

BY EMAIL: dory.jade@capic.ca

May 13, 2022

Mr. Dory Jade, C. Dir.
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Association of Professional
Immigration Consultants

John Murray
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Dear Dory:

Re: Specialization Program

Thank you for your letter of May 6, 2022, setting out concerns raised by CAPIC members with the College's Specialization Program, and providing recommendations to address these concerns.

Background: Licensees of the College who practice before the adjudicative tribunals of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (collectively, the IRB), must successfully complete the Specialization Program in order to continue to represent clients before the IRB after July 1, 2022. The need for additional training for Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs) who practice before the IRB was identified by the House of Commons Committee on Citizenship and Immigration in its Report 11: *Starting Again: Improving Government Oversight of Immigration Consultants* (June 2017) and the development of the Specialization Program was undertaken, in consultation with the IRB, to address this need.

Specialization Program: The Specialization Program focuses on competency areas specific to IRB practice. RCICs wishing to complete the Specialization Program are offered three pathways: (1) PLAR Pathway – experienced RCICs may provide portfolio documents for assessment which demonstrate competence in each area; (2) Education Pathway – less experienced RCICs may complete 5 educational modules offered by the College to obtain the necessary training in each competency area; or (3) Hybrid Pathway – RCICs with experience in certain competency areas may have those areas assessed through the PLAR Pathway and complete training in remaining areas through completing the appropriate module(s) of the Education Pathway. All RCICs enrolled in the Specialization Program must complete the final Specialization Exam (Exam).

CAPIC Recommendations:

(1) Open more Exam slots with faster release of results: Each Exam sitting will accommodate several hundred candidates. The first Exam was offered on May 6, 2022. We expect results to be released on or about May 24, 2022. The second Exam is scheduled for June 8, 2022. We expect the results to be made available before June 30, 2022. Additional Exams will be scheduled in September and December 2022, likely coordinated with scheduled sittings of the College's Entry-to-practice Exams. I note that, as part of the development process, we surveyed RCICs and

used annual renewal data obtained in 2020. This indicated that approximately 900 licensees practiced or intended to practice before the IRB. The Specialization Program, as launched in August 30 of 2021, was specifically designed to ensure that this number of RCICs, could be accommodated in PLAR, hybrid, and educational cohorts and Exam sittings prior to the July 1, 2022, deadline.

(2) Improve proactive communications with RCICs: Communications regarding the need for RCICs to complete the Specialization Program began in December 2020 and have continued regularly. We will continue to provide updated information on our website, in the Bulletin, and through direct e-blasts to RCICs enrolled in the Specialization Program whenever new information becomes available.

(3) Integrate the Specialization Program into the Graduate Diploma in Immigration and Citizenship Law offered by the Faculty of Law, Queen's University and the D.E.S.S. en réglementation canadienne et québécoise de l'immigration offered by the Faculty of Law, Université de Montreal: Specialization Program educational content is already integrated into these programs – RCICs who are graduates of these diploma programs do not have to complete the Specialization Program.

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Thank you again for your letter. We appreciate CAPIC's good work advocating on behalf of Canadian immigration consultants and look forward to continuing to dialogue on these and other enhancements to the profession.

Sincerely,



John Murray