

Covid-19: Immigration update for visa holders

The New Zealand government recently issued an Epidemic Management Notice, designed to inform and support some visa holders.

On 24 March 2020 the Prime Minister, together with the Minister of Immigration and Minister for Social Development, issued an Epidemic Preparedness (Epidemic Management- COVID-19) Notice 2020. This Epidemic Preparedness Notice enabled the Epidemic Management Notice relating to immigration matters to be issued, which states how particular sections of the Immigration Act 2009 will be invoked to manage the relevant practical effects of COVID-19.

The Epidemic Management Notice will come into effect on Thursday 2 April 2020. Under the Notice, people who hold a temporary entry class visa that expires between 2 April 2020 and 9 July 2020 inclusive will automatically have their visa extended to 25 September 2020.

Temporary entry class visas include:

- Work visas;
- Student visas;
- Visitor visas;
- Limited visas; and
- Interim visas.

Except for the extension, all visa conditions will remain the same and must be complied with.

The extension will occur automatically and visa holders should receive email confirmation.

Temporary visa holders whose visa expires on or before 1 April 2020 but who cannot leave NZ should reapply on line for a visa in the usual way. It is likely that an interim visa will be issued.

This extension does not apply to residence visa holders.

Visa holders that are concerned they may not be able to comply with the conditions of their visa due to the effects of Covid-19 should contact Immigration New Zealand by phone or email to discuss their particular circumstances.

Relaxation of certain visa restrictions for supermarket workers

From 25 March 2020 to 25 April 2020 (inclusive) the definition of "work" has been amended in a very specific way. The result of this temporary amendment means the following restrictions will be relaxed for certain visa holders who are currently working in supermarkets:

- Work visa holders will be able to work in roles other than specified on their visa; and
- Student visa holders will be able to work more than 20 hours per week.

For these purposes, 'supermarket' is defined as a retailer selling food and groceries affiliated with Woolworths New Zealand Limited, Foodstuffs North Island Limited or Foodstuffs South Island Limited.

Want to know more?

If you would like further information or have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Anderson Lloyd's specialist [employment](#) team.