

VISA PAK ISSUE 657 — 19 DECEMBER 2025

CHANGES TO POLICE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEMPORARY VISA APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED THROUGH ADEPT

On 7 December 2025, changes were made to the customer-facing application form for temporary visa applications submitted through ADEPT to clarify that applicants should upload a valid and completed police certificate with their applications. The application form has been amended to remove references to uploading receipts of confirmation of applying for a police certificate, unless specifically referenced.

There will be some exceptions to this where the relevant issuing authority provides the police certificate to Immigration New Zealand directly, in which case it will be appropriate for the applicant to upload evidence of applying for the police certificate. This applies only to Fiji, Hong Kong and Israel.

This Visa Pak provides guidance to immigration officers when processing some temporary visa applications submitted through ADEPT to streamline the processing of these applications and reduce delays in assessments where immigration officers are holding applications awaiting the provision of a police certificate, disadvantaging clients that do submit complete applications.

Application types excluded from the change

This guidance covers Accredited Employer Work Visas (AEWV) and ADEPT Visitor Visa applications, excluding Parent Boost, Culturally Arranged Marriage, Child to be Adopted and Adoption Pre-Citizenship Visitor Visas, and the Global Workforce Seasonal Visa. Non-ADEPT based applications are not subject to the process change outlined in this Visa Pak.

International students visa applications

The ADEPT application form for international student visa applications has also been changed, however the approach for processing sites to follow when an international student submits an application without the required police certificate is still being developed. Processing sites will follow their current approach until further notice.

Process for Accredited Employer Work Visas (AEWV) and ADEPT visitor visa applications

Once an application has been received, the immigration officer may assess it based on the information provided with the application. If the application does not include a valid police certificate the immigration officer should continue to assess and decide the application based on the information that has been provided. Applications should not generally be held open indefinitely pending the submission of a valid police certificate. The temporary visa application form in ADEPT has been updated to reflect this requirement.

Example AEWV and ADEPT visitor visa application scenarios and approach

Scenario 1 – Applicant has not spent 24 months in New Zealand

If an applicant has not yet spent 24 months in New Zealand, but has declared that they intend to, the applicant will first be sent a Potentially Prejudicial Information (PPI) letter, with a response timeframe of 5 working days, to either provide the required completed police certificate or to advise of a change in their intended stay to less than 24 months (meaning they would not need to provide a police certificate) or it is likely that their application will be declined as an immigration officer cannot be satisfied that they meet character requirements.

If the applicant is unable to provide the police certificate within this timeframe but advises of a change to their intended length of stay, the application can be approved for:

- AEWV: the remaining duration up to less than 24 months total in New Zealand; or
- Visitor Visa: the duration they are eligible for less than 24 months in total and in line with the relevant visitor visa instruction.

This would mean that if the applicant wants to spend longer in New Zealand they would need to apply again ensuring they meet any applicable instructions at the time of that application, pay a new fee and submit their valid and complete police certificate with the new application.

Scenario 2 – Offshore applicant has spent 24 months in New Zealand

If a client has already spent 24 months or more in New Zealand and is offshore, the application can be declined without the need for a PPI to be sent as not providing a mandatory document, despite being prompted to, is not considered to be prejudicial information they were not aware of.

Scenario 3 – Onshore applicant has spent 24 months in New Zealand

If a client has already spent 24 months or more in New Zealand and is onshore the applicant must be sent a PPI letter and given an opportunity to comment on the non-provision of the police certificate. If the applicant does not provide the police certificate in response to the PPI it is likely the application will be declined as an immigration officer cannot be satisfied that the applicant meets character requirements.

Note: If an applicant is onshore and has provided evidence of applying for a police certificate, the immigration officer should carefully consider the applicant's circumstances, including their ability to remain lawfully in or depart New Zealand when deciding the application. If necessary, consideration should be given to granting a visa as an exception to instructions.

Approval letter wording

Where an application is approved for a shorter duration on the basis that a police certificate has not been provided, the approval letter must contain the advice provided in the [attached](#) agreed wording document.

Police certificate waivers

The changes being made to the application form and assessment process do not impact the possibility of police certificate waivers being granted in line with immigration instructions A5.10.1 where the police certificate is not available or unduly difficult to obtain, where credible supporting evidence is provided.

PPI extension requests

Where a PPI has been sent and an applicant requests an extension to provide the completed police certificate, the immigration officer may consider the merits of each request in line with the principles outlined in [VisaPak 604](#).

Despite the above, there may be exceptional circumstances that justify an immigration officer continuing to hold an application subject to the provision of a police certificate or approving an extension to the PPI timeframe for the document to be provided. The decision as to whether or not to grant an extension is for the discretion of an immigration officer.

Whilst the form changes were implemented on 7 December 2025, there will be a period of transition to this change in processing approach for applications submitted prior to 12 January 2026 where immigration officers will continue to apply the current process.



NEW ZEALAND
IMMIGRATION

For applications submitted after 12 January 2026 the new process will apply.

For Parent Boost please follow the guidance in [Visa Pak 646](#).