



21 April 2021

UPDATE: BRINGING PRODUCTION CAST, CREW AND ASSOCIATED TRAVELLERS TO NEW ZEALAND

1. Background and NZFC role

After New Zealand borders were closed to overseas travellers due to COVID19 in March 2020, NZFC provided information about the film industry and its benefits for the New Zealand economy to the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). This led to a provision for productions to apply for some critical workers to be permitted entry to New Zealand to start or restart productions. The process is relevant for any production – international or local - that requires international crew or cast to trigger production.

Responsibility for approval of these critical worker exemptions sits with Immigration New Zealand. Immigration New Zealand does not share applications it receives with NZFC, and NZFC advice is not sought on specific applications. NZFC can provide support to international clients and New Zealand line producers with what is typically considered in any submission, however, does not influence or play a role in the approval or feedback process.

Contact philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz if you are starting the process for a production and would like further advice beyond this fact sheet.

2. Applying to bring film personnel to New Zealand

New Zealand's border is currently closed other than for:

- people to whom the border closure does not apply - for example returning New Zealand citizens and residents,
- people travelling from Australia, Niue or the Cook Islands who meet the quarantine-free travel criteria,
- people who Immigration New Zealand considers have a critical purpose while the border is closed. This group includes some film cast, crew and associated travellers (e.g. spouse/partners, dependent children).

Productions can apply for border exemptions to bring critical workers to New Zealand using the online form at <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/formshelp/employer-request-for-critical-worker>.

New Zealand citizens or permanent residents do not need to apply for border exemptions to return to New Zealand.

It costs NZD \$380 to make a request for critical workers. You can include as many workers as you want on the same request, and/or may submit multiple times, paying the relevant fee.

In the assessment of applications, Immigration New Zealand will determine if the employees meet a 'less than/more than 6-month' criteria.

If your application states that your employees are undertaking a time-critical role for work which brings significant wider benefits to the national or regional economy, the assessment will consider the amount of economic stimulus your production will bring for New Zealand. This includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of how many people you would like to bring into the country in relation to the number of jobs the production will create for New Zealanders and the estimated production spend in New Zealand.

You're welcome to speak with the NZFC about including supplementary information in your application – please email philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz

To enter New Zealand, productions (employers) must apply for and be granted for each incoming crew or cast member: (unless travelling from Australia - see section 6 of this sheet)

- a critical worker exemption
- a relevant Visitor Visa and
- a managed isolation facility voucher

There is a provision for critical worker applicants to include family members in their submission (e.g. spouse/ partners/ dependent children).

- Workers whose employers receive approval for a border exemption will be contacted by Immigration New Zealand and invited to then apply for a 'Critical Purpose Visitor Visa with work rights' or a 'Critical Purpose Variation of Conditions visa' to allow for travel to New Zealand – [Visa to enter the country](#).

NB: This classification of visa does not require a letter of non-objection (LONO) from a Guild. A LONO may be useful to support a Critical Worker application for those skill sets that might appear available in NZ, but it is not compulsory under the critical worker request or for the visitor visa with work rights.

- As a guideline, the border exemption and visa process (combined) is currently taking around three-four weeks in total.
- From 3 November 2020 it became compulsory to use the online Managed Isolation Allocation System (MIAS) to secure a voucher confirming a place in a mandatory managed isolation and quarantine (MIQ) facility i.e. government-supervised hotel. See section 3 for more information.
- The employer is required to pay for spaces in MIQ and will be invoiced by the government. See section 4 for more information on charges.
- All travellers arriving in or transiting through New Zealand after 11.59pm on 25 January 2021 (except those travelling from exempt locations) need to have proof of a negative COVID-19 test result to enter New Zealand (see Section 4 of this sheet)

3. Mandatory managed isolation and accommodation (minimum of 14 days)

<https://www.miq.govt.nz/>

Airlines will not allow travellers to board their flights to New Zealand without a valid MIAS voucher confirming their place in managed isolation. Pre-booking of vouchers for places in managed isolation

facilities are to be completed here: <https://www.miq.govt.nz/travel-to-new-zealand/secure-your-place-in-managed-isolation/>

It is helpful to note: Spaces in managed isolation are at times in high demand. Additional vouchers may become available if a traveller's plan changes and their voucher is returned to the system for uplifting by others. We recommend you continue checking (refresh the browser) in the Managed Isolation Allocation System for your preferred date and suitable alternative dates.

To assist managed isolation facilities with supporting the different needs of people during their stay, in your application please select double or twin rooms, note dietary requirements, accessibility considerations and any other needs or requests.

All managed isolation hotels meet all public health requirements, and provide 3 suitable meals a day, laundry services and Wi-Fi. View list here: <https://www.miq.govt.nz/being-in-managed-isolation/isolation-facilities/facility-locations/>

Travellers are tested for COVID-19 multiple times during their stay in managed isolation. All travellers (except those travelling from exempt locations) will be required to have a COVID-19 test on 'day zero' within 24 hours of arrival in a managed isolation and quarantine facility. They are then required to remain in their room until the results of the test are known. All travellers are tested on day 3 and day 12 of their stay. You can be required to stay up to a total of 28 days if you refuse a COVID-19 test.

On arrival in New Zealand, individuals could be placed in any of the managed isolation facilities in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Wellington, or Christchurch. This means that, like returning New Zealanders, your travellers won't know which hotel they will be placed in before they arrive in the country. Upon completion of your stay and once you have been authorised to leave your facility, transport will be provided back to the airport you arrived at, if you wish.

MIQ requests that individuals or their representatives do not approach managed isolation facilities/hotels directly to book accommodation. Any bookings or enquiries sent directly to the facilities will be redirected to MIQ.

There is a process to consider whether appropriate arrangements for certain individuals should be made if there is a public health risk. On rare occasions this could include high profile individuals, such as recognisable actors.

4. Pre-departure COVID-19 Testing Requirements

All travellers arriving in or transiting through New Zealand after 11.59pm on 25 January 2021 (except those travelling from exempt locations) need to have proof of a negative COVID-19 test result to enter New Zealand. You will need to have had both your COVID-19 sample taken and your result returned no more than 72 hours before the scheduled departure time of your first international departure.

At this link you can review the Pre-Departure Testing instructions: <https://covid19.govt.nz/travel-and-the-border/travel-to-new-zealand/pre-departure-testing-for-arrivals-into-new-zealand/>

5. Charges for managed isolation

Critical Worker Managed Isolation Fees are outlined at this link: <https://www.miq.govt.nz/being-in-managed-isolation/charges-for-managed-isolation/charges-for-critical-workers/>

Your employer is liable to pay your Managed Isolation Fees. If an employee travels to New Zealand it is likely that the invoice will be issued to the employee and they will need to ask their employer to pay on their behalf or seek reimbursement from them. Payment of the fee will be expected within 30 days of the invoice being issued. Employers or critical worker employees will not be eligible to apply for any waiver of the fee.

Critical workers entering as part of a group are expected to stay as 1 person per room, for which the charge is \$5,520 (inc. GST). When travelling as a family, arrangements may be made to allow for critical workers to share rooms.

Where a group of employees travel together it may be possible to bulk invoice.

6. Quarantine Free Travel

From 19th April 2021, you can travel from Australia to New Zealand without having to enter a managed isolation facility when you arrive, given you meet the following criteria:

- You meet immigration requirements.
- You need to have spent the 14 days prior to your departure in either Australia or New Zealand. (You can visit New Zealand for any length of time and are not required to stay for 14 days.)
- You have not had a positive COVID-19 test in the 14 days before you depart.
- You are not waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test taken in the past 14 days.
- You must complete a travel declaration before you depart (see information below).
- You must answer questions about your health at departure.

If you are outside Australia, you can fly quarantine-free to New Zealand once you have met Australia's managed isolation and quarantine requirements. You do not need a negative COVID-19 pre-departure test for travel to New Zealand on a quarantine-free flight.

All other normal entry requirements, for example immigration and biosecurity, apply. Typically, Australian citizens and permanent residents do not require work visas in New Zealand.

Quarantine-free travel is only available when the New Zealand Government's health preconditions have been met and when travel is low risk.

More information on quarantine-free travel between Australia and New Zealand can be found here: <https://covid19.govt.nz/travel-and-the-border/quarantine-free-travel/quarantine-free-travel-with-australia/>