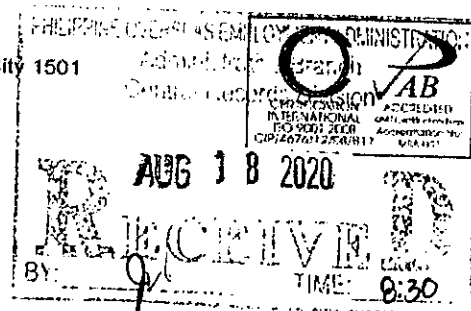




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New Zealand to Implement Changes in Policy for the Issuance of Temporary Work Visas

On top of existing POEA regulations that govern the documentation of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), the government of New Zealand is set to implement changes on the way employers recruit migrants for temporary work in New Zealand. Beginning in July 2020 and for the next eighteen (18) months, the changes that will affect New Zealand employers and the migrant workers they employ, are as follows:

1. *Introduction of a new employer-led visa application process.* From 2021, employers wishing to employ migrant workers on the new temporary work visa will use a 3-step process: the employer-check; the job-check and the worker-check.
 - a. An employer check – mandatory for all employers, including those with an existing accreditation, to be accredited under New Zealand regulations and under the new application process before they can hire migrants on the new work visa.
 - b. A job check – this will include checking that the job is paid in line with the New Zealand market rate and, in some cases, will include a labour market test to ensure New Zealand workers are not available.
 - c. A worker check – when the worker applies for a visa, they must show they meet New Zealand standard character, identity, health requirements, as well as showing they have the skills to do the job they have been offered.
2. *A new temporary work visa that replaces six (6) temporary work visas.* From 2021, a new temporary work visa will replace 6 existing visas:
 - a. Essential Skills Work Visa
 - b. Essential Skills Work Visa
 - c. Talent (Accredited Employer) Work Visa
 - d. Long Term Skill Shortage List Work Visa
 - e. Silver Fern Job Search Visa, and
 - f. Silver Fern Practical Experience Visa.
3. *Classifying jobs as low- or high-paid.* Previously, New Zealand used a combination of a job's Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) skill level and the salary to assess if someone is low, mid or high skilled. From 27 July



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2020 New Zealand will replace this with a median-wage threshold as an indicator of skill. Applicants will be assessed as either:

- a. at or above the median wage, or
- b. below the median wage.

The current median wage of NZD \$25.50 an hour will be used as the threshold. The calculation of remuneration will continue to be in the same way based on an hourly rate.

4. *Strengthening the labor market test for low-paid jobs, open access for high-paid jobs in rural regions and managing labor markets in major cities and regions.* As part of the labor market test, employers will have to:

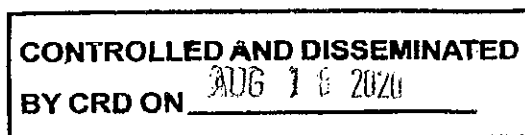
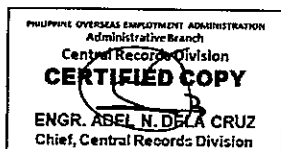
- a. include the salary when advertising the job
- b. provide information about low-paid jobs to MSD, and
- c. accept potential workers referred by MSD for a low-paid job, with some exceptions.

New Zealand has categorized its regions into three (3) types:

- a. City includes Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin
- b. Higher Supply Region is a region with a variable or high number of people available for work and low unemployment or underemployment, covering Northland, Manawatu-Wanganui, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne and Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough and the West Coast as well as regional Wellington, including the Wairarapa.
- c. Lower Supply Region is a region with low number of people available for work and high number of jobs available. The lower supply regions are: Waikato, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland.

Employers offering a high-paid job outside Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin will not have to do a labour market test. Employers in the cities will still need to undertake a labour market test for any job they offer, unless it is on a skills shortage list.

5. *Introducing sector agreements for a range of industries that regularly employ migrant workers.* In the future, policies for temporary work visas will be informed by advice from new Regional Skills Leadership Groups that will provide information to us about the skills needed in their regions. Before 2021, the New Zealand government will be negotiating agreements with industry sectors that employ large numbers of migrant workers, starting with the residential care (including aged care) and meat worker sectors. A sector agreement will include a workforce plan and conditions employers need to meet for recruiting temporary migrants for specific occupations in the sector.



6. *Reinstating the ability for lower-paid workers to bring their families to New Zealand.* From mid-2020, low-paid migrant workers will be able to support family visas. Their partners and children younger than school age can apply for Visitor Visas for the duration of the work visa. School-age children can apply for student visas for the duration of the work visa.

Further details are published and updated at the official Immigration New Zealand portal at www.immigration.govt.nz.

For the information and guidance of all concerned.


BERNARD P. OLALIA
Administrator

___ August 2020

Source: *Immigration New Zealand Official Website*
www.immigration.govt.nz

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