



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Kris Faafoi	Portfolio	Immigration
Title of Cabinet paper	COVID-19: Ongoing Management of Temporary Work Visa Settings	Date to be published	29 October 2021

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
July 2021	COVID-19: Ongoing Management of Temporary Work Visa Settings	Office of the Minister of Immigration
12 July 2021	COVID-19: Ongoing Management of Temporary Work Visa Settings CAB-21-MIN-0272	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

YES / NO (please select)

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld for the reason of Confidential advice to Government.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

COVID-19: Ongoing Management of Temporary Work Visa Settings

Portfolio **Immigration**

On 12 July 2021, following reference from the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (SWC), Cabinet:

Background

- 1 **noted** that in June 2021, SWC invited the Minister of Immigration to report back with policy options for extending temporary work visas for migrants already in New Zealand [SWC-21-MIN-0097];
- 2 **noted** that temporary work visas previously extended by Special Direction began to expire from 1 July 2020;
- 3 **noted** that under s78A of the Immigration Act 2009 the Minister of Immigration is only able to extend visas held by a class of persons by six months at a time;

Proposed amendments to current Essential Skills visa settings

- 4 **agreed** to allow migrant workers in existing roles to apply for an Essential Skills visa with a minimum two-year duration and streamlined evidentiary requirements;
- 5 **agreed** to waive the Essential Skills visa labour market test for Essential Skills visas granted from the date of announcement of this policy **Confidential advice to Government** where the applicant is remaining with their current employer in the same full-time role and geographic region;
- 6 **agreed** that applicants for the Essential Skills visa between the date of announcement of this policy and **Confidential advice to Government** will not normally be required to provide medical and police certificates where this information has been provided to Immigration New Zealand in a previous visa application;
- 7 **noted** that the fee for the Essential Skills visa will be met by the applicant;
- 8 **noted** that holders of short-term border exceptions (Critical Purpose Visitor Visas approved for less than six months) will not be eligible for the Essential Skills visa, but may still be eligible to apply for other temporary work visa categories;
- 9 **agreed** that the Minister of Immigration may make any technical or policy decisions that are required to give effect to the proposal;

Consequential decisions

- 10 **agreed** to temporarily defer the implementation of the Accredited Employer Work Visa, which was due to commence on 1 November 2021, Confidential advice to Government

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet