Are you employing migrant workers in hospitality? What do you need to know?
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CARDS

There are quick reference information cards in the back of this booklet.

They have been designed for you to have easy access to important information.

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About the Guide

How can this guide help me?

Migrant workers are an important part of the hospitality industry in New Zealand because they are able to fill labour and skill shortages.

Employing migrants can be quite different from employing New Zealanders. Migrant workers may need extra support or help from you, particularly when they first start. It is important that new migrants feel settled and supported in their jobs. This will make them more likely to stay and to contribute further to the success of your business.

Your new migrant employees will be adjusting to a new culture, gaining an understanding of New Zealand English and becoming familiar with new ways of communicating. They will be making new friends and becoming part of a new community. Work is such an important part of many new migrants’ lives here, and you, as an employer, have a key part to play.

This guide will help you to find out how to:

› plan ahead and prepare for migrant hospitality workers
› save costs by retaining your migrant workers longer
› have happier, more productive employees
› have fewer staffing headaches
› add value to your bottom line.
Focus of the guide

This guide is designed for employers of migrants who work in food and beverage services. This includes managers and owners of businesses such as:

› cafés  
› restaurants  
› takeaway food outlets  
› catering businesses  
› pubs, taverns and bars  
› clubs.
Immigration options for employing hospitality workers

Visa options

There are a number of immigration visa options for migrant workers depending on their occupation and your offer of employment. Some of the following may meet your business needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visa Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work to Residence</td>
<td>Allows a migrant to work in New Zealand if their occupation is in demand in New Zealand (i.e. on the long term skill shortage list) or if you are an Accredited Employer. After 24 months on the job, they can apply for a resident visa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Visa</td>
<td>Allows a migrant who works in an occupation that is experiencing skill shortages to live and work in New Zealand for a defined period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Visa</td>
<td>Allows a migrant to live and work in New Zealand indefinitely and access most publicly funded services. Most resident visas are granted through the Skilled Migrant Category – a points system based on factors such as age, work experience, qualifications and an offer of skilled employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval in Principle</td>
<td>If you have a number of job vacancies and cannot find suitable New Zealanders to fill them, you can apply to Immigration New Zealand for an Approval in Principle to bring in migrant workers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People in New Zealand on the following visas may also be permitted to work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visa Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Visa</td>
<td>International students in New Zealand on Student Visas who meet the eligibility criteria may be able to work part-time for up to 20 hours per week and full-time during their holidays. For more information about hiring students visit <a href="http://tinyurl.com/nzstudyworkrules">http://tinyurl.com/nzstudyworkrules</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Holiday Scheme</td>
<td>Allows people from countries with Working Holiday Scheme agreements to work and travel in New Zealand for up to 12 months, or 23 months for those from the UK or Canada.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information about visa options, visit: [www.immigration.govt.nz/employ-migrants](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/employ-migrants)

For assistance, call the Immigration New Zealand contact centre:

- 0508 558 855 (within New Zealand but outside Auckland)
- 09 914 4100 (from within Auckland)

Ask for Language Line if you need an interpreter.

**Immigration Act 2009**

Under the Immigration Act 2009, an employer must not employ a foreign national who is not entitled to work in New Zealand or not entitled to work for that employer. This applies whether or not the employer knew that the foreign national was not entitled to work.
Checking visas with VisaView

VisaView enables New Zealand employers to check whether a person who is not a New Zealand citizen has a valid visa to work in New Zealand. Use VisaView to be sure that your migrant employee is legally entitled to work in your business.

Visit: www.immigration.govt.nz/visaview

Giving immigration advice

Many employers like to help new staff with their move to New Zealand and the immigration process. This means it is important to be aware of the Immigration Advisers Licensing Act 2007. The Act was made to protect the interests of people receiving immigration advice and to enhance the reputation of New Zealand as a migration destination.

Under the Act, anyone giving immigration advice must be licensed unless they are exempt. This applies whether the person providing advice is in New Zealand or outside New Zealand. This means that, as an employer, you cannot provide immigration advice to an individual.

The Immigration Advisers Authority (IAA) is responsible for administering the Act.

For more information, visit: www.iaa.govt.nz
Finding skilled migrants

**SkillFinder**

SkillFinder is a free Immigration New Zealand service that helps New Zealand employers to search overseas for people with the skills their business needs.

SkillFinder lets employers search Immigration New Zealand’s database of over 400,000 people by occupation, level of academic qualification, country of residence and years of experience. SkillFinder will then send a job alert email to the people in the database who match the search.

The occupation must:

- be level 1 – 3 on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) scale,
- be on one of the skill shortage lists, or
- meet Accredited Employer Talent requirements (if you are an Accredited Employer).

We recommend that you test the New Zealand market to employ a New Zealand resident before using SkillFinder.

*www.immigration.govt.nz/skillfinder*

**New Kiwis**

New Kiwis is a free national employment service provided by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce and Immigration New Zealand. It connects migrant job seekers with New Zealand employers.

*www.newkiwis.co.nz*

**Training your employees**

You can obtain hospitality training advice from Service IQ, the Industry Training Organisation for the New Zealand tourism and hospitality industries.

*www.serviceiq.org.nz*
Employment obligations

As an employer, you will want to assist your migrant employees so they can start work and transition into your workplace and their new community as easily as possible. At the same time, you will need to ensure that your interactions with potential migrants and any migrants currently working for you are within New Zealand law. Not understanding New Zealand law is not an excuse for breaching employees’ minimum employment rights.

Visit: www.employment.govt.nz

In New Zealand, hospitality employers’ organisations give support and publish resources to help their members run their businesses. This includes help with complying with New Zealand employment law.

Hospitality New Zealand: www.hospitalitynz.org.nz

Restaurant Association of New Zealand: www.restaurantnz.co.nz
Written employment agreement

You must give your migrant workers a current written employment agreement before they start working. They must have the time and opportunity to get independent advice before signing it. Get a signed copy back from your migrant worker before they start work and give them a copy of the signed agreement to keep. You must also keep a signed copy for your records. A clearly written employment agreement can help reduce the risk of misunderstanding.

There are two types of clauses in an employment agreement. There are clauses which are required under the New Zealand minimum employment standards, e.g. rate of pay. Other clauses can be contractual arrangements between you and your employee.

For help with building an employment agreement, use the Employer Agreement Builder: eab.business.govt.nz

Working hours

If you and your employee agree to a set number of working hours, then the hours must be stated in their employment agreement. This includes details about the number of hours, the start and finish times or the days of the week they will work.

You cannot make your employee be available for work above the agreed hours in their employment agreement without having a genuine reason and without giving them reasonable compensation for their availability.

You have no obligation to give your employees work hours above what they have already agreed to. Your employee is also able to decline to work any additional hours.

You cannot cancel an employee’s shift without reasonable notice or compensation. You need to negotiate and agree on a reasonable notice period and compensation rates with your employee and include these in the written employment agreement.
90-day trial period

You are able to offer trial periods to new employees. A trial period must be agreed to by both you and your employee in good faith (openly, honestly and fairly) and be part of the written employment agreement. It is also a good idea to mention the trial period in the initial job offer letter.

The employment agreement, with a clause describing the 90-day trial if you choose to include one, needs to be signed at the start of the employment relationship with your employee and before their first day of work.

You should explain to your employee the potential consequences of a 90-day trial period. These include:

- that the employee has no right to make a claim for unjustified dismissal (being fired for no good reason) if they are dismissed before the end of the trial period
- that they can still raise a personal grievance (make a complaint to the relevant authorities) if they experience discrimination, harassment or unjustified action by their employer
- that all other minimum employment rights apply to them while they are on a trial period.

For more about trial periods, visit: www.employment.govt.nz/trial-and-probationary-periods

Minimum wage

Employees must earn at least the minimum wage for each hour worked. You need to keep a written record of all hours your employees work so that you can show that you are paying at least the minimum wage. You must pay your employees in money, either by bank deposit or in cash.

For more information including the current minimum wage, visit: www.employment.govt.nz/minimum-wage
Deductions

You must not make unreasonable deductions from your employees’ pay, for example, by charging fees or levies. You may deduct pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) tax, and if applicable, student loan repayments, child support payments or money to comply with a court order. Other reasonable deductions can only be made after you first obtain specific written consent from the employee.

For more information, visit:
www.employment.govt.nz/pay-deductions

Record keeping

All employers need to maintain accurate daily records of their employees’ time worked, payments and holiday and leave entitlements. You must keep a signed copy of the employment agreement and give a copy to the employee when they request it. You should also keep records of requests and/or agreements to transfer public holidays and to cash up annual holidays.

You have to produce your records when an employee, a Labour Inspector or an Immigration Officer requests them. You must keep your records for at least six years.

For more information, visit:
www.employment.govt.nz/keeping-accurate-records
Sick leave

Your full-time and part-time employees are entitled to five days of paid sick leave each year, after they have been continuously employed by you for six months.

You will need to explain sick leave entitlements to your migrant workers. They may not realise that sick leave can be used not only when they are sick or injured, but also when their spouse or partner, or a dependent (such as a child or elderly parent), is sick or injured.

Remember that your migrant employee may not have a GP, so it may be difficult for them to obtain a doctor’s certificate. You can ask for a doctor’s certificate after your employee has been sick or injured for three consecutive calendar days. If you require your employee to provide a doctor’s certificate within three days, then you must pay the reasonable costs for your employee to get one within the timeframe.

If your employee is sick before they have worked for six months they can ask to take their sick leave in advance, or they can ask to take their annual leave in advance. They also have the option to take unpaid leave.

For more information on sick leave, visit: www.employment.govt.nz/sick-leave
Bereavement leave

Your employees are entitled to three days’ paid leave because of the death of an immediate family member (known as bereavement leave) after six months’ continuous employment. This includes the death of their spouse or partner, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild or their spouse or partner’s parent. If there is more than one death at a time, your employee can take three days’ leave for each person who has died. They can also take up to one day’s bereavement leave for a death outside their immediate family, depending on their relationship with them.

For more information on bereavement leave, visit: www.employment.govt.nz/bereavement-leave

Depending on their pattern of work, casual workers may also be entitled to sick and bereavement leave.

Parental leave

If your worker has a new child or begins permanently caring for a child (such as through adoption), and they meet certain conditions, then they are eligible for up to 18 weeks’ paid parental leave. This is funded by the government.

For more information about parental leave, visit: www.employment.govt.nz/parental-leave

To find out about the length of your employee’s parental leave entitlement, use the calculator here: www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/eligibility
Annual holidays

Many migrant workers may not be used to having the right to take at least four weeks of paid annual holidays after they have completed a year of employment. Remember, your employees can take at least two weeks’ leave at once if they want to.

They also may not know that they are entitled to 8% of their gross earnings in holiday pay, to be paid out when they leave, if their employment is for less than one year.

Different kinds of employment in New Zealand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Usually between 30 and 40 hours a week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Usually between 10 and 15 hours a week, sometimes up to 30 hours a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>Your employee works when you require them to – they are ‘on call’ – and they do not work regular, predictable hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If your migrant worker works part-time, they are entitled to annual holidays ‘pro rata’. This means that they will get four weeks of holidays based on what a working week is for them. For example, if they work three days each week, then their annual leave entitlement will be 12 days.

Employees with a genuinely intermittent or irregular work pattern are called ‘casual’ employees. If you employ casual workers, you can pay their annual holidays as ‘pay-as-you-go’. This means that you pay 8% of their gross earnings as holiday pay, on top of their wages.

Casual employees are different from part-time employees and specific conditions must be met to enter a ‘pay-as-you-go’ arrangement. If your employees work regularly (e.g. every weekend), or if they are on a roster, then they are likely to be considered part-time workers and are entitled to four weeks’ paid annual holidays.

For more information about casual workers, visit: www.employment.govt.nz/types-of-employee
Public holidays

Migrant workers will not be familiar with New Zealand’s unique set of public holidays, and they will need to know when they occur.

If a public holiday falls on a day when your employee would usually work, they are entitled to get the day off work and be paid for it. But if you ask them to work on a public holiday, you must pay them time-and-a-half for the hours that they work. If they would usually work on that day, then they are entitled to another day off on full pay (an alternative day, also known as a day in lieu).

Your worker has the right to ask to transfer a New Zealand public holiday to another working day and you must consider the request in good faith. This could, for example, be to celebrate a religious or cultural holiday. You can also ask your employee to transfer a public holiday to another day when they would usually work. In either case, both you and your employee should make the agreement in writing.

Breaks

Rest and meal breaks have direct benefits for workplaces by helping employees stay safe in their jobs.

Well rested employees are also happier and more productive. In hospitality, your employees may have to stand for long hours and sustain their focus on repetitive or precise tasks. This can lead to them becoming fatigued. Giving your employees regular breaks helps to mitigate the associated risks.

Controlling risks, including physical and mental fatigue, are part of your obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act.
You are required to provide rest and meal breaks that are appropriate to the length of an employee’s day. Their breaks must give them time to rest, refresh and attend to their personal needs.

There are no specific rules about how long or how often breaks should be. The timing and length of your employees’ breaks should be negotiated with them. Usually, rest breaks are 10–15 minutes long and meal breaks are at least 30 minutes long.

Rest breaks must be paid. Whether meal breaks are paid will depend on what you and your employee agree to when negotiating the written employment agreement.

You may restrict breaks in some situations, but there are special requirements that must be met. If you do not provide breaks your employees must be fairly compensated.

For more information about breaks, visit:
www.employment.govt.nz/hours-and-wages/breaks/

Tax in New Zealand

Tax is a complicated area but it is important that you, as an employer, follow all of your legal tax obligations.

For some useful tools for businesses, visit:
www.ird.govt.nz/tool-for-business

If you want to know more about taxation in New Zealand, visit:
business.govt.nz/tax-and-accounting/tax-when-you-have-employees/paye
**Types of tax in New Zealand**

Pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) income tax is deducted from your employees’ wages or salary. It is deducted before you pay your employees and you pay it to Inland Revenue on behalf of your employees each month.

Other taxes include goods and services tax (GST), which is added to the price of most products and services in New Zealand. Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) levies fund claims for injuries suffered by all New Zealanders. If you are a small business owner, you will pay an ACC work levy every year. Employees pay their ACC levies as part of their PAYE tax.

**IRD Numbers**

It is important that you tell your migrant worker that they need an Inland Revenue (IRD) number before they start working, otherwise they will be taxed at the highest no-notification rate.

*For some useful tools for businesses, visit:*
www.ird.govt.nz/how-to/irdnumbers/yourirdnumber.html

**KiwiSaver**

KiwiSaver is a work-based retirement savings scheme. Employers must contribute at least 3% of an employee’s gross salary or wage to the employee’s KiwiSaver account or fund.

*For more information about KiwiSaver for employers, visit:*
www.ird.govt.nz/kiwisaver/employers

Your employee cannot join KiwiSaver if they are holding a temporary, visitor or student visa.
Health and safety in hospitality

Keeping work healthy and safe

If a worker gets injured or ill, your business is affected. You need to find and train a replacement, deal with the paperwork and keep the business running. Keeping your workers healthy and safe is not just the right thing to do – it is good for your business too. It is also the law in New Zealand.

You have a legal obligation to ensure the health and safety of people who work for your business. You also have to ensure that any other people are not put at risk. You need to identify and manage risks together with your workers to make sure that everyone at your business stays healthy and safe.

Your responsibility is to provide the right training, supervision and equipment for employees to do their jobs properly and in a healthy and safe way. You must make sure workers have a chance to contribute to health and safety decisions. You need to have effective ways for workers to raise issues that may come up day-to-day. It is important to make it clear what is expected of workers and their rights and responsibilities in the workplace.
Risk management

Some hazards in hospitality workplaces can include:

› hot liquids, elements and flames
› smoke and vapour
› heavy objects such as pots and pans
› equipment with sharp edges, such as knives, meat slicers and mandolines
› slippery floors and spills
› electrical cords and clutter
› food safety and hygiene
› long working hours

› physical fatigue
› mental stress
› customers under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs
› violent or aggressive customers
› loud music
› dark or small spaces
› chemicals and cleaning fluids
› manual lifting
› broken glass or crockery.

The level of risk from these hazards will be different for each business. Make sure that your workers know what the main risks are and how to manage them.
**Worker responsibilities**

Explain to your workers that they must:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and ensure that their actions do not cause harm to themselves or others
- comply with any reasonable instructions, policies or procedures on how to work in a safe and healthy way.

Explain to your workers that being responsible means:

- not doing a task, if they believe that doing the work is a serious risk to them or to someone else
- letting a manager or supervisor know right away so that the issue can be fixed.

**Training and supervision**

Make sure that migrant workers understand how to operate equipment safely. Make sure you supply the right personal protective equipment, such as gloves or an eye wash station. Explain why this equipment is important and show them how to use it properly.

If your migrant workers do not speak English as a first language, and you do not speak their language, be sure that they understand the health and safety information that you provide to them. Ask them to repeat or demonstrate through actions what you have said.

Describe to your workers what to do in an emergency and where you keep emergency equipment and first aid kits.

You must show your migrant workers how to report hazards, accidents and incidents which did not cause an injury but could have done so (near misses). You may need a system to record these.

Part of training is making sure all workers know how to raise any safety or health concerns with you. Workers may also want to raise good ideas for how to make work less risky. Regularly encourage your workers to raise any issues with you.

Your business will be healthier, safer and more productive if there are effective ways for workers to contribute.
WorkSafe New Zealand

WorkSafe is New Zealand’s health and safety regulator. They monitor and enforce compliance with health and safety law, publish information and give advice about health and safety.

To learn more about WorkSafe, visit: www.business.govt.nz/worksafe

You must notify WorkSafe when certain work-related events happen, such as death or serious injury.

Use WorkSafe’s Notifiable Event tool to find out which work-related events are notifiable and what actions you must take following a notifiable event:

www.worksafe.govt.nz/when-to-notify

You can contact Worksafe:

- By phone: 0800 030 040 (24 Hours)
  Ask for Language Line if you need an interpreter
- Online: forms.worksafe.govt.nz/notifiable-event-notification

Resources

For up-to-date information on how to manage risks with your workers visit:

www.business.govt.nz/health-and-safety
www.worksafe.govt.nz/worksafe/hswa/working-smarter/how-to-manage-work-risks

For more on health and safety in cafés and restaurants, visit: www.worksafe.govt.nz/cafe-and-restaurant-risks
ACC publishes information about how to reduce the number of injuries in hospitality businesses.

For more information, visit:
http://tinyurl.com/nzfoodsafef and
http://tinyurl.com/nzfoodsafefbooks
Culture and communication

Differences in culture and communication

Language and communication skills are important to many jobs in hospitality, whether it is chatting with a customer or relaying orders in the kitchen.

For some migrants, differences in language and communication styles will be particularly important to consider. This can even be the case for migrants who speak English as a first language. Kiwi ways of working and communicating can still be unfamiliar to them.
For migrants whose first language is not English, understanding conversation can be even more of a challenge. It is important to remember that if someone has a different accent it does not mean that they have poor English skills or cannot do the job. It means that both parties need to take extra care to ensure that they are heard and understood.

Kiwis can use informal language at work, including slang (colloquial language). This makes it difficult for migrants who have been taught formal English, and also those migrants whose first language is a different variety of English, to understand what is being communicated.

There are cultural aspects to consider as well. For example, some migrant workers are offended by bad language and shouting. Some may not be used to the shallow hierarchies and informal relationships that are common in New Zealand workplaces.

Also, words used in the hospitality business in New Zealand might be completely new to migrant workers. You can help them learn new words by writing them down with a brief definition. Employers who take the time to help employees with language should see improvements in productivity.

**TIPS**

Here are some tips for communicating with your migrant employees:

› Encourage your migrant workers to speak slowly if you are having difficulty understanding them.

› Ask your migrants directly for their opinions or suggestions if they do not contribute when you feel they have knowledge or expertise that is appropriate.

› Understand that if they express advice too strongly or bluntly they may be having difficulty understanding what is appropriate.

› Make it clear when you are making a suggestion and not giving an instruction.
Use phrases like, ‘This is just a suggestion, what do you think?’ or ‘Can you think of another way we could do this?’

› Be very clear when giving instructions. Do not miss steps or make assumptions about their understanding.

› Provide important instructions in writing if necessary.

› Try to demonstrate or use pictures and diagrams to explain things rather than words.

› Use simple and direct language. Explain any complicated words and jargon.

› Try not to swear or shout as it can cause offence.

› Ask open questions rather than yes/no questions. A migrant’s cultural background can make it difficult for them to say no to the boss. Do not take advantage of this.

› Be aware that your migrant workers may say yes, even if they do not understand.

› Check their understanding of your instructions by asking your worker to repeat what they have to do. Ask them, ‘What are you going to do first?’

› Use a noticeboard, whiteboard and signs to provide visual reminders for your workers.

In New Zealand the relationships between people at work are different from those at home.

Liu Chang, migrant business owner of Kung Fu Noodle located in the Balmoral shops in Auckland.
Communicating at work

Kiwi workplaces are less formal than what many migrants are used to. They may not be used to talking in the workplace about non-work topics, like what they did at the weekend.

Some migrants find it difficult to chat during breaks and while on the job due to cultural or language differences. Small talk at the beginning of the day or before and after staff meetings can also be a challenge. Light teasing or ‘banter’, which is common in many hospitality workplaces, may also be unfamiliar to them. Their lack of engagement and possible unfamiliarity with New Zealand humour can make them seem unfriendly, when this may not be the case.

Even the ways Kiwis speak can be challenging for migrants. They may not recognise an instruction if it is stated in an indirect way. For example, ‘Do you want to chop those vegetables?’ and ‘The pot needs to be over there’ are indirect instructions that can be misinterpreted. ‘Andrea, please chop those vegetables’ and ‘Sergio, please move that pot over there’ are instructions that are more likely to be understood.

It is helpful to encourage your migrant workers to ask questions to clarify what is being said. Some migrants can be offended if you ask them, ‘Do you understand?’ as it can imply that their English is not of a high enough standard.

For more information on how to communicate well with your migrant employee, visit: worktalk.immigration.govt.nz
Talking with customers

Differences in communication styles can make talking with customers especially difficult for migrant workers. Kiwis often request things indirectly and this can be difficult to understand, particularly for those who do not speak English as a first language.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We’re after a glass of water</th>
<th>I want a glass of water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The chicken looks good</td>
<td>I want to order the chicken meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could do with some salt</td>
<td>I want some salt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Kiwi accent can also make it more difficult to understand, especially in noisy and busy environments.
There are some things you can do to help acclimatise your new migrant worker to customer service work. For example, if your employee is a waiter, pair them with an experienced colleague for a few days so they can get used to the way customers order their food. This way they will have someone at hand who can provide immediate support.

Another option is to run a training session for your employees and facilitate a number of role-plays. Have another employee act as a customer and ask your migrant worker to take their order. The group can then provide constructive feedback. This can also be effective for dealing with difficult talk, such as customer complaints. It is important to make training like this a positive, inclusive and constructive experience for everyone. Remember that training is useful for all employees, not just your migrant staff.

**Providing English language support**

Several organisations provide English language support for people who do not speak English as their first language. Some new migrants may need literacy and numeracy support. To find local service providers, phone or visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

*For more information, visit: [www.cab.org.nz](http://www.cab.org.nz)*

You can also direct your migrant worker to the local library. Libraries are a good place to go to find information about activities in the community and language learning resources.
Life in New Zealand

Differences for migrants

For many new migrants, no matter how good their planning and preparation, there will be things to learn. They will have to adjust to new ways of living, road rules, banking systems and laws. Settling into working and living in New Zealand will take time. It is useful for you, as their employer, to know about the key differences of living in New Zealand that new migrant employees may not be familiar with.

Differences can include:

› cost of living, especially for electricity and internet
› heating costs, particularly for migrants from warmer climates and those living in southern regions of New Zealand
› use of electrical appliances
› how transport works, including driver licensing, cycling, buses and trains
› the climate and wearing suitable clothing and footwear.
Helping with accommodation

Accommodation in New Zealand may be different from other countries. For example, New Zealand rental properties are usually unfurnished. Your migrant worker may need help with finding furniture and appliances to furnish their rental property.

Information about tenancy is available at:
www.tenancy.govt.nz

How to provide settlement support

If you want to retain your staff, it helps to go the extra mile.

You do not have to do it all yourself. Immigration New Zealand provides settlement information, resources, programmes and services nationally. There is information available to help all newcomers settle into work and life in New Zealand on this site:

Visit: www.newzealandnow.govt.nz

There is also advice for employers on settling workers here:

Visit: www.immigration.govt.nz/employ-migrants
Your checklist to plan ahead

Being well prepared for the arrival of new migrant employees can make a big difference to how well they settle into your workplace and life in New Zealand. We have prepared a checklist to help you plan.

☑ Before Arrival:

☐ Have I given my new migrant employee time to read and seek advice on their employment agreement?
☐ Have we both got copies of the signed employment agreement?
☐ Have I given them information about living and working in New Zealand, such as the migrant version of this guide?
☐ Have I got information about the cultural values and work styles of my new migrant employee?
☐ Do I know how they are used to being managed at work?
☐ Have I discussed NZ Ready, Immigration New Zealand’s free online planning tool for migrants moving to New Zealand, with the new employee?
☐ Have I arranged a buddy or mentor for my new migrant employee?
☐ Are the other employees prepared for the new person’s arrival?
☐ Is there a job description and list of tasks and goals for the new employee?
☐ Do I have written information about how we operate, such as staff structure and roles, lines of communication, hours of work and timing of breaks?
☐ Is there someone meeting them when they arrive in New Zealand?
☐ Is their accommodation and transportation organised?
☐ Is there someone locally from their ethnic background who I can put them in touch with?
☐ Do I know about their religious beliefs and whether they have any religious commitments that could affect when they can work?
On Arrival: Living in New Zealand

- Have I checked that they know about local transport options?
- Have I checked that they know where to buy food, especially from their culture?
- Have I advised them where they can get a mobile phone or SIM card?
- Have I discussed the cost of living in New Zealand?
- Have I mentioned how utilities and bills are usually paid in New Zealand?
- Have I asked if they need a driver licence?
- Have I checked that they have the right clothing and equipment for work?
- Have I provided them with information about their local community and CAB contact details?

First Day at Work

- Have I introduced the new migrant to their buddy or mentor
- Have I introduced all team members to the new employee
- Have I taken them on a tour of the workplace
- Have I shown them the emergency exits and emergency procedures
- Have I shown them how to use equipment safely and in a healthy way (e.g. to avoid muscular strain or inhaling fumes)
- Have I given them written documents about the job and workplace, including a copy of the signed employment agreement
- Have I set up regular meetings with my migrant employee and their buddy to help them to settle into the workplace
- Have I allowed for some time off in the first week for the new employee to organise their home life
- Have I asked them if they need any other help with settling in, such as arranging school visits, getting an IRD number or opening a bank account

Next Days at Work

- Have I organised a health and safety briefing, including information on:
  - Why it is important that they stay healthy and safe
  - How workers can raise health and safety concerns or suggestions (e.g. at a regular meeting or recorded in a book)
- Have I organised other relevant training (e.g. first aid)
- Have I organised social activities for my new employee and their family
- Have I found ways to celebrate and acknowledge cultural diversity in the workplace
More than words

Getting things done: Requests and instructions at work

Why do some migrants have problems with requests and instructions?

Many new migrant employees are used to a hierarchical workplace structure and managers who speak very directly. New Zealand managers, however, usually speak in a more respectful manner and make their instructions sound like requests rather than orders.

It is common for New Zealand employers to soften requests, such as:

*Do you think you could bring me that grater?* – rather than – *Bring me that grater*

*It would be a good idea to add some salt* – rather than – *Add some salt*

Many migrants find these softened or tentative requests and instructions confusing and they are not exactly sure what is expected of them.

How can you make sure that a migrant employee has understood your instruction?

› Avoid giving more than one instruction at a time.
› Be clear about who is to do the task. Use ‘you’ rather than ‘we’ or ‘I’. *‘Could you get that knife?’* is easier to understand than *‘We will need a knife.’*
› Repeat or summarise the key points. Give the message at least twice and emphasise the most important details.
› Avoid saying *‘Do you understand?’* A new migrant employee might say ‘yes’ to appear willing, capable and respectful but may not understand completely. Instead, check understanding by asking *‘What will you do first? What will you do if you have questions or problems? Could you summarise the main points that we have been discussing?’*
Maybe we could... Suggestions and advice at work

In some cultures you only give your opinion or make suggestions when invited. In other cultures, advice is expected and given at times when New Zealanders would not give advice. New migrants can be unsure when it is appropriate to give advice and voice opinions in New Zealand workplaces.

New Zealanders often soften suggestions or opinions at work to avoid imposing their views too strongly on others and risking a relationship breakdown.

Some people use the same words when they are making a suggestion or expressing their opinion as when they are making a request or giving an instruction, for example, ‘I wonder if we could...’

New migrants may have difficulty understanding whether they have been given a suggestion rather than an instruction. They can also find it difficult to soften suggestions.

How can you help?

Directly ask new migrants for their opinions or suggestions if they do not contribute when you feel that they have appropriate knowledge or expertise. Start with their name. For example, ‘Cheung, do you have any suggestions about how we can do this?’

Understand that if they give advice too strongly or bluntly they may just be having difficulty understanding what is appropriate. English courses often teach the use of ‘you should’ for giving advice, but New Zealanders tend to avoid saying this as it is too strong and direct.

Make it clear when it is just a suggestion and not an instruction. Use phrases such as, ‘This is just a suggestion, what do you think?’ and ‘Can you think of another way we could do this?’
More than words

Fitting in: Being part of the team

Being able to communicate and interact with colleagues is one of the key aspects of fitting into a new team. Most new employees need to learn the style of interacting and communicating that is common in their new workplace.

This can be even more challenging for your new migrant employees who are trying to adapt to communication styles in a language that is not their mother tongue. Also, in some cultures, small talk and developing relationships with workmates is not the norm.
How can you help new migrant employees to fit in?

Greet your new migrant employees at the start of their shifts, even if they do not respond at first. Remember that even simple greetings and farewells may not be the norm for some migrants. They do not mean to be unfriendly; they just may not be used to talking to superiors in an informal way.

Encourage your new migrants to join in the small talk during breaks. Show an interest in their background and find out what they see as normal workplace behaviour.

If there is a lot of joking or banter in your workplace, try to include them in this. Again, this may not be something they are used to, but it is an important part of friendly behaviour in many New Zealand workplace teams.

Give new migrants time to adapt. For some new migrants, even ways of showing interest such as nodding and saying ‘mm, yes’ when listening to someone are not usual. An attentive silence is considered respectful in many cultures.

Also, speaking up when making a contribution in a meeting is not the norm in some cultures. In China, for instance, you must always use a quiet voice when talking to a superior. Encourage your new migrant employees to speak up, like their workmates do, if they are very softly spoken.
More than words

Difficult talk at work: Refusing, disagreeing and complaining

In many cultures it is difficult to refuse your boss even if the request is beyond what is normally expected. Sometimes employees need to refuse, disagree or complain. Sometimes you want and expect other opinions and you need to know when there are potential problems.

I was planning to attend my friends’ birthday celebration but he’s my boss....”

We need another person to work this weekend...
Making refusals and disagreement possible

When asking for something beyond what is normally expected, for example, when asking your new migrant employee to stay at work late, make sure they have no other commitments first. Say something like, ‘What are your plans for this evening?’

If you do not prepare in this way for your request, they may not tell you that they have a family commitment or a ticket for a concert or movie.

When asking for feedback, make it clear that you want to hear about any problems as well as about things that will work or that are going well. You could say, ‘What changes would you suggest? What problems can you see?’

Expressing refusals and disagreement

New Zealanders tend to be very indirect and polite when they refuse, disagree and complain. While some new migrants find it difficult to speak out, others struggle to express refusals, disagreements and complaints in a suitably polite way.

Try not to react too negatively if disagreement is expressed directly or bluntly. Understand that learning to disagree less bluntly and to refuse and complain politely can take some time.
Won’t a buddy system for new migrant staff cost time and money?

No. A buddy system saves time and money by getting your new migrant employee familiar with your workplace faster.

It also helps with any small problems that come up along the way and gives new migrants someone to talk to.
What does a buddy do?

- Explains how the business works
- Explains the usual way of doing things in the workplace
- Explains Kiwi slang and technical words
- Answers questions
- Gives moral support
- Helps sort out any problems
- Includes the new migrant in social activities
- Learns about other cultures
- Learns mentoring and leadership skills

How does this help?

- Migrants understand workplace systems and culture better
- They settle more quickly
- They become more productive
- They stay in your business

A good buddy is often one who has something in common with the new migrant employee, such as children the same age or similar interests. In hospitality, think about assigning a buddy who works in the same section as the new employee, so that they have someone familiar close by.
Helping new migrants to settle and perform

Are your new migrant employees juggling a lot of things?

Helping new migrants settle means that they are able to perform well in your business, faster.

This diagram represents the interconnectedness of life at work and outside work for new migrant workers.

The Workplace Settlement Model

- **High Performer**
  - Integrating into work
  - Training and support

- **Well Settled**
  - Children integrating at school
  - Partner integrating into work
  - Integrating into the community

- **In the Workplace**
  - New Migrant Employee
  - Home and car, power and phone, bank account, IRD number, doctor, dentist, etc.

- **Outside the Workplace**
  - Partner and children – employment and school

**Maximising potential**

**Building a sense of belonging**

**The nuts and bolts of starting out**
Many new migrant employees have partners and families and need time at the beginning to organise their new life in New Zealand.

**TIP**

- A happy new migrant gives 100% to the business
- A happy family means a happy new migrant
- Organise some staff and family days to get everyone together
- Set up a partners’ network so the partners of migrant employees can support each other

Maintaining an interest in how your new migrant and their family are settling in will help them to perform well. It will also help you to identify what kind of support, if any, they need along the way.
Helping new migrants to settle and perform

Has your new migrant become unmotivated?
Does it affect their work – and your business?
Maybe it is because they are having second thoughts.

It is quite common to feel like that. It is one of the settlement stages.
New migrants go through a series of settlement stages and some settle more quickly than others.

Forethought - Before migrants leave for New Zealand they need to have realistic expectations about living and working in New Zealand. It helps if they understand that the following settlement stages are normal.

- **FUN** - Excitement with the move to a new life in a new country.
- **FRIGHT** - A bad experience, small or large, may trigger frustration and dissatisfaction.
- **FLIGHT** - Having second thoughts – either wanting to go home or actually leaving.
- **FIGHT** - The decision to battle with negative feelings and to make the most of the opportunities available.
- **FIT** - Adjustment to their new life; feeling ‘settled’.

**TIP**

- Offer support to your migrant employees and their families during the low period – it can make all the difference to their work.
Local information for new migrants

Immigration New Zealand provides a free local information service for new migrants about living and working in New Zealand.

This service can be accessed at the Citizens Advice Bureau in 30 locations around the country.

South Island

Nelson–Tasman
CAB Nelson-Tasman
9 Paru Paru Road, Nelson.
Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

Marlborough
CAB Marlborough
Marlborough Community Centre, 25 Alfred St, Blenheim.
Monday–Friday 9.30am – 4pm

Canterbury
CAB North Canterbury
Trevor Inch Memorial Library, 141 Percival Street, Rangiora.
Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

CAB Christchurch City
Ara (formerly CPIT)
15 Williams St, City.
(Cnr Ferry Rd. & Williams St.)
Monday and Friday 9am – 12pm, Tuesday–Thursday 9am – 3pm

CAB Christchurch West
Hornby Community Care Centre, 8 Goulding Avenue, Hornby, Christchurch.
Monday–Friday 9am – 5pm

Free help in your language
Call 0800 InfoNOW
(0800 463 6669). You can ask to talk in your language
South Island continued...

**Otago**

- **CAB Dunedin**
  283-301 Moray Place.
  Monday–Friday 8.45am – 5.30pm
  Saturday 9.30am – 12 noon

- **CAB Queenstown**
  44 Stanley St.
  Monday–Friday 9.30am – 4.30pm

**Southland**

- **CAB Invercargill**
  97 Spey St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 5pm
  Saturday 10am – 12pm

North Island

**Northland**

- **CAB Whangarei**
  Municipal Building, 71 Bank St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

- **Auckland**

  - **CAB New Lynn**
    New Lynn Library Building,
    3 Memorial Drive, New Lynn.
    Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm
    Saturday 10am – 1pm

  - **CAB Northcote**
    Northcote Library Buildings,
    5 Ernie Mays, Northcote.
    Monday–Friday 9.15am-3.30pm

  - **CAB Eden Albert**
    82 St. Lukes Road (by Public Library) Mt Albert.
    Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm

  - **CAB Manurewa**
    Library Complex, 7/1 Hill Road, Manurewa.
    Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm
    Saturday 9am – 11am

  - **CAB Mangere**
    Shop 17, Orly Avenue,
    Mangere Town Centre.
    Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm

  - **CAB Onehunga**
    Community Centre & Library Building,
    81 Church St, Onehunga.
    Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm
    Wednesdays open until 7pm
    Saturday 10am – 12pm

**Waikato**

- **CAB Hamilton**
  55 Victoria St.
  Monday–Friday 8.45am – 5pm

- **Taranaki**

  - **CAB New Plymouth**
    Community House,
    32 Leach St.
    Monday–Friday 9.30am – 3.30pm

**Whanganui-Manawatu**

- **CAB Palmerston North**
  Community House.
  77 King St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

**Bay of Plenty**

- **CAB Tauranga**
  38 Hamilton St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 5pm

**Gisborne**

- **CAB Gisborne**
  124A Bright St.
  Monday–Friday 9.30am – 4pm

**Hawke's Bay**

- **CAB Napier**
  Community Hub, Community House,
  62 Raffles St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm
  Saturday 9.30 am – 12pm

**Wellington**

- **CAB Lower Hutt**
  Apex House, Cnr Queens Drive and Laings Road.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 5pm

- **CAB Upper Hutt**
  18 Logan St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

- **CAB Porirua**
  2nd Floor, Pember House,
  16 Hagley St.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

- **CAB Kapiti**
  1st Floor Coastlands Shoppingtown, Paraparaumu.
  Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm

- **CAB Wellington City**
  Mezzanine Floor Central Library, 65 Victoria St.
  Opens 9.30am Monday - Friday
  Closes 6.30pm Tuesday-Thursday
  Closes 3.30pm Friday
  Saturday 11am – 1pm
Acknowledgements

This guide was collaboratively developed by the following organisations:

A copy of this guide is available online

Visit: www.newzealandnow.govt.nz guides