hard on communication and outreach initiatives designed to inform and educate the public and other stakeholders about the work being done by Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants.

The Council will also provide best practice resources, support mechanisms for new and established members, and communication tools to promote member competence and integrity. The Council will be investigating further measures to advance the profession.

The Council welcomes ideas and involvement from members regarding the future of the profession and will soon put in place feedback and input mechanisms to allow for better communication between members and with the regulator.

The Council is committed to establishing the Office of the Ombudsman within the first year. The Ombudsman will provide assistance to members who may be having difficulties in dealing with the Council.