

Special Direction—Variation of Travel Conditions of Critical Purpose Visitor Visas Held by Classes of People, in Order to Manage the Effects, or Deal With the Consequences of, Measures Taken to Contain or Mitigate the Outbreak of COVID-19 or its Effects

Under section 53(4A) of the Immigration Act 2009 (“Act”), by special direction, I vary the conditions of the visas held by the following classes of people:

1. Every person who holds a critical purpose visitor visa on the date of this special direction; and
2. every person who applied for a critical purpose visitor visa before 12 May 2022 and who is subsequently granted that visa.

The conditions of their visas relating to travel are varied so that they allow multiple journeys to New Zealand.

I am satisfied that the making of this special direction is reasonably necessary to manage the effects, or deal with the consequences of, measures taken under the Act to contain or mitigate the outbreak of COVID-19 or its effects.

The border was closed and a border exception process was established to manage the impact of COVID-19 in New Zealand. To further manage the impacts of COVID-19 and limit the movement of people across the border, critical purpose visitor visas were only granted with single journey travel conditions. With the border reopening, this means that critical purpose visitor visa holders are unable to leave New Zealand and return on their current visa, unlike many other visa holders. This special direction manages that consequence by allowing critical purpose visitor visa holders to return to New Zealand on their current visa.

This special direction expires at the end of 31 December 2022 unless revoked earlier.

Dated this 30th day of May 2022.

HON KRIS FAAFOI, Minister of Immigration.

Explanatory Note

The effect of this special direction is to vary the travel conditions of current critical purpose visitor visas from single to multiple journey. It also means that, if a person had applied for a critical purpose visitor visa before 12 May 2022 but this had not yet been granted, the travel conditions of their visa will be varied immediately after the visa is granted to allow multiple journeys to New Zealand. This is so critical purpose visitor visa holders can return to New Zealand on their current visa in line with most other temporary visa holders.