

11 January 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 to the Minister for some critical workers to be permitted to come to New Zealand to start or restart international productions stalled by the COVID19 pandemic. The aim was to trigger a significant spend and jobs for New Zealanders and the New Zealand economy. The process is relevant for any production – international or local - that requires some limited international crew or cast to trigger production.

This initial phase resulted in seven major productions getting up and running.

Since then, responsibility for approval of these critical worker exemptions has moved to 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 supply some advice on what is typically considered in any submission, however does not influence or play a role in the approval or feedback process.

NZFC can provide support to international clients and New Zealand line producers as they go through these processes, noting again that we do not play a role in the approvals 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 doesn't apply - for example returning New Zealand citizens and residents,
- 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 (i.e. employers) 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;

- 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 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 – a [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 November 3 it became compulsory to use the online Managed Isolation Allocation System (MIAS) to secure a voucher confirming a place in a mandatory managed isolation (MIQ) facility i.e. government-supervised hotel. See section 3 for more information.
- The employer is required to pay for MIQ places and will be invoiced by the government. See section 4 for more information on charges.
- ALL travellers from the United Kingdom or United States arriving in or transiting through New Zealand after 11.59pm on 15 January 2021 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 14 x 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 are 4-star or higher, meet all public health requirements, and provide 3 suitable meals a day, laundry services and wifi. View list here <https://www.miq.govt.nz/being-in-managed-isolation/isolation-facilities/facility-locations/>

All travellers are tested for COVID19 three times while in managed isolation – usually within 24 hours of arrival (day 0/1), day 3 and day 12.

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.

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

There is a process to consider whether appropriate arrangements for individuals should be made if there is a public health risk. This could include high profile individuals, such as recognisable actors. For more information contact philippa.mossman@nzfilm.co.nz

4. Pre-departure Covid Testing Requirements

ALL travellers from the United Kingdom or United States arriving in or transiting through New Zealand after 11.59pm on 15 January 2021 need to have proof of a negative COVID-19 test result to enter New Zealand. 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/>

Each individual traveller will receive an invoice at the end of their stay which includes information on how to pay. You will generally have 90 days to pay unless staying in New Zealand for a shorter period than that.

MIQ is working on group and third-party invoicing for an employer with multiple employees staying at a managed isolation facility however currently these invoices are generated individually. NZFC will update when bulk invoicing becomes available. More information on the fees can be found here: <https://www.miq.govt.nz/being-in-managed-isolation/charges-for-managed-isolation/>