



BRIEFING

Clarifying Time Sensitive Travel allocation criteria – applicants with family members

Date:	20 July 2021	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:		Tracking number:	2122-0161

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Chris Hipkins Minister for COVID-19 Response	Agree to update the criteria for Time Sensitive Travel allocation, to include immediate family of the applicants	29 July 2021

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Privacy of natural persons	Manager, MIQ Allocation and Supply Policy	Privacy of natural persons	✓
	Policy Advisor		

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
N/A

Minister's office to complete:

Approved

Declined

Noted

Needs change

Seen

Overtaken by Events

See Minister's Notes

Withdrawn

Comments



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Purpose

To seek your agreement to update the Time Sensitive Travel allocation criteria, to explicitly allow for immediate family members to accompany successful Time Sensitive Travel applicants in MIQ.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** that applications closed on the 14 July 2021 for the second round of Time Sensitive Travel applications, relating to arrivals across the September-October 2021 period. *Noted*
- b **Note** that there have been a number of Time Sensitive Travel allocation applications which include the immediate family of the applicant. Most of these families can be accommodated in one room, while a small number will require two rooms. *Noted*
- c **Agree** to update the criteria to allow for immediate family members to be explicitly included in the application.

Agree Disagree

Privacy of natural persons

Manager, Allocation and Supply, MIQ Policy
Managed Isolation and Quarantine, MBIE

21 / 07 / 2021

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister COVID-19 Response

21 / 07 / 2021

Background

1. You agreed to introduce the new Time Sensitive Travel (TST) allocation from 13 April 2021. There are 400 rooms set aside for TST for each round (ie 100 per fortnight over two months).
2. The second round of TST applications, for September and October arrivals, closed on 14 July 2021. MBIE received 75 applications for this round, with a total of 151 workers (as some applications can contain multiple workers). The applications also contain 30 family members of the workers.
3. Zero applications were received for the first TST round, for July and August arrivals. This was likely due to the relative availability of vouchers on MIAS over this period.
4. MBIE continues to review the suitability of its allocations and intends to provide you with a broader review of the TST Allocation in late August 2021.

Current time-sensitive allocation criteria is based on the individual

5. The current eligibility criteria for the TST allocation refers to the applicant as an individual. The assessment of the applicants is based on those coming to New Zealand to provide significant benefit to (or prevent major loss) to New Zealand. The current criteria does not specify whether the worker can bring their family.
6. MBIE has received a number of applications which include the TST applicant and their family members. The maximum capacity of a room is two adults and two children. For the current round, there are three families which would exceed the capacity of a single room, as they have more than two dependent children.

Options for the treatment of families of time-sensitive applicants

Option 1 – all workers can include immediate family members in their application [recommended]

7. MBIE recommends updating the criteria for TST allocations to allow for all applicants to include their immediate family members. We recommend that the definition of immediate family member comprises spouses, partners and dependent children. This would mean that some workers would require more than one room to accommodate their family.
8. For the current round, demand for TST rooms has not exceeded supply. This means that, should workers bring their families and require any additional rooms, space is available. Any rooms not required will be released back into MIAS. However, if future TST applications see greater demand than supply, providing multiple rooms for family members may decrease rooms available for other eligible applicants.
9. The benefit of this option is that it supports workers carrying out significant work in New Zealand. This approach is also consistent with immigration settings - where a person will be travelling to New Zealand to work and is likely to remain for more than a brief period, it is desirable to facilitate the entry of their family where their family members are eligible to be granted visas to travel to and enter New Zealand on the basis of that relationship (for example, highly skilled workers can generally bring their family to New Zealand).
10. Allowing family members may also encourage eligible workers to apply for the allocation for future rounds. This will support filling the gaps in the workforce.
11. The downside of this option is that, during times of higher demand, allowing workers multiple rooms for their family could take the place of other eligible workers. However, based on the current round, we anticipate the numbers of workers requiring multiple rooms is low. In times

of lower demand, it will reduce the number of rooms released back into MIAS, as they may be used by families.

Option 2 – no applications can include family members [not recommended]

12. This option would not allow applicants to include their family members in the application.
13. This option would restrict the use of the rooms to individual TST applicants who meet the criteria. This would prevent a critical worker taking up multiple rooms, which may impact on prioritisation during times of high demand. As such, this option retains the focus of the TST allocation, which is to ensure that there is MIQ capacity available to support time-sensitive travel of workers that provide critical benefit (or prevent major loss) to New Zealand. This option would also allow any rooms, which would otherwise be used by applicants requiring multiple rooms, to be released back into MIAS.
14. However, this option may discourage time sensitive critical workers from applying for a TST allocation, as they would not be able to bring their family. This would be a particular risk for any permanent roles that need to be filled, as it would be difficult to attract permanent workers who could not relocate with their immediate family. Given the critical nature of the workers applying for this allocation, we do not recommend this option.

Next steps

15. If you would like to update the criteria to allow for immediate family members, then officials will update the online information and operational processes to reflect this. This would be operationalised immediately to coincide with the decision making for the second TST round.