

Special Direction - Grant of Work Visas to a Class of Offshore Persons Whose Post-Study Work Visas Have Expired

Pursuant to section 61A(2) of the Immigration Act 2009 ("Act") of my own volition, by special direction, I grant a work visa with the following currency and conditions, to the class of offshore persons as described below:

1. Start Date: 30 March 2023
2. Duration: Visa valid for 12 months from first arrival in New Zealand.
3. Travel conditions:
 - a. First Entry Before: 30 September 2023
 - b. Number of entries: Multiple. Valid for further travel for 12 months from first arrival.
4. Other conditions: Stay subject to grant of entry permission. You must leave before visa expiry or face deportation. Financial support evidence not required. Return/onward ticket not required. The holder may work for any employer in any occupation in New Zealand.

The following persons are classified as persons to whom this special direction applies. A person who:

- is outside New Zealand and does not hold a current New Zealand visa on the day this special direction is made; and either
- held a New Zealand post-study work visa (open or employer-assisted) while they were offshore on 19 March 2020; or
- were granted a New Zealand post-study work visa (open or employer-assisted) while they were offshore between 20 March 2020 and 10 August 2020 (inclusive).

I am satisfied that the making of this special direction does not disadvantage the recipients and is reasonably necessary to manage the effects, or deal with the consequences, of measures taken under the Act or any other enactment in New Zealand, and other measures taken elsewhere, to contain or mitigate the outbreak of COVID-19 or its effects. For the persons to whom this special direction applies, the effect of the COVID-19 response in closing the border meant that they were unable to use the post study work visa that they had been granted. This inability to use their post study work visa, or be granted another post-study work visa, had an enduring negative impact on these persons which remained unchanged by the subsequent or current COVID-19 response.

This special direction comes into force on 30 March 2023 and expires on 30 June 2023 unless cancelled earlier.

Dated this 3rd day of February 2023.

HON MICHAEL WOOD, Minister of Immigration.

Explanatory Note

The effect of this special direction is to grant new post-study work visas of 12 months duration, with a start date of 30 March 2023, to persons who are not in New Zealand and who held or were granted post-study work visas during the period that COVID-19 related border restrictions were in place, and as a result were unable to use these post study work visas and no longer hold post study work visas as they have expired. These persons will have from 30 March 2023 until 30 September 2023 to travel to New Zealand and the visa will be valid for 12 months from first arrival in New Zealand.