

Immigration to New Zealand, Part 1: Corporate Work Visas

by *Simon Laurent and Bill Milnes*

Employees of international organizations may be granted work visas for New Zealand (NZ) under several sections of 'Immigration Instructions.'

Business visitors from visa-free countries, who are coming to NZ for sales, buying or similar purposes, who will not be 'working' in a NZ business, may travel visa-free and be granted a Business Visitor Visa on arrival. However, to avoid potential issues on arrival, it is wise to ensure that the intentions meet Immigration NZ (INZ) criteria. [Laurent Law](#) would usually be able to provide such advice by phone or email, at no cost.

All others intending to work in NZ will require a work visa which would usually be sought prior to travel. The relevant categories are:

- Senior executive or specialist personnel on short term secondment who have an offer of employment in a substantial NZ company or a NZ subsidiary of an overseas company;
- Senior or specialist personnel being seconded as an Intra-corporate transferee in a multi-national company;
- Personnel on longer term transfer would apply under Essential Skills instructions, which in many cases require the NZ employer to provide evidence there is no one available locally, who could with reasonable training, fill the position.

It has been said that Essential Skills work visa



applications are among the most difficult of applications to achieve success, because they are considered to be a risk to the employment of New Zealanders. Consequently, professional advice should be sought to ensure that the role meets INZ and labour market criteria that the proposed employment can be justified and the process is followed so that the application can be successful.

Visa terms vary from 1 to 5 years, depending on the category and whether or not, medical and police certificates are provided.

Health and character requirements must be met. Medical certificates are required for all applicants for any stay of 12 months or longer. Police certificates



FOR MORE ON WORK VISAS:

Read [Living and Working in Trinidad and Tobago](#) in the March issue of the newly redesigned VOICE.

are required for applicants over the age of 17, for any stay of 24 months or longer.

Dependent partners may be granted a visitor or open work visa of the same duration of that of the principal applicant. For various reasons we recommend the partner applies for a work visa. Dependent children to age 5 would apply for visitor visas and those aged 5-16 would apply for student visas. Tertiary age children are in a more difficult situation and advice would vary depending on the circumstances of the family.

Although we get exceptional service from most overseas branches of Immigration New Zealand, sometimes unforeseen circumstances require urgent travel and there is not enough time to obtain a work visa before traveling. On those rare occasions we can liaise with INZ for legal entry to NZ with the lodgement of the applications once the applicant has arrived in NZ.

Laurent Law specializes in New Zealand immigration. Simon Laurent, the firm Principal, and Bill Milnes, the Senior Consultant, are both past chairmen of the New Zealand Association for Migration & Investment Inc. (NZAMI).