

VISA PAK ISSUE 601 — 11 OCTOBER 2024

POLICE CERTIFICATES FOR RESIDENCE CLASS VISAS

Immigration instructions at [A5.5\(b\)\(ii\)](#) state that it is a mandatory requirement (see [R2.40](#)) for first time applicants for a residence class visa aged 17 and over to obtain a police or similar certificate from each country in which the applicant has lived for 12 months or more (whether on one visit or intermittently) in the last 10 years. (see [A5.10.1](#)).

The reference “in the last 10 years” at [A5.5\(b\)\(ii\)](#) is the threshold for triggering the mandatory requirement of providing a police certificate for a residence class visa application. This means that the applicant must provide a police certificate if they have lived in a country for 12 months or more in the last 10 years. The police certificate itself should not be limited to the last 10 years or a certain period, but instead needs to evidence whether the applicant has been convicted of an offence **at any time** in a particular country they have lived in for 12 months or more in the last 10 years.

As part of a character assessment, immigration officers must be satisfied that applicants meet the character instructions requirements including that they have not been convicted, at any time, of offences listed at [A5.25.5](#) and have not been convicted of any offence for a term of imprisonment and within the time frames set out in section 15(1)(a) and (b) of the Immigration Act 2009 as reflected in [A5.20\(b\)](#).

Immigration officers should carefully consider whether additional character checks are needed if a police certificate submitted to Immigration New Zealand (INZ) is insufficient to determine that the applicant meets the character requirements. Immigration officers can use the provisions at [R5.10\(b\)](#) for residence visas and [E7.5\(b\)](#) for temporary entry class visas to request additional information. If unsure whether an applicant can obtain a police certificate from a particular country, please consult with your local verification team.

Updates will be made to relevant INZ web pages in due course to ensure this requirement is clearer for visa applicants when applying for a visa.