

Out of scope



### **Parent Category**

6. The Parent Category allows up to 1,000 people to be granted residence annually. In order to apply under this category potential applicants must submit an EOI and be invited to apply. The Parent Category was recently re-opened with modified settings and INZ began accepting EOIs under the new policy on 24 February 2020.
7. Upon submission Parent Category EOIs are placed in a “pool” which, under normal circumstances, would be selected from as required to meet the annual limit of resident visas available under the Parent Category. Parent Category EOIs are selected from the pool based on the date they were entered into the pool. The first selection from the Parent Category pool of EOIs was scheduled to take place in late May but due to the COVID-19 outbreak, was deferred until a later date to be determined by operational considerations once onshore offices reopened.
8. Current immigration instructions do not enable the selection of EOIs from onshore applicants to be prioritised.

## **We recommend continuing to defer Parent Category EOI selections**

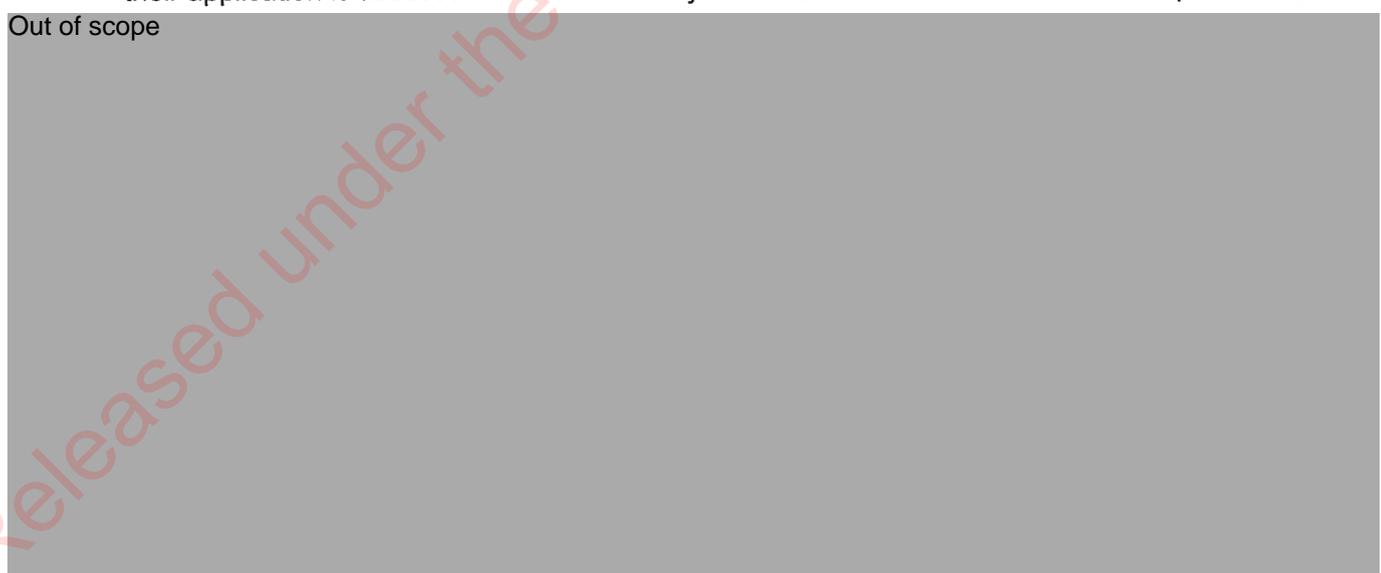
We have considered the following options for Parent Category EOIs:

- a. Continue the deferral of the Parent Category EOI selection
  - b. Start Parent Category EOI selections from 25 November 2020, when the relevant INZ processing office (Hamilton) have confirmed they can assign the necessary staff to begin processing the EOIs.
9. A table outlining the risks and benefits of each option in detail can be found in Appendix 3.

## **We recommend option A: continue to defer Parent Category EOI selections with a further review in the first quarter of 2021**

10. The impact of starting Parent Category EOI selections would necessitate the equivalent of five full time staff to be redeployed from assessing residence applications for approximately two months in order to process EOIs, resulting in an estimated loss of 250 residence decisions over that time. Continuing to suspend the selections allows INZ to focus resources on assessing, and therefore managing the inflow, of applications.
11. As at 1 October 2020, there were around 5,300 Parent Category EOIs in the pool, 80% of which are from offshore applicants. It is likely to be some time before any of these applicants are in a position to be granted a visa to travel to New Zealand due to the border closure.
12. Starting EOI selections will result in the majority of invitations to apply being sent to applicants offshore and is likely to create confusion in terms of messaging about the continuing border closure amongst this cohort. If a potential applicant based offshore was invited to apply, any resulting application may be processed, but would not be decided until after the border restrictions are lifted<sup>1</sup>.
13. Residence applications from applicants onshore are currently prioritised ahead of those offshore. If EOI selections were to start and applications received, this would likely result in offshore Parent Category applicants remaining in a queue for a lengthy period of time before their application is assessed. This would likely correlate with a rise in associated enquiries.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 43 (1) (b) of the Immigration Act 2009 states that "A visa (other than a transit visa) granted outside New Zealand indicates that...at the time the visa is granted, there is no reason to believe that the holder will be refused entry permission if the holder's travel is consistent with the conditions of the visa relating to travel". This means an application could be processed up to a point, but a visa would not be granted until there is no reason to believe entry permission would be refused.