

Hint — Now is the time to get some professional health information about conditions at the mission. Many of the EIC doctors have themselves been posted to unhealthy places and are more than willing to share their expertise.

Hint — Do you have a record of your, and your family's, vaccinations against measles, mumps, diphtheria? Check the need for any of these with the examining physician and/or your family doctor/paediatrician.

Hint — Will you need any prescription drugs while living abroad? Ask the EIC doctor about their availability. Include copies of your prescriptions with the important papers you will be taking along. If necessary, perhaps a letter summarizing or enclosing your medical history can be prepared by your family doctor.

Hint — The pre-posting medical does not include a specialist eye examination. Take an extra pair of corrective lenses to the mission for each family member needing them. Keep copies of your lens prescriptions. Consider prescription sunglasses if you are going to the tropics.

## 1.8 Starting Your Foreign Language Training

Do you know how to speak Arabic, Mandarin, Italian, Spanish, Greek, or Swahili? Do you need to learn a foreign language for your next posting?

Preparing for a posting often does include acquiring some skills in a foreign language. Foreign language training is provided so as to achieve the following:

1. To enable the employee to attain the language proficiency level (elementary, intermediate or advanced) required by the duties of the position he or she will occupy. This training is normally planned by the assignment officer to enable the employee to reach the required level before being posted. Depending on the level and complexity of the language being studied, the trainee may need from 8 to 24 weeks to reach the elementary level, from 16 to 44 weeks for the intermediate level, and from 24 to 96 weeks for the advanced level. An intensive two-year training program is given in some languages. Language training begun in the pre-posting period may be continued at the mission during the initial years of the assignment.
2. To help employees and their spouses to integrate socially in the foreign environment. The training is taken voluntarily and enables one to attain a basic level. It may take place either before or during the first years of the assignment. Depending on the complexity of the language being studied, the training can last up to 16 weeks.
3. To provide the spouse who will be performing representational duties with language training to the intermediate level before the posting. If not completed before departure, this training continues for the first years of the posting.

Upon receiving confirmation of his or her posting, the employee is invited to meet with the assignment officer in order to determine the training needs and to establish a training plan. The training plan will specify the training needs that employees and their spouses have in connection with their posting, and will determine how they might best achieve a given level of language skill. The assignment officer will send the plan to the Language School at the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI), which will determine, in discussion with the employee, how the plan will be carried out, and will organize the required courses.

The employee may take courses in the National Capital Region (NCR). If the employee fails to attain the required level before departure, training will continue at the mission; the same rules apply to employees transferred laterally, who receive their training at the mission they are leaving.

For additional information concerning the guidelines and procedures related to training, contact the Language School at the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI).

Hint — French and English as a second language are not foreign languages. Spouses of rotational employees may attend French or English classes when they are in Ottawa. Applications should be forwarded to an Official Language Training Advisor at CFSI. When such training is required when