



20 January 2021

Vishal Dhote
fyi-request-14190-e97d7421@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: DOIA 2021-1054

Dear Vishal Dhote,

Thank you for your email of 23 November 2020 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA), the following information:

"I am a NZ resident visa holder and looking to request the following information's: -

- 1. How long is the current visa processing time for Critical Purpose Visitor Visa (CPVV) under the category – Partner of NZ resident Travelling together to New Zealand?*
- 2. How many applications have been lodged under CPVV and approval rates since this category of visa started (Please provide data in monthly format)?*
- 3. Date of oldest application in a queue under CPVV waiting for allocation for case officer?*
- 4. Are there separate queues under CPVV for different categories of applications, like applicant from visa waiver countries gets prioritized over an applicant from non-visa waiver countries?*
- 5. Please provide a copy of instruction manual immigration officer follow to process CPVV applications for Partner of NZ travelling together to New Zealand."*

Our Response

Question 1: How long is the current visa processing time for Critical Purpose Visitor Visa (CPVV) under the category – Partner of NZ resident Travelling together to New Zealand?

The time taken to assess an application can vary considerably. This depends on the quality of the supporting documents and whether we require further information or verification of the information provided. We cannot confirm when an application will be decided. The immigration officer assessing the application will provide updates as the application is assessed.

'Partner of NZ resident travelling together to New Zealand' is not a visa category but a criteria within the Critical Purpose Visitor Visa category. The processing time is not held in a reportable format however we are able to advise that in the period 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020 Immigration New Zealand (INZ) completed and decided a total of 5,569 Critical Purpose Visitor Visas.

Question 2: How many applications have been lodged under CPVV and approval rates since this category of visa started (Please provide data in monthly format)?

Please refer to table 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: The number of Critical Purpose Visitor Visas that have been accepted for processing up to and including 31 December 2020, broken down by accepted month:

Accepted Month	Number of applications
Apr-20	244
May-20	562
Jun-20	905
Jul-20	1,772
Aug-20	2,113
Sep-20	2,538
Oct-20	2,566
Nov-20	1,841
Dec-20	1,803

Table 2: The approval rate of Critical Purpose Visitor Visas that have been approved up to and including 31 December 2020, broken down by month approved:

Decision Month	Approval rate:
Apr-20	99%
May-20	98%
Jun-20	98%
Jul-20	95%
Aug-20	96%
Sep-20	97%
Oct-20	95%
Nov-20	92%
Dec-20	91%

Question 3: Date of oldest application in a queue under CPVV waiting for allocation for case officer?

As at 13 January 2021, the oldest on-hand Critical Purpose Visitor Visa that is waiting to be allocated to a case officer was accepted for processing on 01 December 2020.

Question 4: Are there separate queues under CPVV for different categories of applications, like applicant from visa waiver countries gets prioritized over an applicant from non-visa waiver countries? And;

Question 5: Please provide a copy of instruction manual immigration officer follow to process CPVV applications for Partner of NZ travelling together to New Zealand

INZ have two different queues for partnership applications that are split by those from visa waiver countries and those from non-visa waiver countries. However, this is not to prioritise one over the other but rather to ensure applications are processed in accordance to the relevant instructions.

Non-visa waiver partnership applications are assessed against the H5 COVID-19 Support Restricted Temporary Entry immigration instructions. Visa Waiver Partnership applications are assessed against the H6 COVID-19 Support Restricted Temporary Entry Instructions (relationship-based visitor visa for visa-waiver partners of New Zealanders).

Immigration Officers have no discretion to grant an exception if they are not satisfied that the criteria in H5 or H6 instructions have been met. These instructions can be found here: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/policy-and-law/how-the-immigration-system-operates/immigration-instructions>

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Lautalie Leausa Vaa, Senior Business Advisor, Operations Support, Immigration New Zealand at Lautalie.Leausavaa@mbie.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Hogg'.

Nicola Hogg
General Manager - Border and Visa Operations
Immigration New Zealand