Working In The New Zealand Construction Industry
How can this guide help me?
It takes time to adjust to living and working in a new country, good information can help. This guide has information to prepare you for working in the New Zealand construction industry.

What’s in this guide?
There is information about:
→ Working on a New Zealand construction site
→ Living in New Zealand
→ Bringing family to New Zealand
→ Language on the construction site
→ New Zealand safety standards
→ Where you can go for information
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New Zealand’s construction sector values its migrant workers. No matter how long you stay in New Zealand, it’s important that you enjoy your time working here.
Which visa do you need to work in New Zealand?

Visa options for working in New Zealand include:

**Temporary work** visas are for people who:
- have a job offer from a New Zealand employer
- are skilled in occupations that are in demand
- are coming here for a particular purpose, project or event
- want to gain work experience or work after studying in New Zealand
- are students and who want to work
- want to join a spouse or partner here and work.

**Residence or Work to Residence** visas are based on your occupation or skills. The options if you want to live in New Zealand permanently are:
- **Skilled Migrant Category** - for people who have the skills, qualifications and/or experience New Zealand needs
- **Work to Residence** is for people who:
  → are qualified in occupations that are in demand in New Zealand, or
  → have a job offer from an accredited employer, or
- **Residence from Work** - for people who are already in New Zealand on a Work to Residence visa, and want to apply for residence.

For further information go online at:

- **Visa options**
  visaoptions.immigration.govt.nz
- **Working in New Zealand**
  www.immigration.govt.nz/workinnz
Immigration Advisers
If you choose to use an immigration adviser (private sector) use an immigration adviser who has been licensed by the New Zealand Government.
If you are unhappy with the advice or services provided by an immigration adviser, you can make a complaint to the Immigration Advisers Authority.
For more information:

www.iaa.govt.nz
info@iaa.govt.nz

Freephone: New Zealand Only
0508 IAA IAA (0508 422 422)
+64 9 925 3838

How long will you stay?
Migrant workers coming to New Zealand to work in the construction sector may stay temporarily. There are opportunities for people with specific skills and experience to stay and live in New Zealand permanently.
The construction industry requires many different skills: some are in long-term demand and others are needed temporarily. People with skills that are in long-term demand may be eligible for permanent residence in New Zealand.
To view current lists of essential skills in demand go online at:

www.immigration.govt.nz/essentialskills

To find out what options you have to stay in New Zealand:
0508 55 88 55*
www.immigration.govt.nz/workinnz

*Ask for “Language Line” if you want an interpreter
Some advice to temporary workers

→ The conditions of your visa specify your position, employer, and location of employment. As a temporary worker you can only work within the conditions of your visa.

→ You should approach your nearest Immigration New Zealand branch if you want to change any of the conditions stated on your visa. If you want to change your employer, you may change by a Variation of Condition. If you change jobs, your previous employer must also advise Immigration New Zealand.

→ No one is allowed to threaten you if you change jobs. No one is allowed to keep your passport or your personal documents. If your employer has your passport without your permission call the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment’s contact centre on:

   0800 20 90 20*

   *Ask for “Language Line” if you want an interpreter

→ By law, your employer is required to deduct tax and ACC. Your employer cannot deduct other money from your wages without your agreement in writing. The law protects the employee’s right to receive wages from their employer without unauthorised deductions. Your employer cannot tell you how to spend your wages.

→ New Zealand Government officials and most employers recognise that new migrants face challenges when arriving in New Zealand, and are happy to help. For them to be able to help, you need to be open and honest with them, even if the problem is sensitive or difficult to discuss.

→ Changes to your visa, including extending the time period, can take time to process. Avoid problems by applying 2-3 months ahead.
Obeying New Zealand law

Newcomers to New Zealand have the same rights and obligations under New Zealand law as any other person living here. Newcomers need to obey New Zealand law.

Breaking the law can put your visa status, and your family’s status, at risk. Immigration New Zealand can require non-citizens to leave New Zealand if they consider the offence calls into question the migrant’s good character. This can include any criminal offending (such as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs) and may apply to migrants with permanent residence visas as well as temporary workers, regardless of the reason for your stay, or the needs of your employer.

Illegal workers

People must be New Zealand citizens, residents, or have the appropriate immigration work visa status to work in New Zealand. Illegal workers affect others by:

→ Undermining employed workers’ conditions
→ Operating outside health and safety systems
→ Undermining New Zealand’s immigration system

If you have concerns about illegal workers you can call the Immigration NZ Contact Centre.

0508 55 88 55*

*Ask for “Language Line” if you want an interpreter
Construction-related occupations requiring registration

If you come to New Zealand to do the following work, the law requires you to register with a professional body:

→ Architect
→ Electrical service technician
→ Electrician
→ Line mechanic
→ Plumber, gasfitter and drain layer
→ Cadastral (land title) surveyor

People submitting an immigration visa application based on an offer of employment in these occupations need to have either full or provisional registration before applying for a work, work to residence, or residence visa.

For the details of the relevant registration organisation please go online at:

www.immigration.govt.nz/nzworkregister
Chartered Professional Engineers (CPEng.)
In New Zealand the titles “Chartered Professional Engineer” and “Registered Engineer” can be used only by engineers on the CPEng register, administered by Institute of Professional Engineers of New Zealand. Generally, building consent authorities will require Chartered Professional Engineers to certify engineering design work.
For more information, go online at:

www.ipenz.org.nz

Restricted Building Work and Licensed Building Practitioners
All restricted building work must be done, or supervised and approved by a Licensed Building Practitioner. The Licensed Building Practitioner scheme helps ensure that people in the New Zealand building industry are competent and accountable. The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.
For definitions and registrations go online at:

www.lbp.govt.nz
About the New Zealand construction industry...

The New Zealand construction industry includes:
- Commercial building (vertical infrastructure)
- Roads, network services etc. (horizontal infrastructure)
- Residential building (house repairs and new builds)

Construction is an important industry in New Zealand. The construction sector is closely linked with the growth of the country’s economy, and it is key to the rebuild of Christchurch City following the earthquakes there.

The New Zealand Government is a key agency for the construction industry. It may be helpful for you to know what the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE) does:
- regulates Employment Relations and Health & Safety in the workplace
- regulates building and construction
- helps to fill skill shortages and supports migrants to settle in work

For more information go online to MBIE’s website at:

www.mbie.govt.nz

In addition to this, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) oversees the rebuild of Christchurch.

For more information about CERA so online at:

www.cera.govt.nz
How is construction different in New Zealand?
Construction in New Zealand will have similarities and differences from construction work in your own country. Migrant construction workers say some of the differences are:

- Different materials, building methods and building standards
- The requirement to follow New Zealand health and safety laws on the worksite
- Informal communication styles at work
- Quickly changing weather conditions

New Zealand has a growing number of women in construction and the workforce is increasingly ethnically diverse. You may hear other languages on the worksite, alongside Māori words, and Kiwi slang.
Health and Safety on site

New Zealand has laws in place to protect people at work. Construction sites pose a number of serious hazards to anyone on site, and it is therefore extremely important that you understand them.

Your employer should provide you with information and an induction before you start work. This will include the hazards present and what is in place to reduce the risk of someone getting hurt.

They must also provide you with the appropriate personal protective equipment which you need to do the job safely.

If you believe your health and safety is at risk let your supervisor or manager know immediately. Under law you have a right to refuse to undertake any work you believe will put you in danger.

More information on health and safety at work in New Zealand is available online at:

www.dol.govt.nz
Make sure you keep yourself safe

New Zealand law says employers must provide you with a safe workplace, and the right training, supervision, and equipment.

There are many hazards on the construction site including:

→ Slips, trips and falls (falls from heights are the most common cause of deaths in construction - even falls from one or two metres can be fatal)
→ Being hit or crushed by moving objects and machinery
→ Electrocution
→ Loss of control of machinery or equipment
→ Health hazards such as noise, chemical or asbestos exposure

Injuries on New Zealand construction sites most frequently occur due to falls from height, fumes, inexperience, or lack of understanding of New Zealand health and safety standards.

When you start work, your employer must tell you what to do in an emergency (such as a fire or chemical spill) and where emergency equipment and first aid kits are kept. Your employer must also tell you to report any hazard, accident or “near miss” to them (a “near miss” is an incident, accident, or emergency that could have caused injury, but didn’t).

If you do not feel you have enough information, training, or knowledge to carry out a task, you should discuss this with your employer.
Personal protective equipment

Employers are legally required to provide training to their staff to operate equipment safely and workers must use appropriate personal protective equipment.

Personal protective equipment and safety gear must be provided by employers, and may include:

- **Eyes**
  - Safety glasses, goggles, face shield

- **Hearing**
  - Ear plugs, ear muffs

- **Respiratory**
  - Masks, respirators, cartridge filters

- **Head**
  - Hard hat
Body
Overalls, safety harness, high visibility clothing, gloves

Foot
Steel capped boots/ shoes

Safety at heights
Harnesses (installed anchors or restraining cables), roof edge barriers

Visibility
High visibility vests, jackets
Working safely at height
The New Zealand Government has set a target to reduce worksite fatalities and serious injuries by 25% by 2020. To support this, the Government has created a toolkit to help prevent falls from height. The toolkit is not only for workers on taller structures – half of all dangerous falls in New Zealand are three metres or less. The toolkit is free and available in hardcopy or online at:

www.dol.govt.nz/prevent-falls

You are required in New Zealand to refuse to work in any situation which you consider unsafe.

1. Eliminate

Eliminate the chances of a fall by doing as much of the preparation work as possible on the ground.

2. Isolate

Isolate yourself from the risk of a fall by using edge protection and scaffolds to prevent a fall.

3. Minimise

Minimise the risk when these first two steps are not achievable.

Questions about Safety?
You can call the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment’s contact centre to learn more about New Zealand health and safety requirements, your rights, and how to make a complaint about health and safety problems.

0800 20 90 20*

*Ask for “Language Line” if you want an interpreter
Accident Compensation Corporation ACC

ACC covers injuries that happen at work, at home, on the road and during sport – no matter whose fault it was. You cannot sue for personal injury in New Zealand – in most cases ACC replaces that right.

If you’re injured while working in New Zealand, Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), is likely to provide you with help, including help with treatment costs. ACC provides 24-hour, seven-day-a-week injury cover for everyone in New Zealand, including visitors and migrants.

It is very important, however, that you understand how the ACC entitlements could apply in your own particular circumstances. For example, ACC may help cover your loss of earnings if you cannot continue to work, but the amount of income, and when you start to receive it, may depend on factors such as how long you have been working in New Zealand and, for the first week’s entitlement, whether the accident was work related.

It is not possible, in this booklet, to explain how ACC entitlements apply in every situation and circumstance. It is, however, important to be aware of what cover the ACC system already provides, especially if you are considering taking out income replacement insurance.

To see if you are eligible for ACC go online to the Ministry of Health website:

www.moh.govt.nz/eligibility

For more information about how ACC can help, go online at:

www.acc.co.nz

Health Care

You may not be eligible for public funded health care in New Zealand, if you are on certain temporary visa categories. To see if you are eligible, go online to the Ministry of Health website:

www.moh.govt.nz/eligibility

The New Zealand Government strongly recommends that people in New Zealand who are not eligible for public funded health services have comprehensive travel insurance that includes health insurance.
Getting more training in New Zealand

Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) are part of a formal process to increase and develop skills in the workplace and they link to New Zealand’s national qualifications system.

Many roles in the construction industry require formal qualifications. ITOs arrange the training, set the standards for qualifications and work with industry to determine skill development needs. ITOs offer construction industry National Certificate programmes and support:

→ Programmes in health and safety
→ Training in New Zealand building techniques
→ Vocational literacy and numeracy

You may wish to discuss support for your training needs with your employer.

Building and Construction ITO

www.bcito.org.nz

Carpentry, cement and concrete, floor and wall tiling, frame and truss manufacturing, interior systems, proprietary plaster and cladding systems, solid plastering, brick and block laying, historical masonry trades, construction management, architectural technology and quantity surveying.

Floor NZ and Decorate NZ


Sanding and finishing, carpet laying, vinyl and wood installation, painting and decorating.

Joinery ITO

www.jito.org.nz

Joinery, architectural aluminium joinery, kitchen and bathroom design and manufacturing, and the glass and glazing industries.
Civil infrastructure industries including civil engineering, civil construction and maintenance, roading and pavement surfacing, roadmarking, utilities and subdivisions, demolition, rural contracting and agrichemical application, surveying, procurement, contract and asset management.

Engineering, refrigeration, heating, air conditioning, locksmithing, fire alarms and protection systems.

Electrotechnology, telecommunications, plumbing, drainlaying, gasfitting, roofing, power crane operation and elevating work, rigging scaffolding and industrial rope access, electronic security services.
How Kiwis communicate

In New Zealand, people may communicate differently at work from other countries.

Kiwis may have a less formal relationship between workers and employers than what you are used to. Some examples of Kiwi communication styles are set out here.

- **I wonder if you could** cut that board shorter.
- **Could we** cut that board shorter?
- **Do you want to** cut that board shorter?
- **We need to** cut that board shorter.
- **We just need to** cut that board shorter.

Kiwi's are not usually direct. They use *softeners* to sound polite and have good working relationships.
You don’t always have to agree with the boss in New Zealand.
While it’s important to follow instructions, it’s also ok to challenge, question or complain politely sometimes.

I need you to work late tonight because we’re behind schedule.

I’m sorry, but it doesn’t seem safe to me to work under that. We should reinforce it first.

Could you go over and set out the pegs by that brick wall?

I’m sorry but it’s going to be a bit difficult for me to work late tonight, I need to be home for the children.
Fitting in – being part of the team

Being able to communicate and interact with workmates is very important if you want to fit into your new team. Most new employees need to learn the style of interacting and communicating that is common in their new workplace.

Greet colleagues and your boss with a smile in the morning and respond to their greeting. Show interest by joining in conversations at tea and lunch breaks. Kiwis like to talk about a range of subjects like the weather, the news, sport, the traffic, last night’s TV programmes. Say goodbye at the end of the working day.

Good morning Paul. Did you have a good weekend? Yes I did. How about you?

Did you see the Rugby game on TV last night? No I didn't, was it a good game?
Kiwis don’t like it when people brag, so I’ve learned to be careful how I talk about any successes.

In my country, we normally don’t talk to the boss. But here it is okay to have a chat with him, and he expects us to come to him if there is a problem or a safety issue.

Many New Zealand words and phrases may be unfamiliar. If in doubt – ask someone to explain.
Building and Construction Terms

There are many terms used in New Zealand’s building and construction trade which are different from other countries. Some of these are:

Bob the Builder – building cartoon character
Bobcat – small front loader tractor
Brickie – bricklayer
Chippy – builder, carpenter
Crescent – adjustable spanner
Dwang – a horizontal spacer fitted between two studs (Nogging)
F & T – pre-made timber frame and truss
Four by two – length of timber measuring approximately 94cm x 46cm
Gib Board/ Gibralta Board – Gypsum Board/ Plasterboard
Gibstopper – puts plaster finish on gib board
Jimmy bar – crow bar
Jimmy it out – take it out using a crowbar
Planed and gauged – timber machined to a specific size

Plant – machinery on site
Precast concrete – sections of formed concrete ready for use
Quote – give a price to do a job
Rough sawn – not smooth
Sawhorse – support workbench
Skip – large waste bin
Sparkie – electrician
Subcontractor / Subbie – a tradesperson hired by main contractor to do specific work such as plumbing, wiring or painting
Untreated – no chemical preservatives
3604 – NZ Building Standard code
**Kiwi Language**

Many words and phrases used in New Zealand seem strange to people coming from overseas. Some of these are below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arvo</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbie</td>
<td>barbecue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloke</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring a plate</td>
<td>bring some food to share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheers</td>
<td>thank you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowboys</td>
<td>unqualified tradespeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodgy</td>
<td>unreliable, poor quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gear</td>
<td>clothing, equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jandal</td>
<td>thongs, flip-flops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumper</td>
<td>sweater, jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi</td>
<td>New Zealander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knackered</td>
<td>exhausted, tired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift</td>
<td>elevator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Give someone a) lift</td>
<td>give them a ride in your car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loo</td>
<td>bathroom, toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mate/matey</td>
<td>friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorway</td>
<td>freeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No flies on you</td>
<td>you’re smart, shrewd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offsider</td>
<td>assistant of another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol</td>
<td>gasoline, gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal code</td>
<td>zip code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>to telephone somebody, as in &quot;I'll give you a ring&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish</td>
<td>garbage, trash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’ll be right</td>
<td>no worries, everything is good, OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout</td>
<td>to treat/pay for a round (often drinks, but can be food or entertainment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickie</td>
<td>to take a day off work or school because you are sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoko</td>
<td>a break from work or morning tea/afternoon tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunnies</td>
<td>sunglasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet as</td>
<td>everything is OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ta</td>
<td>thanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-aways</td>
<td>food to be taken away and eaten, fast food outlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>evening meal, dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiki tour</td>
<td>take a look around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torch</td>
<td>flashlight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ute</td>
<td>small pickup truck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veges</td>
<td>vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wally</td>
<td>clown, silly person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yack</td>
<td>to have a conversation with a friend, to talk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Help with communication

You may sometimes hear words at work that you don’t understand the meaning of. Some of these words may be: Kiwi expressions, Māori words, or unfamiliar building and construction terms.

If you hear new words or expressions that you don’t understand, you can always ask someone, or you could look at one of the following websites:

Kiwi Language:

- [www.chemistry.co.nz/kiwi.htm](http://www.chemistry.co.nz/kiwi.htm)

Māori Language:

- [tinyurl.com/tereomaori](http://tinyurl.com/tereomaori)

English Expressions:

- [www(usingenglish.com/reference/idioms](http://www(usingenglish.com/reference/idioms)

Building and Construction Language:


For more information on workplace communication go online at:

- [worktalk.immigration.govt.nz](http://worktalk.immigration.govt.nz)
Weather and work

Working outdoors all year
Construction work happens year round and much of it is outdoors. So, whatever the weather you will have to work outside all year too. New Zealand’s climate might be quite different from what you expect and from what you are used to. Our summer is between December and February and our winter is between June and August. The northern regions of New Zealand are generally warmer than the southern regions. New Zealand weather can also change very quickly – sometimes New Zealand can have four seasons in one day! This means you need to be prepared for any weather changes when you leave the house in the morning.

Protection from the sun
As a country in the Southern Hemisphere, New Zealand has relatively high levels of harmful Ultra Violet (UV) radiation. The UV radiation does not provide heat, so you can burn and damage your skin even when you feel cool (on a cloudy day, for example). Sunburn can cause melanomas and other skin cancers. To avoid sunburn, it is important to:

✓ Wear a hat and clothing that covers your skin
✓ Apply sunscreen (SPF 30+)
✓ Wearing wrap-around sunglasses will help protect your eyes.
Employment Agreements
A New Zealand employer must give you a written copy of the proposed employment agreement when they offer you a job. You can take it away to read and discuss with other people before you sign and accept the job.

If anything about the agreement isn’t clear, ask your employer. If the agreement has things you don’t like, you’re entitled to discuss them with your employer and to try and negotiate changes.

Once you and your new employer have both signed the agreement, ask for a copy and keep it safe. You may need to check the terms and conditions you originally agreed to, if there’s a disagreement later on.

Your employer is required to keep an accurate record of the time you work, payments you receive and your holiday and leave entitlements. Your employer is required to provide this information to you if you ask for it.
Wages no less than the minimum wage

The adult minimum wage rate is the minimum amount that must at least be paid to an employee aged 16 years and over. The minimum wage is reviewed every year. To view the current minimum wage rates go online at:

[link to dol.govt.nz/nzwages]

Deductions

Money cannot be deducted from your pay unless you agree to it, in writing. Some deductions (like PAYE tax) are required by law and do not require written consent.

Immigration New Zealand has also produced a guide to work and work rights in New Zealand that you can find online at:

[link to www.immigration.govt.nz/workrights]

If you have questions or need more information on employment relations, pay, holidays, and health and safety, click on the ‘Labour’ link of the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment’s website or contact the Ministry’s contact centre.

[phone number] 0800 20 90 20*  [link to www.dol.govt.nz]

*Ask for “Language Line” if you want an interpreter
Annual holidays
You have the right to take at least four weeks of paid annual holidays after you have completed a year of employment. You can take at least two weeks together if you want. You cannot be forced to cash up any holiday leave (that is, change your holiday leave for money). If your employment is for less than one year you are entitled to be paid holiday pay at the end of your employment. This is calculated at 8% of your gross earnings (that is, your total income before any tax is deducted or other adjustment made).

Important
Some businesses and construction sites close for a defined period over the Christmas/New Year break. It will be important to check this with your employer, especially if you will not have earned enough leave entitlement to cover the full break period. Some employers allow workers to anticipate leave not yet earned to cover the closure period.

If you have a fixed term employment agreement of less than 12 months, or if you are a casual worker with very intermittent or irregular work patterns, you can agree to have 8% of gross earning (that is your total income before any tax is deducted or other adjustment made) added to your regular pay instead of paid time off work. This arrangement must be specified in your written employment agreement and the amount of holiday pay paid each pay period must be recorded as a separate identifiable amount in your wages.
Public holidays
In addition to annual holidays, you are also entitled to public holidays. Where a public holiday falls on a day you would normally work you are entitled to have the day off work and be paid as if you had worked it. If you work on a public holiday you are entitled to receive time-and-a-half for the hours you work – and in addition, if the public holiday is a day when you usually work, then you are also entitled to another day off on pay.

New Zealand public holidays are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>25 and 26 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Year</td>
<td>1 and 2 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitangi Day</td>
<td>6 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday &amp; Easter Monday</td>
<td>Dates change each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANZAC Day</td>
<td>25 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s Birthday</td>
<td>First Monday in June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Day</td>
<td>Fourth Monday in October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Anniversary Day</td>
<td>Different provinces have public holidays on different dates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transferring a public holiday
In New Zealand employers and employees can agree to transfer the observance of a public holiday to another working day to meet the needs of the business or the individual needs of the employee. An employer and employee should make the agreement in writing. For employees who may want to exchange public holidays for their own religious holidays more information is available online at:

$i$ dol.govt.nz/nzholidays2

Sick leave
You are entitled to five days’ paid sick leave each year after you have been employed continuously by the same employer for six months. Sick leave can be used when you are sick or injured and also when your spouse or partner, or a person who depends on you for care (such as a child or elderly parent) is sick or injured. If you are sick before you have worked for six months you can ask your employer if you can use some of your annual leave or take unpaid leave.

Bereavement leave
After six months’ employment, you are entitled to paid bereavement leave if someone close to you dies. If that person is your spouse or partner, child, brother or sister, mother or father, grandparent, grandchild, or parent of your spouse or partner you are entitled to three days’ leave. For other bereavements you may be entitled to one day’s leave.

When close family or friends die in your home country, it is very difficult for you being so far away. You are still entitled to bereavement leave, if you need it. Some people find it helpful to take the time out from work to grieve.
Accommodation

There are many different accommodation options in New Zealand. These may include:

→ Dedicated worker accommodation (possibly arranged through your employer)

→ Boarding with a New Zealand family – sometimes referred to as “private boarding” or “billeting”

→ Staying in a “Bed and Breakfast”

→ Flatting – sharing a house or apartment with others

→ Renting accommodation

→ Buying a home

Renting in New Zealand may be different from your country. For example, New Zealand rental properties are usually unfurnished. This means that, although an oven is provided for cooking, you will need to provide your own furniture (including beds and linen), refrigerator, washing machine, cutlery and cooking equipment. Some older houses in New Zealand can be very cold because they are not insulated and don’t have heating.

If you bring family to New Zealand, you may wish to consider arriving in advance and staying in temporary accommodation while you establish a suitable arrangement for your family.

General information on tenancy law and detailed information on rental property costs by type and location is available online at:

ℹ️ www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-index
The cost of rental accommodation varies considerably by location and quality. Initial rental costs can include paying a bond of up to four weeks’ rent in advance. Tenants pay bonds to landlords to cover potential future expenses, such as unpaid rent, damage to the property (if that damage can be shown to be your fault) or any other claim. If none of these future expenses need to be paid when the tenancy ends, the tenant can get their bond back.

In some cases, a tenant’s initial costs may also include letting agent fees - usually one weeks’ rent, plus 15% Goods and Services Tax (GST).

**A word about insurance**

If you plan to take out home and/or contents insurance, make sure that you can secure the insurance cover before you purchase a house or enter a tenancy agreement.

For more advice on your rights and obligations as a tenant you can call:

0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62)*

*Ask for “Language Line” if you want an interpreter

Detailed advice on accommodation in New Zealand can be found online at:

dol.govt.nz/ssnzhousing

Online accommodation options include -

→ general websites sites that advertise accommodation:
  
  www.trademe.co.nz
  
  www.allrealestate.co.nz
  
  www.flatfinder.co.nz

→ short term accommodation:
  
  www.holidayhomes.co.nz
  
  www.bookabach.co.nz
Driving in NZ

You need a current driver licence from your home country to drive in New Zealand. You may also need an international driving permit or a translation of your licence if it is not written in English.

If you need to drive specialist or heavy vehicles – such as trucks, motorbikes or forklifts – you will need to meet the extra licence requirements that apply to these types of vehicle.

If you are in New Zealand for more than one year, you need to get a New Zealand Driver Licence or convert your overseas licence to a New Zealand licence (written and practical tests may be required). You must carry your driver licence when you are driving.

Your vehicle needs to be safe and have a current Warrant of Fitness, which can be obtained from licensed agents across New Zealand. Your vehicle also needs a current vehicle registration.

We drive on the left-hand side of the road in New Zealand.

Seat belts and child restraints are compulsory.

It is illegal to use a mobile phone when driving unless it is an approved hands free model.

For more information about driving in New Zealand, see The New Zealand Transport Agency guide “What is different about driving in New Zealand” online at:

tinyurl.com/nzdrivingguide
Will your family come too?

Immigration New Zealand allows you to sponsor family members to New Zealand if you meet Immigration requirements. More information is available online at:

www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant

Your family will need to be prepared to live in a different culture. It is helpful if you tell your employer if you intend to bring your family here.

If family do join you, think about the following:

→ Can they speak English?
→ Do you earn enough to support them here?
→ Is there a place for them to live?
→ What schools will your children go to?
→ Can your partner/spouse drive?
→ Can they work?
→ How can they find a job?
→ What social life will they have?
→ What public services, like healthcare, are they eligible for?
→ Can they adjust to a new country?

NZ Ready is a new free online planning tool for people moving to New Zealand. Create a tailored task list, add notes, and check things off. It can’t get lost, and it’s always online. Get NZ Ready now, at:

http://nzready.immigration.govt.nz/
Schools in New Zealand
School age children of temporary workers will be issued a student visa (domestic) as long as the temporary visa holder is earning the minimum income threshold (NZ $33,675 gross per annum as at March 2013). To avoid any delay that could lead to having to pay fees for schooling, apply for children’s student visa before you arrive in New Zealand.

For more information about the New Zealand Education System, you can go online to the Ministry of Education’s website at:

![Link to website](www.minedu.govt.nz)

What other things do I need to know?

Before accepting a job, think about the following:

☑️ Do you have an employment agreement that includes a written job description that accurately describes the job you are being hired to do?

☑️ Do you know what your accommodation options are and will these suit you and your family?

☑️ Do you know if the employer has a good reputation for looking after their staff and being fair?

☑️ Do you know what hours and which days of the week you will be working?

☑️ Will you have enough time off to do the things you and your family would like to do while you are in New Zealand?

☑️ Is the pay going to be enough to meet your own living costs as well as sending money home, if that is what you want to do?

Remember – if you have any problems or questions, it is always best to be honest and ask, so that people can help you.
Support for you in New Zealand

Settlement Support New Zealand (SSNZ) is funded by Immigration New Zealand to provide a first point of contact for new migrants and for employers of new migrants. SSNZ coordinators can give links to local information and services that help with settling in New Zealand and in the workplace. They provide local information about:

- Community groups
- Finding work
- Health
- Recreation
- Education and training
- Learning English
- Housing
- Transport
- Other settlement information
Go online to the SSNZ website for more information or call:

0800 SSNZ4U (0800 776 948)  www.ssnz.govt.nz
Find out as much as you can about your new job, about New Zealand and about the settlement process before you come. A good place to start is the Settlement Support New Zealand website:

- [www.ssnz.govt.nz](http://www.ssnz.govt.nz)

You can also go online at:

- [www.newzealandnow.govt.nz](http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz)
Working in or near Christchurch

In February 2011, Christchurch experienced a devastating earthquake which killed 185 people, and destroyed a significant portion of buildings and infrastructure.

Working in Canterbury may not be for everyone, but for those who are keen, there are numerous career opportunities and the excitement of building a new city.

Find out as much as you can about Christchurch before you move there, because living in a post-earthquake environment has unique challenges. Much of the city is working normally now, but a large part is still damaged. There are still a number of residential areas awaiting repairs. The region is still experiencing aftershocks.

You can find out more about what it is like to live in Christchurch during the rebuild from the Christchurch Settlement Support Coordinator by emailing:

settlementsupport@cecc.org.nz

or by going online at:

www.settlementsupport.net.nz
Canterbury Skills and Employment Hub

The Hub is a free job-matching service where an employer can register their vacancies for workers which we then match against our database of job seekers to find the best fit. The Hub aims to ensure that firms can easily get the staff that they need locally – and, where that’s not possible, there’s a streamlined process to help them access offshore migrants to meet their needs.

Job seekers who register with the Hub are free to put themselves forward for vacancies that are listed on the Hub’s website.

Designed to help employers and job seekers, the Hub is a collaboration between the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, the Ministry of Social Development and the Tertiary Education Commission.

www.opportunitycanterbury.org.nz
Accommodation in Christchurch

Finding a place to live in Christchurch may present different challenges from other parts of New Zealand. This is due to the influx of workers to help with the rebuild, and the need for many existing residents to use alternative accommodation while their own homes are rebuilt or repaired.

You should check whether the property is damaged, and if it is you should ask what repairs are planned, when they will occur, and whether you will need to move out while the repairs are done.

You may wish to research (or ask your employer or recruitment agency about) some of the options specific to Christchurch.

For current information on accommodation options in Christchurch, go online to the Christchurch Settlement Support website:

www.settlementsupport.net.nz

The site includes up-to-date links to accommodation options, including links to websites that arrange accommodation for both short term stays while you establish more permanent living arrangements, or for longer term stays.

A word about insurance in Christchurch

Many insurers are not taking on new customers in Christchurch, so check you can get insurance before you purchase a house or enter a tenancy agreement.
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- CERA
- Canterbury Employers’ Chamber of Commerce
- CDC
- Construction Safety Council
- Victoria University of Wellington
- Language in the Workplace
- Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment
- Immigration New Zealand

New Zealand Government