



11 SEP 2020

G L Mallon

'fyi-request-13324-b51725f8@requests.fyi.org.nz'

Ref: DOIA 2021 -0172

Dear G L Mallon,

Thank you for your email of 15 July 2020, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

Can you please advise:

The number of outstanding onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa requests yet to be allocated to a Case officer.

The oldest date of outstanding onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa requests yet to be allocated to a Case officer.

The amount of onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa requests that have been allocated to Case Officers since the start of May 2020.

How do you prioritize onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa compared with the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC), and Residence from Work Category (RFW) Resident Visas. I have read and understand Immigration Instructions at A16.1 which sets out the priority criteria for residence class visas and also the different tiers of priority for residence processing. However, A16.1 does not directly state where Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa falls in priority when compared with SMC & RFW.

Our response

Question 1

The number of outstanding onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa requests yet to be allocated to a Case officer.

As of 27 August 2020, 3725 residence applications under the Partners of New Zealand Citizens and Residents category are waiting for allocation to an immigration officer.

Question 2

The oldest date of outstanding onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa requests yet to be allocated to a Case officer.



As of 27 August 2020, the oldest onshore residence application under the Partners of New Zealand Citizens and Residents category to be allocated was lodged on 6 January 2020.

Question 3

The amount of onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa requests that have been allocated to Case Officers since the start of May 2020.

I am advised that providing the requested information requires substantial collation. It needs manual research of 8387 residence applications under the Partners of New Zealand Citizens and Residents category accepted between 1 May 2020 and 27 August 2020 to determine how many have been allocated to case officers since 1 May 2020.

I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the OIA. The information requested is held on a large number of individual files. To provide you with the information would require staff to manually review each application. It would remove Ministry staff from their core duties and therefore the greater public interest in the effective and efficient administration of the public service would not be served. I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in both cases, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Question 4

How do you prioritize onshore Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa compared with the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC), and Residence from Work Category (RFW) Resident Visas. I have read and understand Immigration Instructions at A16.1 which sets out the priority criteria for residence class visas and also the different tiers of priority for residence processing. However, A16.1 does not directly state where Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa falls in priority when compared with SMC & RFW.

Immigration instructions at A16.1 (a) state that first priority will be given to residence class visas where the applicant is in New Zealand. This includes onshore partnership residence visa applications. Partnership residence visa applications are processed at the Immigration New Zealand (INZ) Hamilton office whereas Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) applications are processed at the INZ Manukau office. Partnership residence visas are part of the family stream of the New Zealand Residence Programme whereas SMC and Residence from Work applications are part of the skilled business stream. The allocation of SMC applications has no impact on the allocation or processing of partnership applications. Partnership applications are generally allocated in lodgement date order, however, immigration officers can prioritise applications when the individual circumstances warrant it, as per A16.1 (e) and (f).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of our decision by the Ombudsman. Information about how to do so is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or free phone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Dongrui Pang, Operations Support, Immigration New Zealand at Dongrui.Pang@mbie.govt.nz

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. McGill', written over a horizontal line.

Steve McGill

Acting General Manager, Border and Visa Operations
Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment