

VISA PAK ISSUE 451 — 29 OCTOBER 2020

SPECIAL DIRECTIONS – 2020/21 HORTICULTURE AND VITICULTURE SEASON

On 1 October 2020, the Minister of Immigration made two special directions to maximise the onshore migrant workforce and facilitate their ability to work in the horticulture and viticulture industry for the upcoming 2020/21 season.

The effects of the two special directions are:

1. Granting a Supplementary Seasonal Employment (SSE) work visa to certain onshore Working Holiday visa (WHV) holders
2. Granting a Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) visa to certain onshore RSE workers who have been unable to return home, so that they may “re-enter” the RSE scheme

Working Holiday visa holders

Granting SSE visas to Working Holiday visa holders

This [special direction](#) applies to onshore WHV holders (including those holding a Working Holidaymaker Extension visa) whose visa expires between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 (inclusive) and who do not have an on-hand temporary visa application on the date of their visa expiry.

Eligible WHV holders will be automatically granted an SSE visa with an expiry date of 30 June 2021 on the day their visa expires, to start on the day after the expiry of their WHV.

For example, if a WHV holder has a visa with an expiry date of 1 November 2020 and on 1 November 2020 they do not have a temporary visa application in progress, they will be granted an SSE visa on 1 November 2020 that starts on 2 November 2020 and expires on 30 June 2021.

Withdrawing on-hand temporary visa applications

WHV holders whose visas expire between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 (inclusive) may request to withdraw an on-hand temporary visa application so that they will be granted the SSE visa by special direction. Any requests to withdraw an application will need to be received before the expiry of the WHV, for the holder to be eligible for the SSE visa.

- Requests for a refund of the application fee should be treated in the usual manner. Clients should be directed to the following page on the INZ website if they wish to submit an application for a refund: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/already-have-a-visa/my-situation-has-changed/visit/can-i-get-a-refund-for-my-application-fee>
- Requests to withdraw should be forwarded to the RSE unit using the following email address as soon as they are received: [\[internal mailbox\]](#)

The on-hand application should also be transferred to the RSE unit promptly so the withdrawal request can be processed.



Updating AMS records

Two ICT solutions will be implemented on 1 November 2020:

The first ICT solution will retrospectively grant all eligible WHV holders with visas expiring between 1 and 31 October 2020 inclusive an SSE visa. As an interim measure (before the ICT solution is implemented), the RSE Unit will notify clients about their eligibility for the SSE visa at the time their WHV expires.

The second ICT solution will grant, on a daily basis, new SSE visas to all eligible WHV holders (with visas expiring between 1 November and 31 March inclusive), to start on the day after their current visa expiry date. Communications will be sent to these clients to confirm their SSE visa has been issued.

Recognised Seasonal Employer Visas

Granting RSE visas

This [special direction](#) applies to a specific cohort of RSE workers that previously received a limited visa by special direction (Visapak 447). Eligible RSE workers will need to demonstrate that they have an employment agreement with a RSE employer that meets the minimum RSE requirements and that the RSE employer has an approved ATR. These visas will not be automatically granted in AMS as it requires eligible RSE workers to provide evidence of an employment agreement, which allows the workers to elect to return to the RSE scheme or not.

The RSE unit will record these visas in AMS for all eligible RSE workers.