
Immigration alert

New Zealand's UK Working Holiday Visa program expanded

Background

Currently, UK citizens between the ages of 18 and 30 can apply for a New Zealand working holiday visa for up to 23 months. This allows work for any employer in New Zealand, but for no more than 12 months (total). It does not allow permanent employment.

Update

From 1 July 2023 the conditions of the UK working holiday visa will be expanded to provide:

- Visa holders can stay in New Zealand for up to 36 months.
- Visa holders can work for the full visa duration.
- UK citizens aged between 18 and 35 will be eligible.

There will be a cap of 15,000 visas issued each year.

Health and character requirements

Applicants who are from or have spent 3+ months in a country that does not have a [low incidence of tuberculosis](#) in the last 5 years will require a chest x-ray.

A stay of more than 12 months will require both a general medical and chest x-ray certificate.

A stay of 24+ months will require police checks from the applicant's country(s) of citizenship and any country lived in for 5 or more years since turning 17.

What about working holiday makers already in New Zealand?

Those already in New Zealand on a UK working holiday visa can apply for the balance of the 36 months from 1 July 2023. This will also allow them to work for the rest of their stay.

Police and medicals will be required for these applications, if they haven't already been provided.

Our thoughts

This is a brilliant update for young UK citizens hoping to live and work in New Zealand. It is also positive news for employers, as they continue to struggle with labour shortages across many industries.

Questions?

If you have any questions about this article, please contact [Tash Rae](#) or a member of our specialist [Employment Team](#).