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# Q

**As a Canadian professional can I work in the United States?**

# A

The North American Free Trade Agreement (“NAFTA”) in Appendix 16 has provided for professional status allowing Canadian citizens to work in the United States to render professional services. This includes two situations, the first where a professional is working on behalf of a professional firm and the second where a professional is rendering services directly to a client in the United States. The entity for which the professional is rendering services must be a United States entity. This includes individuals, partnerships, joint ventures and corporations. The services to be provided must be at the professional level. Appendix 16 to NAFTA provides a list of designated professionals ranging from Architects to Librarians. The list is quite comprehensive with more than 50 professional occupations listed. To qualify for this work status an individual must be a Canadian citizen, possess a Bachelors Degree related to their profession and be rendering services at a professional level.

Additionally, there are some professional occupations listed which require a post secondary diploma and years of experience. Depending upon the duration of the work professionals may be authorized to work for a period of one year up to three years. There is no limit on the number of extensions an individual may apply for. This is nonimmigrant status which means that at the end of the individual’s stay in the United States they have an intention to return to their home country. Pursuant to NAFTA as a Canadian citizen an individual is able to apply at a Port of Entry and receive adjudication of the application on the spot. This provides a speedy avenue to obtain status is the United States for professionals.



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