



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Andrew Little	Portfolio	Immigration
Title of Cabinet paper	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Date to be published	12 July 2023

List of documents that have been proactively released		
Date	Title	Author
September-October 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Office of the Minister of Immigration
28 September 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa DEV-22-MIN-0230 Minute	Cabinet Office
3 October 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa CAB-22-MIN-0421 Minute	Cabinet Office
29 July 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
18 August 2022	Draft Cabinet paper for consultation – Updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
18 August 2022	Parent Category – options for Green List sponsors and implementation	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
9 September 2022	Final Cabinet paper – Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment

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 to maintain legal professional privilege, privacy of natural persons, free and frank opinions and 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.

Updating and Reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa

Portfolio **Immigration**

On 3 October 2022, following reference from the Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV), Cabinet:

Background

- 1 **noted** that the Parent Category Resident Visa (the Parent Category) currently:
 - 1.1 allows New Zealand residents and citizens to sponsor their migrant parents for residence in New Zealand, subject to meeting an income threshold and agreeing to a ten-year undertaking to financially support their parents;
 - 1.2 is capped at a maximum of 1,000 people issued visas per annum, with expressions of interest selected chronologically;
 - 1.3 has been closed to new selections, with no new expressions of interest selected for processing since October 2016;
 - 1.4 has an existing queue of expressions of interest of 5,620, representing 8,849 individuals;

- 2 **noted** that on 18 September 2019, DEV agreed to the current income threshold settings, namely:
 - 2.1 a baseline income threshold of two times median wage for one sponsor of one parent;
 - 2.2 an additional income requirement of 1 times median wage per additional parent that is sponsored;
 - 2.3 an additional income threshold of 1 times median wage for joint sponsorship (totalling three times median wage for joint sponsors of one parent);

[DEV-19-MIN-0257]

Proposed changes

- 3 **noted** that an income threshold requirement has shown to be an effective means to reduce the risk of costs to Crown-funded services;
- 4 **agreed** to reduce the Parent Category's baseline income threshold for one sponsor and one parent to 1.5 times median wage;
- 5 **agreed** to reduce the income threshold for sponsoring additional parents so that it increases by 0.5 times median wage per additional parent;
- 6 **agreed** to reduce the additional income threshold for joint sponsors to 0.5 times median wage;
- 7 **agreed** to allow two adult children (i.e. siblings) to be joint sponsors for the Parent Category, in addition to partners;
- 8 **noted** that the demand that Parent Category residents are likely to impose on health and social welfare services is limited by the annual cap;
- 9 **agreed** to set the annual cap of individual Parent Category approvals at 2,500 people per annum;
- 10 **agreed** to resume the selection of Parent Category expressions of interest that are in the existing queue a month after changes are announced, in chronological order based on the date the expression of interest entered the pool;
- 11 **agreed** to invite those who withdrew their expression of interest on the basis of the previous income thresholds to resubmit their expression of interest;
- 12 **agreed** to collect and select all expressions of interest submitted from the date of announcing these changes from a self-clearing ballot;
- 13 **agreed** that from August 2023, 500 visas per annum will be allocated to new expressions of interest submitted after the changes are announced, and will be selected from the pool by a ballot;
- 14 **noted** that selecting and processing the existing 5,620 expressions of interest, representing 8,849 people, with a cap of 2,000 visas available per annum will take up to four years to complete;
- 15 **noted** that selecting expressions of interest through a ballot will begin once the online ballot system and associated fees are implemented;
- 16 **noted** that the online system and associated fees will be confirmed by May 2023;
- 17 Confidential advice to Government
[REDACTED]
- 18 **noted** that reducing the income thresholds as agreed in paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 above will reduce barriers to accessing the Parent Category;
- 19 **noted** that there are some residents and citizens who are well settled in New Zealand and cannot afford to meet the proposed income thresholds;

- 20 **directed** officials to conduct further work in 2023 on other options for those who cannot meet the income thresholds;

Implementation

- 21 **authorised** the Minister of Immigration to finalise implementation details, including details of the ballot and deadlines for applicants to submit visa applications, as well as to make decisions on minor technical matters, in alignment with the above decisions;
- 22 **noted** that the Minister of Immigration will announce the changes to the Parent Category settings in the next three to four weeks, once early implementation details are finalised;
- 23 **invited** the Minister of Immigration to report back to DEV in March 2023 on revised fees for the Parent Category;

Financial implications

- 24 Confidential advice to Government
[Redacted]
- 25 **authorised** the relevant appropriation Minister(s) and the Minister of Finance jointly to agree to:
- 25.1 Confidential advice to Government
[Redacted]
- 25.2 approve necessary changes to appropriations required to reflect the changes in 25.1 and their inclusion in the 2022/23 Supplementary Estimates, and to the increases being met from Imprest Supply in the interim;
- 26 **agreed** that the expenses incurred under recommendation 24 above be managed outside of allowances, with a flow-on increase to net debt and decrease to OBEGAL;

Sponsorship period

- 27 **agreed** to unlink the sponsorship period from the residency rules for superannuation, and to continue to set the sponsorship period at ten years.

Rachel Hayward
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet