

Questions and answers: New assessments of visitor visas to join New Zealand partners

Who was invited to make a new application?

People outside New Zealand who were declined after 10 May 2019 the following visas:

- culturally arranged marriage visitor visas
- general visitor visas where the purpose was to join a New Zealand citizen or resident living in New Zealand
- work or visitor visas based on partnership with a New Zealand citizen or resident

To be invited for to make a new application, the person must also:

- still be outside New Zealand
- not have been subsequently approved a visa (after the initial declined application)
- not have a current application being considered

What type of visas can invited people apply for?

People invited may apply for a general visitor visas to join their partner in New Zealand, and not partnership-based visas. Partnership-based visas were not affected by the advice published on 10 May 2019. However, people who were declined partnership-based visas may have been eligible to be considered for general visitor visas under the new guidelines; that's why people who were declined partnership-based visas have been contacted to invite them to apply for general visitor visas.

How long will the new application take?

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) will assess these applications in the order we receive them. We aim to process applications within 25 working days of receiving them.

Can these applications be prioritised?

Dedicated teams have been set up to assess these applications. We aim to complete these applications as quickly as possible.

Will everyone invited to make a new application be approved a visa?

No. People invited to make a new application must meet all requirements for a visitor visa and there is no guarantee in any particular case that a visa will be granted.

Can people complain if they are declined a visa again?

INZ investigates complaints about service or process failures – for example where we did not follow our own processes.

[Complaining about INZ services and processes](#)

The INZ complaints process is not an avenue to seek a reconsideration of an application. Complaints solely about the decision to decline a visa will not be accepted for investigation unless a service or process issue has been identified.

Where can people get help with their applications?

Visit the INZ website for information about applying for visas, including what sort of information to provide, and how visas are assessed.

[Visitor Visa](#)

People may also choose to engage a professional immigration adviser for assistance.

See the Immigration Advisers Authority website to find licenced immigration advisers.

[Immigration Advisers Authority](#)

See the New Zealand Law Society website to find immigration lawyers.

[New Zealand Law Society](#)

Why were partners of work or student visa holders not invited to reapply?

The guidelines released on 10 May 2019 suggested that people coming to live with partners in New Zealand shouldn't be considered genuine visitors because they were intending to stay permanently. These guidelines were unlikely to affect partners of work or student visa holders, because the partner in New Zealand was here temporarily as well (as they held a temporary visa).

Despite this, if partners of work or student visa holders think they were declined unfairly because of the guidelines published on 10 May 2019, they can apply for a visa and explain why they were affected. They must pay the appropriate fee for that application which will be assessed against relevant requirements in the normal way. Immigration New Zealand will consider the person's circumstances and refund their visa application fee if they were unfairly affected.

Can I apply for a partnership-based visitor or work visa instead?

If you believe you meet the requirements for a partnership-based work or visitor visa, including living with your partner in a genuine and stable partnership, you can apply for partnership-based visa in the normal way and pay an application fee. No refunds will be provided for partnership-based applications because there has been no change to how these applications are assessed.

Now that Mumbai, Beijing and Hamilton offices are completing these new applications how will that affect processing times?

Dedicated teams will assess these applications and Immigration New Zealand will closely monitor all application streams to minimise any effect on processing times.