

VISA PAK ISSUE 426 — 31 JANUARY 2020

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES FOR REFUGEE OR PROTECTION STATUS CLAIMANTS APPLYING FOR TEMPORARY ENTRY CLASS VISAS

This item provides further information regarding the handling of medical certificates for temporary entry class visa (TECV) applications under the asylum seeker category. It replaces the previous advice regarding medical certificates published in Visa Pak 420.

Below are revised requirements and procedures intended to address issues that have arisen in this area. Immigration instructions have also been amended to reflect the revised requirements.

Medical requirements

All applicants who have applied for a TECV under the asylum seeker category are required to provide a chest x-ray certificate only, as per amended immigration instructions at A4.25(e) and A4.30.1. Immigration New Zealand (INZ) will meet the costs for the chest x-ray certificate. This is designed to address public health risks. Partners (excluding pregnant women) and dependents (children over the age of 11) of refugee or protection status claimants, who are in New Zealand at the time of the claim, are also required to provide a chest x-ray certificate, the costs of which will be met by INZ. This is regardless of whether they have their own claims under consideration.

Applicants who have provided a medical certificate for a TECV application under the asylum seeker category since October 2019 until 16 December 2019 may be reimbursed for the cost of obtaining a general medical certificate and/or a chest x-ray certificate on provision of evidence of having paid for this procedure themselves.

Any applicant who has already provided a chest x-ray certificate in the last 36 months is not required to provide another one.

Process

INZ should only request a chest x-ray certificate once a refugee or protection status claim has been accepted or a TECV application under the asylum seeker category has been received. Either the Refugee Status Unit (RSU) or Specialist Assessment Team (SAT) will request that a health assessment record is created through the Health Assessment Team (HAT). The HAT will provide the unique NZER number to RSU or SAT and the applicant will be sent a letter with this number to take to an onshore panel physician who will then carry out the chest x-ray. The panel physician will confirm the applicant's details via their NZER number and invoice INZ. Note that it is not the responsibility of INZ to make the appointment or ensure that the applicant attends.

Immigration Officers will still be able to exempt people from having to provide a chest x-ray certificate in exceptional circumstances, where they have submitted a claim for refugee or protection status in New Zealand or have been recognised as having refugee or protection status in New Zealand. These should be considered on a case-by-case basis only.