



Crown World Mobility

Immigration Update New Zealand

MAY 2026

- Family Visa applications moving to Immigration Online
- Employment conditions clarified for open work visas
- Higher Income and Sponsorship requirements – Pacific and family visas

Family visa applications moving to Immigration Online

INZ are continuing their transition to a fully digital immigration system, with further updates taking effect from **June 1, 2026**. From this date, a range of visitor, work, and student visa pathways linked to a primary temporary visa holder will move into the updated platform. Applications for family members will be managed within a single system, with submissions automatically linked where they relate to the same family unit.

The enhanced platform is set to introduce a more structured application process, with clearer guidance and dynamic forms that adjust based on individual circumstances. These improvements aim to reduce incomplete applications and support more efficient processing.

During the transition, applications already lodged will continue to be processed as usual. Draft applications may either be completed in the current system or restarted in the new platform, depending on the applicant's preference.

For employers managing workforce planning and family movements, this change supports a more integrated approach, particularly where multiple applications are submitted together.

Employment conditions clarified for open work visas

Changes to employment conditions for people with open work visas came into effect from **20 April 2026**.

These changes are designed to provide clarity about what work is allowed under open work visas, helping migrants to better understand their rights and responsibilities. Clear and consistent visa conditions reduce uncertainty and support safer, fairer, and more compliant work practices for both migrants and employers.

An open work visa allows you work for almost any employer, in any job or location in New Zealand, without needing a job offer. An employer-specific work visa, like the Accredited Employer Work Visa, links you to one employer and a set role. Employer-specific work visas will not be impacted by these changes.

INZ recognises that not all migrants are familiar with New Zealand's employment laws or business rules, and that changes to visa conditions can sometimes be difficult to navigate. Their focus is on education and helping people clearly understand their visa conditions.

These changes do not apply to Student Visa holders.

How the world works better

Two new types of employment conditions

1. Open work visas allowing any work

Some open work visa holders will be able to undertake any work in New Zealand. This includes working for an employer, sole trading, or owning and operating a business.

This employment condition applies to the following visas:

- Partner of a Worker Work Visa
- Partner of a Student Work Visa
- Partner of a Student Work Visa supported by a New Zealand Scholarship funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Post Study Work Visa
- Partner of a New Zealander Work Visa
- Partner of a Military Work Visa

2. Open work visas requiring work for an employer

Other open work visa holders must work for an employer, either under an employment agreement or a contract for services. INZ considers a contract for services as employment.

This employment condition applies to the following visas:

- Victims of Domestic Violence Work Visa
- Victims of People Trafficking Work Visa
- Migrant Exploitation Protection Work Visa
- Asylum Seeker Work Visa
- All working holiday visas (must be fixed term)

Regardless of the specific employment condition, if you have an open work visa you must meet the conditions of your visa and comply with New Zealand's employment and business laws.

Higher income and sponsorship requirements for Pacific and family visas

Effective **April 30, 2026**, income and sponsorship thresholds have increased for several Pacific and family visa categories.

The changes affect:

- *Pacific Access Category and Samoan Quota*
- *Parent Category Resident Visa*
- *Parent Boost Visitor Visa*

This summary was prepared using information obtained from INZ. Information is subject to change without notice.