



24 February 2020

**IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND INSTRUCTIONS: Amendment Circular No. 2020/04**

**To: All Manual Holders**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND OPERATIONAL MANUAL**

**Introduction**

This circular outlines changes to the Immigration New Zealand Operational Manual. A copy of the amended general instructions is attached.

All immigration officers dealing with immigration applications should read the amendments and operate in accordance with the amended instructions in Appendix 1 on and after 24 February 2020.

**Note**

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

**Any enquiries about these amendments should be directed to the Immigration Contact Centre on 0508 558 855 or 09 914 4100 (Auckland only).**

## **Description of changes**

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### **Order and manner of processing residence applications**

#### *A16.1 General Instruction as to the order and manner of processing residence applications*

The Deputy Chief Executive - Immigration, acting under authority delegated by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, has made a general instruction as to the order and manner of processing residence class visa applications.

This general instruction gives priority to Skilled Migrant Category applications (with job offers) and Residence from Work Category applications where the principal applicant has current occupational registration and this registration is required by immigration instructions, or is paid twice the median wage or higher.

## **Appendix 1: Amendments to the Administration Section of the Operational Manual effective on and after 24 February 2020**

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### **A16.1 General Instruction as to the order and manner of processing residence applications**

Pursuant to section 26(4) of the Immigration Act 2009 and acting under delegated authority from the Chief Executive of the Ministry of the Business, Innovation, and Employment, I hereby give the following general instructions as to the order and manner of processing of residence class visa applications under Government residence instructions, effective from 24 February 2020:

- a. First priority will be given to the following types and categories of applications for residence class visas in preference to applications under other types and categories:
  - i. Christchurch Response (2019) Category will have priority;
  - ii. Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) applications with job offers; and within this category, priority will be given to:
    - o Applicants with an hourly rate equivalent to or higher than twice the median wage (currently \$51.00 per hour or an annual salary of \$106,080 or more);
    - o Applicants with current occupational registration where registration is required by immigration instructions;
  - iii. All business categories;
  - iv. Residence from Work Category applications (Talent (Accredited Employer), Talent (Arts, Culture and Sport), South Island Contribution, Religious Worker and Long Term Skill Shortage List); and within this category, priority will be given to:
    - o Applications which include a job offer with an hourly rate equivalent to or higher than twice the median wage (currently \$51.00 per hour or an annual salary of \$106,080 or more);
    - o Applications which include a job offer which requires occupational registration where occupational registration is required by immigration instructions;
  - v. Refugee Policy;
  - vi. Partnership and Dependent Child applications where the partner or parent is,
    - o a New Zealand citizen, or
    - o the holder of a permanent resident visa, and who has been absent from New Zealand for a period of at least two years prior to the date of the application being accepted for consideration apart from short visits within that period. (Note that in the case of a partnership application the New Zealand partner and the applicant must have been living together for 12 months or more in a partnership that is genuine and stable).
- b. Second priority will be given to the following types and categories of applications for residence class visas:
  - i. Partnership and Dependent Child applications (other than those in instruction (a)).
- c. Third Priority will be given to the following types and categories of applications for residence class visas:
  - i. Parent Category.
- d. Within the priorities set out above, applications should generally be processed in lodgement date order.

- e. These instructions do not prevent immigration officers according urgency to the processing of any particular residence class visa application when the individual circumstances so warrant that.
- f. The previous General Instructions made pursuant to section 26(4) of the Immigration Act 2009 are revoked.