



18 December 2025

IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND INSTRUCTIONS: Amendment Circular No. 2025-45
AMENDMENTS TO THE IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND OPERATIONAL MANUAL

Introduction

This circular outlines changes to immigration instructions. A copy of the amended instructions is attached.

All immigration officers dealing with immigration applications should read the amendments and operate in accordance with the amended instructions from the effective date.

Note

The amendments described in this circular will be published in the Immigration New Zealand Operational Manual in due course.

Information about these changes is available on our website www.immigration.govt.nz.

Description of changes

C8.5 Definition of mass arrivals and associated terms

E6.5 Acceptable sponsors

E3.15 Conditions to which holders of temporary entry class visas are subject

R5.65.1 Resident visas subject to conditions

Changes have been made to immigration instructions to:

- Update the definition of mass arrival group to align with the definition in the Immigration Act (2009) as amended by the Immigration (Fiscal Sustainability and System Integrity) Amendment Act 2025.
- Clarify when being subject to conditions under s49(1)(a) or s50 of the Immigration Act 2009 does not exclude someone from being an eligible sponsor.
- Remove reference to conditions related to the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020 which was repealed on 26 November 2024.

These changes came into effect on 14 December 2025.

WA4.10.1 Requirements for the employment offered

Changes have also been made to immigration instructions to adjust the minimum requirements for employment evidence provided with an Accredited Employer Work Visa application. This change came into effect on 15 December 2025.

Appendix 1: Amendments to Temporary Entry instructions effective from 14 December 2025

C8.5 Definition of mass arrivals and associated terms

See also Immigration Act 2009 ss 9A; 115

C8.5.1 Definition of a mass arrival group

- a. For the purposes of immigration instructions, a “mass arrival group” is defined as a group of more than 30 people, each of whom is a person who falls under D4.20.1 and who arrived in New Zealand on board the same:
 - i. craft; or
 - ii. group of craft at the same time; or
 - iii. group of craft and within such a time period or in such circumstances that each person arrived, or intended to arrive, in New Zealand as part of the same group.
- b. For the purposes of C8.5.1(a), the term “craft” includes aircraft, ships, or other vehicle or vessel travelling to New Zealand in the course of a scheduled international service.
- c. A group of people arriving on board a group of aircraft are a mass arrival group under C8.5.1(a) if the aircraft arrive within the same 24-hour time period.

Appendix 2: Amendments to Temporary Entry instructions effective from 14 December 2025

E6.5 Acceptable sponsors

See also *Immigration Act 2009*, ss 4, 48, 49, 55

- a. Whether sponsorship is required for any type of temporary entry class application will be determined in immigration instructions for that type of application (see V2.20 and V2.25 for visitors, U3.20 and U3.25 for students, W2.15, W2.20, WM3 and WR2.15 for workers, and H8).
- b. A sponsor for a temporary entry class application must be deemed acceptable by the Minister of Immigration or an immigration officer.
- c. An acceptable sponsor must either be a natural person, an organisation, or a government agency (including Crown entities and State Owned Enterprises), defined as follows:
 - i. a natural person must be a New Zealand citizen or the holder of a current residence class visa that is not subject to conditions, other than conditions relating to travel, under section 49(1)(a) or section 50 of the Immigration Act 2009; or
 - ii. an organisation must be registered in New Zealand as a company, incorporated society or charitable trust; or
 - iii. a government agency must be a government department named in Schedule 1 of the State Sector Act 1988, or a Crown entity as defined in section 7(1) of the Crown Entities Act 2004.
- d. Whether natural persons, organisations or government agencies can sponsor a specific type of application will be determined in immigration instructions for that type of application.
- e. A sponsor who is not a natural person must nominate an individual as the authorised contact for the purpose of sponsorship.
- f. All acceptable sponsors must:
 - i. provide written undertakings for the maintenance, the accommodation, and the cost of deportation or repatriation of the applicant (see E6.15); and
 - ii. meet any other sponsorship requirements specified in the relevant immigration instructions (if any).
- g. It is a matter for the absolute discretion of the Minister of immigration or the immigration officer whether a person (or organisation or government agency) is acceptable as a sponsor, and no appeal lies against their decision, whether to any court, the Tribunal, the Minister of Immigration, or otherwise.

Note: for the purpose of sponsorship requirements, Crown entities as defined in section 7(1) of the Crown Entities Act 2004 include Crown agents, autonomous Crown entities and independent Crown entities, Crown entity companies, Crown entity subsidiaries, school boards of trustees, and tertiary institutions.

E3.15 Conditions to which holders of temporary entry class visas are subject

See also *Immigration Act 2009* ss 48, 49, 52, 77

a. The holder of a temporary entry class visa may:

- i. visit New Zealand consistent with the conditions of the visa, for any lawful purpose; or

Examples: Holidaying, sightseeing, family and social visits, amateur sport, business consultations, undergoing medical treatment.

- ii. work in New Zealand, or within the exclusive economic zone of New Zealand, only if the conditions of the visa allow, and only consistently with those conditions; or
- iii. study in New Zealand, only if the conditions of the visa allow, and only consistently with those conditions; or
- iv. undertake the express purpose for which they were approved to travel to New Zealand, and only consistently with the express purpose conditions, if granted a limited visa.

b. An interim visa holder may work, study or visit only as authorised by the terms or conditions of their interim visa.

c. Subject to any special direction to the contrary, every visitor, work and interim and limited visa that is not an interim or limited visa granted for the purpose of study, is subject to the following conditions:

- i. at all times during the currency of the visa to be in New Zealand, the holder has sufficient funds available for the holder's maintenance in New Zealand, or a current approved sponsorship undertaking (see E6); and
- ii. at all times during the currency of the visa to be in New Zealand, the holder has the means to travel to a country to which the holder has a right of entry, such means to be in the form of:
 - o a fully paid travel ticket to any such country; or
 - o sufficient funds held in New Zealand by or on behalf of or in trust for the holder to purchase any such ticket; or
 - o a current approved sponsorship (see E6).

d. Every temporary entry class visa is subject to the condition that the holder comply with:

- i. any order made under section 70 of the Health Act 1956; and
- ii. any instruction from a Medical Officer of Health which relates to a notifiable or quarantinable disease.

e. Despite E7.10(a)(ii), (d) above applies to all visas granted (including in an immigration control area) on and after 18 March 2020.

Note: A notifiable or quarantinable disease is any disease referred to in Part 1 and Part 3, respectively, of Schedule 1 of the Health Act 1956.

E7.30 Approving an application

See also Immigration Act 2009 s 43

- a. Applications for temporary entry class visas or entry permission may be approved if the immigration officer is satisfied that:
 - i. the applicant has provided the evidence required by immigration instructions, and any additional evidence requested by the immigration officer; and
 - ii. the applicant meets the requirements of the relevant temporary entry immigration instructions as well as applicable generic temporary entry instructions; and
 - iii. if the applicant is offshore, there is no reason to believe that the applicant would be refused entry permission, if the visa is granted (see E7.1(c)-(e)).

Appendix 3: Amendments to Residence instructions effective on and after 14 December 2025

R5.30 Approving an application

Applications for a residence class visa must be approved if the immigration officer is satisfied that:

- a. the applicant has provided all evidence required by the applicable residence instructions, and any additional evidence requested by the immigration officer; and
- b. the applicant meets applicable residence instructions including the requirements of health and character.

R5.30.1 Approving an application for a resident visa made at an immigration control area by holders of current Australian permanent residence visas, current Australian resident return visas or valid Australian passports

- a. People who hold current Australian permanent residence visas, current Australian resident return visas or valid Australian passports may be granted resident visas on arrival in New Zealand, provided they have not been excluded under sections 15 or 16 of the Immigration Act 2009 (see A5.20).
- b. If sections 15 or 16 apply, a resident visa may be granted only in accordance with a special direction made under section 17 (see RA7).

Note: A resident visa granted to an Australian passport holder will be an electronic record held by INZ. If an Australian passport holder requires evidence of their resident status in New Zealand, they may apply for a confirmation of a residence class visa (R7).

R5.65.1 Resident visas subject to conditions

See also Immigration Act 2009 ss 49, 50, 55

- a. When a principal applicant is granted a resident visa subject to conditions, the resident visas of any accompanying partner and dependent child will be subject to the condition that "the principal applicant comply with the conditions of the principal applicant's visa".
- b. For applications based on partnership, or dependent child relationships, any applicant who is supported by a person whose resident visa is subject to conditions at the time the sponsorship was undertaken or support was given, will be granted a resident visa subject to the condition that "[name of supporter] comply with the requirements of [his or her] visa".
- c. Every resident visa, except for a second or subsequent resident visa granted under RV4, is subject to the condition that the holder comply with:
 - i. any order made under section 70 of the Health Act 1956; and
 - ii. any instruction from a Medical Officer of Health which relates to a notifiable or quarantinable disease.
- d. The visa condition in (c) above applies for a period of three months from:
 - i. the date that the visa was granted, where the visa was granted in New Zealand; or
 - ii. the date that the holder was first granted entry permission on the basis of the visa, where the visa was granted outside New Zealand.

Note: A notifiable or quarantinable disease is any disease referred to in Part 1 and Part 3, respectively, of Schedule 1 of the Health Act 1956.

Appendix 4: Amendments to Temporary Entry instructions effective on and after 15 December 2025

WA4.10 Determining an Accredited Employer work visa

- a. An immigration officer may grant an Accredited Employer work visa if they are satisfied that the applicant:
 - i. meets the generic work visa requirements for applicants at W2.10.1; and
 - ii. holds an offer of employment that meets the requirements at WA4.10.1; and
 - iii. is suitably qualified by training and experience to do the job they have been offered, as set out at WA4.10.5 and meet the minimum skills threshold as set out at WA4.10.6; and
 - iv. has not exceeded a maximum continuous stay period as set out at WA4.11.1; and
 - v. has a job token that has not been used to approve another Accredited Employer work visa application, unless that work visa has been varied to allow the visa holder to work for a different employer or the job token has been reused as set out at WA4.10.20; and
 - vi. meets a minimum standard of English language at WA4.12 for roles assessed at the Job Check as ANZSCO level 4 or 5, unless the application is for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa or a Peak Seasonal Visa.
- b. If there is information that indicates the employer may no longer meet the requirements of their accreditation, an immigration officer may postpone making a decision on the application until the employer is determined to meet the requirements, or until the employer's accreditation is revoked ([WA2.55](#)).
- c. If the employer's accreditation is suspended, an immigration officer may postpone making a decision on the application until the suspension ends.
- d. If the employer's accreditation expires or is revoked, an immigration officer may decline the application.
- e. Applicants who hold a work visa with remuneration as a condition of that visa, may be required to provide evidence of their remuneration payment, such as an Inland Revenue income summary and bank statements.
- f. If the application is for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa or a Peak Seasonal Visa, an immigration officer must be satisfied that the applicant meets:
 - i. the requirements for an Accredited Employer work visa set out at WA4.10(a) to (e) above; and
 - ii. any requirements that are specific to the relevant seasonal visa applied for, including any specific requirements for:
 - o employment offered (WA4.10.1); and
 - o the applicant to be suitably qualified (WA4.10.5) where relevant; and
 - o the minimum skills threshold (WA4.10.6); and
 - o the maximum continuous stay period (WA4.11.2); and
 - o health and character (WA4.13.1); and
 - o medical insurance (WA4.13.2) where relevant.

WA4.10.1 Requirements for the employment offered

- a. The offer of employment must be genuine (refer to WA3.30.1) and **evidence provided with the application must** include the following information:
 - i. name of the employer; and
 - ii. name of the person to whom the job is offered; and
 - iii. **details of the job** including:
 - o the job title or designation; and
 - o **the location of employment; and**
 - o the type of work, duties and responsibilities involved; and
 - o details of pay and conditions of employment; and
 - o the hours of work; and
 - o the duration of the job.
- b. The offer of employment must be from an accredited employer (as defined at [WA2.60.1](#)).
- c. The following details of the employment offered must be the same as those approved as part of the Job Check application:
 - i. the location of the job; and
 - ii. the occupation; and
 - iii. the hours of work (the minimum guaranteed hours of work must not be less, and the maximum hours must not be more, than those approved as part of the Job Check application); and
 - iv. the remuneration (the remuneration must be within the range approved as part of the Job Check application unless an exception under WA4.10.3 below applies); and
 - v. the direct employer (as defined at WA2.60.5).
- d. All other terms and conditions of the employment offered (for example leave entitlements, notice periods and absence of a trial provision) must be the same as, or more favourable to the applicant than, those declared or provided (if applicable) as part of the Job Check application.
- e. The employment must continue to meet all other requirements for acceptable employment as specified at WA3.15.5 and WA3.15.10, in effect at the time the Accredited Employer work visa application is made.

- f. INZ will decline an application for a work visa where it considers that the employment was offered as a result of payment made or promised by the applicant (or their agent) to the employer (or their agent) in exchange for securing that offer of employment.
- g. When assessing whether the employment offered meets the requirements at (d) and (f) above:
 - i. an immigration officer may accept the declaration or other information provided in the Job Check application; and
 - ii. an immigration officer may request and review further evidence if they are not satisfied that these requirements are met; and
 - iii. despite the requirement to determine applications for temporary entry in accordance with the instructions in effect at the time the application is made (E7.10(a)(ii)), an Accredited Employer work visa application may be determined in accordance with the instructions at (g)(i) and (ii) above if the application was made before 20 November 2024 and has not been decided.
- h. Despite WA4.10.1(d), an immigration officer may approve an application where the duration of employment offered differs from the length of employment declared or provided (if applicable) in the Job Check application, if the application is for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa or a Peak Seasonal Visa.
- i. The offer of employment must cover at least one season of employment for the first season if the application is for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa.
- j. An immigration officer must be satisfied that the employment offered is genuinely seasonal if the application is for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa or a Peak Seasonal Visa.
- k. When determining whether the employment offered is genuinely seasonal, an immigration officer may consider whether the period of employment offered is for the part of the year during peak activity for the industry.
- l. When determining whether the offer of employment is genuine (see WA4.10.1(a) and WA3.30.1), an immigration officer may request and review further information such as (but not limited to) evidence showing how long the job offer is open.

WA4.10.3 When the remuneration in the job offer may differ from the remuneration approved in the Job Check

Despite WA4.10.1(c)(iv), an immigration officer may approve an application when the remuneration in the employment offered is not the same as the Job Check application if the remuneration in the employment offered is:

- a. less than the remuneration approved at Job Check stage and:
 - i. the Job Check was submitted on or before 9 March 2025; and
 - ii. the remuneration offered is not less than the New Zealand market rate for that occupation as required by WA3.15.5(b); or
- b. more than the remuneration approved at Job Check stage because the current minimum wage is higher than the rate advertised at the time of the Job Check; or
- c. more than the remuneration approved at the Job Check stage and the applicant is re-using a Job Check number as described in WA4.10.20.

WA4.10.5 Determining whether an applicant is suitably qualified to do the job they have been offered

- a. An applicant is suitably qualified to do the job they have been offered if they have the qualifications, work experience, skills and other specifications that were listed by the employer, in the Job Check application, as the minimum requirements for the job.
- b. If the employment offered is for an occupation that is on the Green List, an applicant is suitably qualified if:
 - i. they meet (a) above; or
 - ii. they meet the current requirements on the list for that occupation ([Appendix 13](#)).
- c. If the application is for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa, an applicant is suitably qualified if they meet WA4.10.6(b) below.
- d. Despite [W2.10.1\(b\)\(i\)](#), an immigration officer may accept that an applicant has the minimum qualifications, work experience, skills or other specifications required for the job, without the applicant providing evidence of those specifications, where:
 - i. an immigration officer has already assessed and accepted them as part of a previous application; or
 - ii. the applicant holds evidence of full or provisional occupational registration for the job they have been offered, where the specifications were required to obtain that registration.

WA4.10.6 Determining whether an applicant meets the minimum skills threshold

- a. An applicant who is applying for a regular AEWV meets the minimum skills threshold if an immigration officer is satisfied that they:
 - i. can demonstrate two years or more of relevant work experience with sufficient evidence from a third party; or
 - ii. have a relevant qualification at Level 4 or higher on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF).
- b. An applicant who is applying for a Global Workforce Seasonal Visa meets the minimum skills threshold if an immigration officer is satisfied that they can demonstrate three seasons or more of relevant work experience which was gained in the six years immediately before the date the application is made.

- c. An applicant who is applying for a Peak Seasonal Visa meets the minimum skills threshold if an immigration officer is satisfied that they can demonstrate one season or more of relevant work experience which was gained in the three years immediately before the date the application is made.
- d. For the purposes of WA4.10.6(b) and (c), a season of relevant work experience refers to time spent across one or multiple years to equal a full period of the season duration for the industry.
- e. Despite the requirement to determine applications for temporary entry in accordance with the instructions in effect at the time the application is made (E7.10(a)(ii)), an AEWV application submitted but undecided as at 9 March 2025 should be assessed in accordance with WA4.10.6(a)(i) above, rather than the instruction that was in effect when the application was made.
- f. A qualification or work experience can be considered to be relevant if it is in the same field or industry as the job offered.
- g. Qualifications that are Bachelor's degrees or higher can be considered relevant to any employment offered.
- h. Evidence of relevant work experience from a third party may include, but is not limited to:
 - i. letters of reference from an employer; or
 - ii. certificates of employment; or
 - iii. payslips; or
 - iv. tax certificates.

Note: For the avoidance of doubt, a curriculum vitae is not sufficient unless it is provided with supporting documentation not written by the applicant that satisfies an immigration officer.

- i. Evidence of a qualification at Level 4 or higher on the NZQCF must include:
 - i. a copy of the qualification certificate awarded to the applicant specifying the qualification type and awarding institution; and
 - ii. an NZQA assessment (International Qualification Assessment (IQA)) provided with the application, if the qualification was gained outside of New Zealand and is not a Level 7 Bachelor's degree or higher.
- j. Despite WA4.10.6(a), (b), and (c) an applicant can be considered to meet the minimum skills threshold if:
 - i. the employment offered is for an occupation that is on the Green List and they meet the current requirements on the list for that occupation ([Appendix 13](#)); or
 - ii. the employment offered has a proposed remuneration of twice the median wage (\$67.12) or higher.
- k. An immigration officer may accept that the applicant meets the minimum skills threshold, without the applicant providing evidence, where:
 - i. an immigration officer has already assessed and accepted them as part of a previous application; or
 - ii. the applicant holds evidence of full or provisional occupational registration for the job they have been offered, where the specifications were required to obtain that registration.
- l. An applicant is exempt from meeting the minimum skills threshold if an immigration officer is satisfied that:
 - i. the applicant holds a valid Accredited Employer work visa in a tourism and hospitality occupation listed under appendix 14 that expires on or before 31 March 2025 and is applying for a further visa for the same role; or
 - ii. the applicant holds a valid Accredited Employer work visa under the care workforce sector agreement (see Appendix 14) that was granted between 4 July 2022 and 23 November 2023 (inclusive) in a role that was paid at least \$26.16 per hour and is applying for a further one-year duration visa for the same role.

Note: For the purpose of the instructions under (l)(i) and (l)(ii) directly above, employment in the 'same role' allows for employment with a different employer and/or in a different location.

WA4.10.15 Requirements for dependents of Accredited Employer work visa holders

See also *Immigration Act 2009* s 49(1)(b)

- a. Accredited Employer work visa holders who wish to support their partner's visa application must meet the requirements specified in:
 - i. WF3.1.5 for a special work visa, or
 - ii. V3.10.1 for a visitor visa.
- b. Accredited Employer work visa holders who wish to support their dependent child's visa application must meet the requirements specified in:
 - i. U8.20.2 for a student visa, or
 - ii. V3.10.1 for a visitor visa.
- c. Accredited Employer work visa holders who wish to support their dependent child's visitor or student visa application must meet the minimum income threshold. The visa holder's dependent child will be assessed against criteria set out in [U8.20.6](#) or [V3.10.10](#).
- d. Parents holding Accredited Employer work visas may be liable for deportation if the dependent child's visa application is declined under these instructions and the dependent child becomes unlawful.

- e. It will be a condition of the dependent child's visa and the parent/s visa(s) that the parent/s must maintain the minimum income threshold for the duration of their dependent child's visa. If the threshold is not maintained the parent/s and child may be liable for deportation.
- f. Global Workforce Seasonal Visa and Peak Seasonal Visa holders are not eligible to support an application for their partner or dependent child.

Notes:

- Where both parents hold Accredited Employer work visas (or Accredited Employer and Essential Skills work visas), their incomes may be combined to meet the minimum income threshold.
- The minimum income threshold excludes employment-related allowances (for example tool or uniform allowances) and must be calculated on the basis of no more than 40 hours' work per week

WA4.10.20 Subsequent applications re-using a job token

- a. A subsequent application for an Accredited Employer work visa (AEWV) from an AEWV holder can be granted if it is made on the basis of the job token they most recently used (whether the job token was used for an AEWV application or for a Job Change application) and if the application for the AEWV the applicant currently holds was made on or before 9 March 2025.
- b. Despite (a), a subsequent application for an AEWV made on the basis of the most recently used Job Check number cannot be granted where the application for the AEWV the applicant currently holds was for one of the following occupations and where the rate of pay was below \$29.66:
 - i. Meat process worker (831311)
 - ii. Seafood process worker (831313)
 - iii. Snowsport Instructor (452314)
 - iv. Mountain or Glacier Guide (452214)
 - v. Snow Groomer (721999)
 - vi. Outdoor Adventure Instructor (452215)
 - vii. Outdoor Adventure Guides nec (452299)
 - viii. Whitewater Rafting Guide (452217)
 - ix. Parachute Rigger (399999)
 - x. Ski Technician (399999)
 - xi. Snow Maker (712999)
- c. A subsequent Accredited Employer work visa may only be granted under these instructions if the offer of employment is made by an accredited employer and the following details of the employment offered in the current application are the same as the conditions of employment upon which the applicant's current Accredited Employer work visa was based:
 - i. the location of the job; and
 - ii. the occupation; and
 - iii. the remuneration (the remuneration must be no less than the remuneration specified in the conditions); and
 - iv. the direct employer (as defined at WA2.60.5).
- d. Despite the requirement to determine applications for temporary entry in accordance with the instructions in effect at the time an application is made ([E7.10\(a\)\(iii\)](#)), the requirements at (a) to (c) above apply to any subsequent AEWV application that was submitted on or before 9 March 2025 and not decided by that date.

Note: For the avoidance of doubt, a subsequent application for an Accredited Employer work visa with a re-used job token must meet the requirements at WA4.10 in effect at the time the application is made.