



29 May 2026

IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND INSTRUCTIONS: Amendment Circular No. 2026-15
AMENDMENTS TO THE IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND OPERATIONAL MANUAL

Introduction

This circular outlines changes to administrative 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

A15.5 Delegation of Powers: Minister of Immigration to Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment immigration officers – Immigration New Zealand and Te Whakatairanga Service Delivery

A15.15 Delegation of Powers: Minister of Immigration to Delegated Decision Makers of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – Immigration New Zealand

Administrative amendments have been made to delegate decision-making powers under section 380 of the Immigration Act 2009 (the Act).

Appendix 1: Administrative Amendments to Delegations of Powers effective on and after 16 February 2026

A15.5 Delegation of Powers: Minister of Immigration to Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment immigration officers– Immigration New Zealand and Te Whakatairanga Service Delivery.

PURSUANT to section 380 of the Immigration Act 2009 (the Act) and effective from the date of signature I, Erica Stanford, Minister of Immigration:

1. REVOKE the Instrument of Delegation dated 21st day of January 2024 previously made under that section; and
2. DELEGATE, to each immigration officer who is the holder (or is acting as the holder) from time to time of any office or position specified in each of the Schedules to this Instrument, and is suitably trained and qualified, the powers under the Immigration Act 2009 specified in relation to that office or position in the relevant Schedule, but subject to any conditions listed in those Schedules; and
3. DELEGATE to every immigration officer the power to take the practical steps necessary under that Act to implement a decision taken by another immigration officer pursuant to this Instrument of Delegation. Any person who exercises any power pursuant to this Instrument of Delegation shall do so in accordance with the Government policy and Departmental instructions that are current at the time, as set out from time to time in the Immigration New Zealand Operational Manual and circular instructions on Immigration.

Dated this 16th day of February 2026

Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Immigration

Schedule 1

Office or Position:

1. Chief Executive and Secretary, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
2. Deputy Chief Executive/Deputy Secretary – Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Powers Delegated:

1. All those powers set out in Schedules 2, 3 and 4 of this Instrument of Delegation without limitation or subject to any conditions;
2. Specifying an international organisation under s4, by notice in the Gazette, as an organisation whose travel documents will be accepted as certificates of identity.

Schedule 2

Office or Position:

1. Director Visa - Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
2. 3rd Tier Manager - Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
3. 4th Tier Manager - Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
4. 5th Tier Manager - Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
5. 6th Tier Manager - Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
6. Immigration Manager - Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
7. Delegated Decision Makers (DDMs) specified in the Instrument of Delegation with the title: Delegation of Powers: Minister of Immigration to Delegated Decision Makers of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; namely:

Katherine MacLeod
Elizabeth Cantrick
Nicola Scotland
Lauren Deslandes
Lauren Christensen
Jordan Fallow
Susan Cooke

Christopher Adamson
Fraser Stretton
Kathleen Tait
Katy Goodwin
Sophie Leggett

Powers Delegated:

1. All those powers set out in Schedules 3 and 4 of this Instrument of Delegation;
2. Giving a special direction under s17(1)(a) of the Act authorising a residence class visa to be granted to a person to whom s15 or s16 applies;
3. The power under s79(5) of the Act to grant a temporary visa to a person prohibited from applying for a temporary visa under s79(4);
4. Providing by special direction under s395(2) of the Act for an exemption from or refund of any prescribed fee or charge in whole or in part;
5. Providing by special direction under s396(9) of the Act for an exemption from or refund of any bond, in whole or in part;
6. Giving a special direction under s412(2) of the Act, relating to existing applications for visas and permits, that s412(1) not apply;

7. The power conferred by regulation 26(5) (where applicable pursuant to s399(8) of the Act and pursuant to the transitional provision of Schedule 1AA of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive (by way of special direction) the requirement to pay the migrant levy;
8. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction: one or more of the requirements for applying for a visa (whether at an immigration control area or otherwise);
9. The power to give a special direction under s51(3) of the Act to vary the conditions of a resident visa, as an exception to instructions;
10. The power under s72(3) of the Act to grant a second or subsequent resident visa as an exception to instructions;
11. The power under s72(3) of the Act to grant a permanent resident visa as an exception to instructions, to a person who has held a resident visa in New Zealand;
12. The power under s399(3A) of the Act to provide by special direction for an exemption from or refund of any immigration levy, in whole or in part;
13. The power conferred by regulation 26AAC of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to accept cash payment of prescribed fees by special direction.

Schedule 3

Office or Position:

1. Immigration officer, technical advisor
2. Immigration officer

Powers Delegated:

3. Any of the powers set out below which have been assigned to an individual by the Chief Executive;
4. Giving a special direction under s17(1)(a) of the Act authorising:
 - a. a temporary entry class visa and/or entry permission; or
 - b. a transit visa
 to be granted to a person to whom s15 or s16 of the Act applies;
5. The power under s50(3) of the Act to do either of the things in subsection (2)(b), that is to vary or cancel conditions on a resident visa, by agreement with the visa holder;
6. The power under s61 of the Act to grant or refuse a visa of any type to a person who is unlawfully in New Zealand and is not a person in respect of whom a deportation order is in force;
7. The power under s69(2)(d) of the Act to suspend, in any individual case, a waiver of the requirement to hold a visa permitting travel to New Zealand;
8. The power under s86(4A)(b) of the Act to suspend, in any individual case, a waiver (made by regulations) of the requirement to hold a transit visa;
9. The power conferred by regulation 23(2) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to require, by special direction, that regulations apply to applications for visas not otherwise provided on the approved form;
10. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, the requirements in regulation 5(2)(d)(iii), to the extent that it relates to immigration instruction requirements to produce a police or similar certificate;
11. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, requirements specified in regulation 5(2) in relation to residence class visa applications lodged:
 - a. under the Refugee Family Support category;
 - b. under the victims of family violence category;
 - c. by persons recognised as refugees and protected persons in New Zealand;

This delegation only applies to the extent specified by immigration instructions;

12. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, requirements specified in regulation 5(2) in relation to residence class visa applications lodged under the Skilled Migrant Category;
13. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, the requirements in regulation 10(2)(e) for particular documents, information and /or evidence to be tendered with the approved application form, in respect of applications made for temporary entry class visas;
14. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, requirements specified in regulations 10(2), in relation to temporary entry class visa applications lodged:
 - a. under Special work visas for victims of family violence category;
 - b. by persons recognised as refugees and protected persons in New Zealand;

This delegation only applies to the extent specified by immigration instructions;
15. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(b), (c) and (d) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, one or more of the requirements for:
 - a. applying for a second or subsequent resident visa;
 - b. varying conditions of travel for a resident visa;
 - c. notifying an expression of interest in applying for a residence class visa.

Schedule 4

Office or Position: Immigration officer who holds the position of border officer

Powers Delegated:

1. Any of the powers set out below which have been assigned to an individual by the Chief Executive;
2. The power to make decisions under s16 of the Act that certain persons are not entitled to the grant of a visa and/or entry permission;
3. Giving a special direction under s17(1)(a) of the Act authorising a residence class visa or entry permission (or both) to be granted to a person who applies for a residence class visa on arrival, and to whom s15 or s16 applies;
4. The power under s69(2)(c) of the Act to waive, in any individual case, the requirement to hold a visa permitting travel to New Zealand;
5. The power under s86(4A)(a) of the Act to waive, in any individual case, the requirement to hold a transit visa;
6. The power to give a special direction under s101(4) of the Act in relation to the responsibilities of carriers and persons in charge of craft en route to or arriving in New Zealand;
7. The power to give a special direction under s103(1) of the Act in relation to persons arriving in New Zealand;
8. The power to give a special direction under s108(4)(b) or (5)(b) of the Act to impose, vary or cancel the conditions of a resident visa granted outside New Zealand;
9. The power under s108(9) of the Act, to grant entry permission as an exception to instructions to a person holding a visa subject to residence instructions, if the border entry instructions in force at the time the person applied for their visa would not have allowed them to enter New Zealand holding that visa.
10. The power under s 109(7)(b) of the Act, to grant entry permission as an exception to instructions to a person holding a visa subject to restricted temporary entry instructions.
11. The power to give a special direction under s119(1) of the Act in relation to persons leaving New Zealand;
12. The power under s182(1) of the Act to reduce or remove a non-permanent period of prohibition on entry in relation to a person in regards to their application for visa or entry permission;
13. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a), (b) and (e) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, one or more of the requirements for applying for:
 - a. a visa or for entry permission, to the extent specified by immigration instructions;

- b. a second or subsequent resident visa at an immigration control area;
- 14. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(da) and (f) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction:
 - a. one or more of the requirements for requesting or holding an ETA;
 - b. any matter relating to an endorsement of New Zealand citizenship in a New Zealand citizen's foreign passport.

Schedule 5

Office or Position:

1. Chief Executive and Secretary, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
2. Deputy Chief Executive/Deputy Secretary Te Whakatairanga Service Delivery, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Powers Delegated:

All those powers set out in Schedules 6 and 7 of this Instrument of Delegation without limitation or subject to any conditions.

Schedule 6

Office or Position:

1. 3rd Tier Manager – Immigration Compliance and Investigations, Te Whakatairanga Service Delivery. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
2. 4th Tier Manager – Immigration Compliance and Investigations, Te Whakatairanga Service Delivery. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
3. 5th Tier Manager - Immigration Compliance and Investigations, Te Whakatairanga Service Delivery. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Powers Delegated:

1. All those powers set out in Schedule 7 of this Instrument of Delegation;
2. The power under s180(3) of the Act to reduce or waive any debt due by a person under s180(1) (this power is delegated to the General Manager Immigration Compliance & Investigations and the National Manager Compliance);
3. The power under s398 of the Act to provide funds for the costs of deportation or repatriation of specified people from New Zealand (this power is delegated to the General Manager Immigration Compliance & Investigations, the National Manager Compliance and Compliance Managers in Immigration Compliance and Investigations);

Schedule 7

Office or Position:

1. Immigration officer who holds the position of compliance officer
2. Immigration officer who holds the position of compliance technical specialist
3. Immigration officer who holds the position of compliance practice lead

Powers Delegated:

1. Any of the powers set out below which have been assigned to an individual by the Chief Executive;
2. Determining under s156(1)(b) of the Act that a person holds a temporary entry class visa under a false identity;

3. Determining under s157(1) of the Act that there is sufficient reason to deport a temporary entry class visa holder;
4. Determining under s157(3) of the Act that a person is an excluded person for the purpose of section 157(2);
5. The power under s172 of the Act, with due regard to submissions (if applicable), to cancel liability for deportation for a temporary entry class visa holder.
6. The power to make decisions under s16 of the Act that certain persons are not entitled to the grant of a visa and/or entry permission;
7. Giving a special direction under s17(1)(a) of the Act authorising a residence class visa or entry permission (or both) to be granted to a person who applies for a residence class visa on arrival, and to whom s15 or s16 applies;
8. The power under s69(2)(c) of the Act to waive, in any individual case, the requirement to hold a visa permitting travel to New Zealand;
9. The power under s86(4A)(a) of the Act to waive, in any individual case, the requirement to hold a transit visa;
10. The power to give a special direction under s101(4) of the Act in relation to the responsibilities of carriers and persons in charge of craft en route to or arriving in New Zealand;
11. The power to give a special direction under s103(1) of the Act in relation to persons arriving in New Zealand;
12. The power to give a special direction under s108(4)(b) or (5)(b) of the Act to impose, vary or cancel the conditions of a resident visa granted outside New Zealand;
13. The power under s108(9) of the Act, to grant entry permission as an exception to instructions to a person holding a visa subject to residence instructions, if the border entry instructions in force at the time the person applied for their visa would not have allowed them to enter New Zealand holding that visa.
14. The power under s 109(7)(b) of the Act, to grant entry permission as an exception to instructions to a person holding a visa subject to restricted temporary entry instructions.
15. The power to give a special direction under s119(1) of the Act in relation to persons leaving New Zealand;
16. The power under s182(1) of the Act to reduce or remove a non-permanent period of prohibition on entry in relation to a person in regards to their application for visa or entry permission;
17. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(a), (b) and (e) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction, one or more of the requirements for applying for:
 - a. a visa or for entry permission, to the extent specified by immigration instructions;
 - b. a second or subsequent resident visa at an immigration control area;
18. The power conferred by regulation 34(1)(da) and (f) of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010 to waive, by special direction:
 - a. one or more of the requirements for requesting or holding an ETA;
 - b. any matter relating to an endorsement of New Zealand citizenship in a New Zealand citizen's foreign passport.

Appendix 2: Administrative Amendments to Delegations of Powers effective on and after 16 February 2026

A15.15 Delegation of Powers: Minister of Immigration to Delegated Decision Makers of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – Immigration New Zealand

PURSUANT to section 380 of the Immigration Act 2009 (the Act) and effective from the date of signature I, Erica Stanford, Minister of Immigration, hereby:

1. REVOKE the Instrument of Delegation dated 21st day of January 2024 previously made under that section with the title *Delegation of Powers: Minister of Immigration to Delegated Decision Makers of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – Immigration New Zealand*;
2. DELEGATE the powers in the Act that are specified below to the immigration officers specified below (known as Delegated Decision Makers ("DDMs"));
3. DELEGATE to every immigration officer the power to take the practical steps necessary under that Act to implement a decision taken by a DDM pursuant to this Instrument. Any person who exercises any power pursuant to this Instrument shall do so in accordance with
 - a. any applicable immigration instructions (s22 of the Act); and
 - b. any applicable general instructions to immigration officers from the chief executive (s26(4) of the Act).
4. For the avoidance of doubt, this Instrument is additional to, and does not revoke, any other Instrument aside from that revoked by paragraph 1 of this Instrument.

Dated this 16th day of February 2026

Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Immigration

Specified Delegated Decision Makers

Elizabeth Cantrick
Katherine Macleod
Nicola Scotland
Lauren Deslandes
Lauren Christensen
Jordan Fallow
Susan Cooke

Christopher Adamson
Fraser Stretton
Kathleen Tait
Katy Goodwin
Sophie Leggett

Additional Powers Delegated:

1. *On granting a resident visa as an exception to residence instructions, the power under s50(1) to impose conditions in addition to those specified in the applicable residence instructions (if any); or to vary or waive conditions that would otherwise apply to a visa of that type;*
2. *Following the grant of a resident visa, the power under s50(2) to, by special direction, impose further conditions whether or not the conditions are specified in the applicable residence instructions (if any); or vary or cancel conditions that would otherwise apply to the visa or were imposed under s50(1);*
3. *On granting a temporary entry class visa subject to restricted temporary entry instructions as an exception to those instructions, the power under s53(1) to impose conditions in addition to those specified in temporary entry instructions in relation to a visa of that type; and to vary or waive conditions that would otherwise apply to a visa of that type.*
4. *Following the grant of a temporary entry class visa subject to restricted temporary entry instructions, the power under s53(2) to, by special direction, impose further conditions, whether or not the conditions are specified in temporary entry instructions in relation to a visa of that type; and to vary or cancel conditions that would otherwise apply to a visa of that type or were imposed under s53(1).*
5. **The power under s61A(1), as a matter of absolute discretion, to grant a visa of any type to a person who:**
 - a. **is outside New Zealand; or**
 - b. **is in New Zealand and holds a temporary entry class visa.**
6. *The power under s71(5) to grant a residence class visa, as a matter of absolute discretion, to a person to whom s71(4) of the Act applies;*
7. *The power under s72(2) to give a special direction allowing a residence application received by an immigration officer in the first instance to be considered by the Minister;*
8. *The power under s72(3), as a matter of absolute discretion, to grant a residence class visa as an exception to residence instructions;*
9. *The power under s76(3), as a matter of absolute discretion, to grant a visa as an exception to restricted temporary entry instructions.*
10. *The power under s94(4) to, by special direction, issue an invitation to apply for a visa to a person whether or not the person has expressed his or her interest in the manner required by the Act or immigration instructions;*
11. *The power to determine that a residence class visa holder is liable for deportation under ss156(1)(b), 158(1)(b), 159, or 160;*
12. *The power under s172 of the Act, with due regard to submissions (if applicable), to cancel liability for deportation for a temporary entry class visa holder.*
13. *The power under s172(1) to, as a matter of absolute discretion, cancel a person's liability for deportation where deportation liability arises under ss155(1), 156(1), 158(1), 159, 160(1), 161, or 162;*
14. *The power under s172(2) to, as a matter of absolute discretion, suspend a residence class visa holder's liability for deportation where deportation liability arises under ss155(1), 156(1), 158(1), 159, 160(1), 161, or 162. Any suspension of liability may be set for a period not exceeding 5 years, and may be made subject to any conditions which are to be stated in the written notice of suspension.*
15. *The power under s172(3) to reactivate a person's liability for deportation if the person fails to comply with the conditions imposed by a DDM under s172(2)(b).*

16. The power under s174(2) to determine that a person has met the conditions imposed by the Minister under s172(2) for the period of the suspension, to cancel that person's liability for deportation, and notify the person and the Tribunal of that fact.
17. The power under s182 to reduce or remove a period of prohibition on entry for those who have a permanent prohibition on re-entry to New Zealand under ss179 due to being deported from New Zealand following deportation liability arising under ss156, 158, 160, 161 and 162.
18. The power under s213(5) to determine that a person has met any conditions imposed by the Tribunal under s212(1) for the duration of the suspension, cancel the person's liability for deportation, and notify the Tribunal accordingly.