

11 September 2026

IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND INSTRUCTIONS: Amendment Circular No. 2026-25
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

F4.1 Summary of requirements

F4.5 Expression of interest (EOI) and invitation to apply for residence

Changes have been made to immigration instructions to:

- specify that Parent Category Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will be selected from the Pool through:
 - a queue, based on the date the EOI was submitted, accounting for approximately 90 per cent of selections annually; or
 - a ballot draw, accounting for approximately 10 per cent of selections annually
- remove automatic expiry of EOIs after being in the Pool for 2 years but require people to confirm their interest every two years for their EOI to remain in the Pool. This confirmation must be received within six months of the end of each two-year period;
- provide that an EOI will expire and be removed from the Pool if a confirmation of interest is not submitted within the required timeframe; and
- introduce transitional provisions to allow eligible people with an EOI in the Pool to enter the queue based on the submission date of an earlier expired EOI.

Appendix 1: Amendments to Residence instructions effective on and after 5 October 2026

F4 Parent Category

F4.1 Summary of requirements

F4.1.1 Objective

The objective of the Parent Category is to support family connections, in order to:

- a. progress New Zealand Government economic and social objectives for immigration; and
- b. attract and retain skilled and productive migrants, while also limiting the costs of New Zealand Government benefits.

F4.1.5 Overview

- a. An application for a resident visa under the Parent Category is a two-stage process. People who intend to submit an application for a resident visa under the Parent Category must first submit an expression of interest (EOI) in the prescribed manner (see [F4.5](#)).
- b. EOIs are entered into a Pool of EOIs and selection from the Pool may result in an invitation to apply for a resident visa under the Parent Category.
- c. EOIs may result in an invitation to apply for residence if claims made in the EOI concerning health, character, English language requirement, family relationship and sponsorship requirements are assessed as credible by an immigration officer.
- d. A residence application under the Parent Category will be approved if the requirements for health, character, English language, family relationships and sponsorship (including minimum income thresholds) are met (see F4.15).
- e. Applications for a resident visa must be in the prescribed manner and lodged within four months from the date of the invitation to apply letter (see F4.10.1).

F4.1.10 Annual limit to number of approvals in principle available under the Parent Category

The number of approvals in principle that can be issued under the Parent Category is limited to 2,500 people for each year ending 30 June.

F4.5 Expression of interest (EOI) and invitation to apply for residence

F4.5.1 EOI Pool and the currency of EOIs

- a. Parent EOIs submitted in the prescribed manner will be placed into the Parent Category EOI pool and will be selected, either:
 - i. in date order based on the date the EOIs were submitted, accounting for approximately 90 per cent of selections annually (see F4.5.5), or
 - ii. randomly from a ballot draw, accounting for approximately 10 per cent of selections annually (see F4.5.5).

Note: Current EOIs in the Ballot Pool will be transferred to the Parent Category EOI Pool and selected in accordance with (a).

Example: An EOI was submitted to the Ballot Pool on 22 November 2024, on 5 October 2026 it will be placed in the Parent Category EOI Pool. The EOI will be chronologically positioned in the Parent Category EOI Pool (for the purpose of date order selection) based on the date of submission 22 November 2024.

- b. An EOI will expire and be removed from the Pool if a confirmation of interest has not been submitted in the required timeframe (see F4.5.3.1).
- c. A Parent EOI will also be removed from the Pool if:
 - i. it is selected and the people included on the EOI are invited to apply; or
 - ii. it is selected and an immigration officer is not satisfied that the person(s) who submitted the EOI meets the requirements to be granted a resident visa and as a result no invitation to apply is issued; or
 - iii. the EOI includes a person who is included in more than one EOI in the Pool (because a person may only have one EOI in the Pool at any one time).

F4.5.3 EOI Submission

- a. A person notifies that they are interested in being invited to apply for a resident visa under the Parent Category by submitting an EOI to Immigration New Zealand (INZ) in the prescribed manner. In order to submit an EOI in the prescribed manner, a person must submit to an immigration officer:
 - i. a completed Parent Category EOI form; and
 - ii. the prescribed fee (if any).
- b. By completing an EOI, a person provides a declaration about their and their partner's:
 - i. identity, health and character; and
 - ii. English language ability or an intention to agree to pre-purchase English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition (see F4.25); and
 - iii. relationship to their sponsoring adult children and any other children the applicants have (see F4.30); and
 - iv. sponsor's or joint sponsors' eligibility to sponsor them for New Zealand residence under the Parent Category (see F4.35.1); and
 - v. sponsor's or joint sponsors' income for the past three years (see F4.35.5); and
 - vi. (if the person and/or their partner hold or previously held a Parent Boost visitor visa) they have:
 - o maintained acceptable travel and/or health insurance for a suitable period (see F4.20.20) when in New Zealand while holding a Parent Boost visitor visa; and
 - o no outstanding debt to the Crown (see F4.20.25) has been incurred while being the holder of Parent Boost visitor visa.
- c. At any time, a person may have only one EOI in the Pool.
- d. An EOI will be removed from the Pool if it includes a person already included in an EOI in the Pool.
- e. It is the responsibility of the person submitting the EOI to ensure that the information given is correct in all material respects.

Note: If the partner of a person is considered to be eligible for inclusion in a Parent Category EOI but was not included, the partner will not be granted residence under the Partnership Category if the partner applies at a later date (see F2.40.5). A partner is considered eligible for inclusion in an EOI even if it appears the sponsor/s may not meet the income requirement to sponsor multiple Parent category applicants if invited to apply for residence.

F4.5.3.1 Confirmation of interest for EOI to remain in the Pool

- a. A person who has an EOI in the Pool must confirm their interest for their EOI to remain in the Pool every two years by submitting a completed Parent EOI Confirmation of Interest form.
- b. The confirmation must be received within six months of each two-year anniversary, with the two-year intervals calculated from the date the Parent EOI was submitted into the Pool.

Note: Failure to confirm interest in the required timeframe means the EOI expires (see F4.5.1). A new EOI may be submitted but will enter the queue at that new submission date. If an expired Parent EOI is not removed from the Pool in time or otherwise selected in error, it is not eligible to be assessed or issued an ITA under F4.5.10.

F4.5.5 EOI Selections

- a. EOIs are selected from the Pool periodically on the Government's behalf by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

Note: The timing and frequency of EOI selections will be published on the INZ website.

- b. EOIs will be selected to meet the appropriate number of potential applicants to fill the number of available approvals in principle within the annual period with:
 - i. approximately 90 percent of EOIs selected in date order; and
 - ii. approximately 10 percent selected randomly by ballot draw.

Note: EOIs are eligible to be selected either in date order or randomly by ballot draw.

- c. EOIs will be selected from the Pool in date order based on the date the EOIs were submitted into the Pool, with the earliest submitted EOIs selected first.
- d. To be eligible for selection by ballot draw, an EOI must be submitted in the prescribed manner before the first day of the month of ballot draw.

F4.5.5.1 Transitional provision

- a. Where a person has an EOI in the Pool and a previous EOI(s) that expired on or before 4 October 2026 because they reached the end of the two-year validity period under prior Parent Category instructions, the current EOI will be chronologically positioned in the Pool, for the purpose of date order selection (see F4.5.5(c)) based on the submission date of the earliest expired EOI, provided that each subsequent EOI, including the current EOI, was submitted within 90 days of the expiry date of the preceding EOI.

Note:

Example: A person submitted an EOI on 22 November 2024, which will be placed in the Pool on 5 October 2026. They had a previous EOI that was submitted on 30 October 2022 and expired on 31 October 2024. The period between the expiry of the earlier EOI and the submission of the current EOI is 22 days. Therefore, the relevant submission date is 30 October 2022.

- b. For the purposes of (a) above, at least one individual must be common to the earliest expired EOI and each subsequent EOI, including the current EOI. The individual may be identified as either the person who submitted the EOI or as a partner in any of those EOIs.

F4.5.10 Invitation to apply (ITA) for a resident visa under the Parent Category

- a. People whose EOIs have been selected may be issued an ITA for a resident visa under the Parent Category.
- b. An immigration officer may invite a person to apply for a resident visa under the Parent Category if they are satisfied that:
 - i. the information provided does not indicate the presence of any health or character issues which may adversely affect their ability to be granted a resident visa under the Parent Category; and
 - ii. claims about English language are credible or the applicant has the intention to pre-purchase ESOL tuition (see F4.25); and
 - iii. it is credible that the parent's relationship to their sponsoring adult child(ren) and any other children they have will meet requirements when the parent/s are granted residence (see F4.15.1); and
 - iv. it is credible that the sponsor(s) will meet the sponsorship requirements when the parent/s are granted residence (see F4.35); and
 - v. the sponsor(s) is likely to meet the minimum income threshold for two 12-month periods within the 3 years prior to ITA date (see F4.35.5); and

- vi. if joint income is considered, it is credible that the requirements for joint sponsorship will be met when the parent/s are granted residence; and
- vii. (if the person and/or their partner hold or previously held a Parent Boost visitor visa) it is credible that they have:
 - o maintained acceptable travel and/or health insurance for a suitable period when in New Zealand ([F4.20.20](#)) while holding a Parent Boost visitor visa; and
 - o no outstanding debt to the Crown (see [F4.20.25](#)) has been incurred while being the holder of Parent Boost visitor visa
- c. An immigration officer may decide not to issue an ITA for a resident visa under the Parent Category if they are not satisfied claims made within the EOI are:
 - i. credible; or
 - ii. sufficient to meet the requirements of the Parent Category
- d. An immigration officer may seek further evidence, information and submissions from a person whose EOI has been selected for the purpose of determining whether their claims are credible and whether there are any health or character issues that may adversely affect their ability to be granted a resident visa under the Parent Category.
- e. In any particular case, the selection of an EOI may not result in an invitation to apply for a resident visa under the Parent Category. No person is entitled as of right to an invitation to apply for a visa and the decision to issue or revoke an invitation is a matter for the discretion of the Minister of Immigration or, subject to any special direction, an immigration officer.

Note: A decision to invite a person to apply for a resident visa under the Parent Category does not guarantee in any subsequent application for a resident visa a positive assessment of any requirements for the Parent Category or generic residence (including health and character).

F4.5.15 False or misleading information in an Expression of Interest

- a. It is sufficient grounds to decline a Parent Category resident visa application if:
 - i. false or misleading information was provided as part of the associated Expression of Interest (EOI); or
 - ii. relevant, potentially prejudicial information was withheld from the associated EOI; or
 - iii. an applicant or their agent failed to advise an immigration officer of any fact or material change in circumstances that occurs after an EOI is submitted that may affect a decision to invite the person to apply for a resident visa or to grant a resident visa.
- b. A decision that false or misleading information was provided does not require an immigration officer to determine whether or not the applicant personally:
 - i. knew that the information was false or misleading; or
 - ii. knew that such information was provided to INZ (for example by their agent); or
 - iii. intended to deceive Immigration New Zealand through their actions or inaction.
- c. A decision that relevant, potentially prejudicial information was withheld requires an immigration officer to be satisfied that the applicant, or their agent, knew that information, but does not require an immigration officer to determine whether or not the applicant personally intended to withhold information, or deceive Immigration New Zealand through their actions or inaction.
- d. In cases where an applicant had an agent acting on their behalf, a decision that false or misleading information was provided does not require an immigration officer to determine whether or not the agent knew that the information was false or misleading.

F4.5.16 Deciding whether to decline a Parent Category application for false, misleading or withheld information in the associated Expression of Interest

- a. Where an immigration officer determines that false or misleading information was provided, or relevant, potentially prejudicial information was withheld, in an associated EOI, the residence application under the Parent Category is to be normally declined.
- b. Despite F4.5.16(a), an immigration officer must not decline the Parent Category application under F4.5.15(a) without considering the circumstances of the application.