



## Citizenship and Immigration Canada Restores the Federal Immigrant Investor Program

by Catherine Longo

Originally published in *Blaneys on Immigration Law* (March 2011)

Catherine Longo is an articling student at Blaney McMurtry. She is a graduate of Queen's Law School, and holds a Bachelor of Social Science Honours degree in International Studies and Modern Languages from the University of Ottawa. While at Queen's, Catherine was involved in student government, serving two years as VP of Activities of the Law Student's Society.

Catherine may be reached directly at 416.593.7221 ext. 4447 or [clongo@blaney.com](mailto:clongo@blaney.com).

On November 10, 2010, Citizenship and Immigration Canada ("CIC") published regulations in the Canada Gazette, which restored the Canadian Federal Immigrant Investor Program ("IIP"); these regulations came into force on December 1, 2010. Under the revised IIP, investors are now required to have a personal net worth of \$1.6 million CAD and to invest \$800,000 CAD. The regulatory amendments modify the definitions of "Investor" and "Investment" under R88(1) to reflect these new values.

A moratorium on the IIP had been in place since June 26, 2010, when the Federal Government first proposed changes to the program's personal net worth and investment criteria. Prior to that date, investors were only required to have a personal net worth of \$800,000 CAD and to make an investment of \$400,000 CAD.

The previous personal net worth and investment levels were initially established in 1999. CIC explained that a net worth of \$800,000 CAD in 1999 was considered substantial enough to attract applicants with the financial wherewithal and expertise to make a significant positive economic contribution to Canada. However, due to increasing global wealth, it now believed that a net worth of \$800,000 was within easy reach of a modest property owner in a large city, who may not have other transferable resources as originally envisioned. In addition, CIC stated that most other countries with similar programs now required an investment closer to \$1 Million CAD. The recent changes were designed to update the IIP and align it with similar programs in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States as well as decrease wait times for processing applications.

Under the IIP, the required investment is a five-year, zero interest loan to the Government of Canada. These funds are distributed to participating provinces and territories to fund economic development and job creation initiatives in their regions. The investor is granted permanent residence status and repayment of the loan is guaranteed by the recipient province or territory. British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Northwest Territories currently participate in the IIP. However, other provinces and territories have expressed an interest in participating as well. ■