

# Department of Immigration - POLICY

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**CONTACT:** Corporate Services Manager  
**POLICY NAME:** *Work Permit Holders' Competency with the English Language*

## ***Work Permit Holders' Competency with the English Language***

### ***1.0 PURPOSE***

1.1 While it is appreciated that employers in a number of industries are finding it more and more difficult to recruit from English-speaking countries, it is unacceptable to have foreigners serving persons, whether it is in a restaurant, a hotel or a rest home, who cannot communicate effectively in English. It is dangerous in a job where one has to also read prescriptions or the labels of dangerous chemicals. Consequently, the following policy is being put into effect.

### ***2.0 JOB CATEGORIES AFFECTED***

2.1 The job categories that are being targeted by the new policy are those in industries where the job holder interacts with the public or in jobs where lives could be threatened if the person cannot speak or read English, namely:

- 2.1.1 Restaurant workers: pot washer; cook; waiter
- 2.1.2 Hotel workers: cleaner/houseman
- 2.1.3 Health professionals: physician; nurse; nursing aide; physiotherapist; occupational therapist; radiological technician; social worker
- 2.1.4 Caregivers in nursing jobs: nursemaid/nanny

### ***3.0 POLICY TEXT***

3.1 For workers in the above categories from countries where English is not the first language, a condition is placed on the work permit stating:

“APPROVED SUBJECT TO HOLDER POSSESSING A WORKING  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE”.

3.2 The employer is required to determine that the person who enters Bermuda with the stated condition on the work permit has a working knowledge of the English language. Each employer will make his own internal arrangements for determining whether the person complies with the work permit condition with respect to English.

3.3 The policy cannot be policed by the Department of Immigration proactively without incurring great expense in time, money and manpower. The department will therefore only react to complaints from members of the general public that individual work permit holders cannot speak English. When such a complaint is received the individual will be brought into the Department of Immigration and given an English language test. If the person cannot understand and speak English, then the employer will be told that the work permit is rescinded and the person will be returned to his place of origin at the employers' expense including any charges for escorts.