



13 February 2025

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Peter via FYI

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Tēnā koe Peter

OIA request 24/25 0620 Request for Citizenship Data

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 24 December 2024.

You requested –

1. *Total number of applications submitted to the Minister for approval during the period from October 2023 to November 2024?*
2. *Applications approved by the Minister during the same period?*
3. *Applications rejected by the Minister during the same period?*
4. *Regarding applications assessed on character grounds under the Citizenship Act:*
 - *How many applications were approved and rejected under section 9.1 during this period?*
 - *How many applications were approved and rejected under section 8.7 during this period?*
5. *Total number of applications currently under review that were submitted during the period from October 2023 to November 2024?*
6. *Timeframe for making decisions on applications during this period?*
7. *Details of the process for reviewing and assessing applications submitted to the Minister?*

Your questions have been interpreted as citizenship by grant applications that are individually presented to the Minister through the submission process.

In response to your request, I can provide you with the following information.

Caveats to data

- Data was collated on 14 January 2025
- Multiple applications submitted together to be reviewed by the Minister have been counted as a single application in the following data
- As the data is extracted from dynamic systems, there may be small variances when compared with prior or future datasets.

Question one

I can advise that 221 applications were submitted to the Minister for approval from October 2023 to November 2024.

Question two

I can advise that 139 applications were approved by the Minister for October 2023 to November 2024.

Question three

I can advise that 72 applications were rejected by the Minister from October 2023 to November 2024

Question four

It is important to specify that applications are not 'rejected', a decision is made on whether to 'approve' or 'not approve' the grant of New Zealand citizenship.

Section 8(7) of the Citizenship Act is not relevant to applications 'assessed on character grounds'.

Where an applicant may not be of good character, sections 9(1)(c) and 9A of the Act enables the Minister of Internal Affairs to possibly waive the requirement. In these cases, the applicant is invited to withdraw their application or continue to be considered by the Minister.

Between October 2023 – November 2024 the Minister made decisions on eight submissions under section 9A, all of which were declined.

During that same period, the Minister made decisions on eight submissions where the applicant did not clearly meet good character (section 8(2)(c)) but did not have a disqualifying conviction. Two were approved (both under section 8(1)) and six were declined.

The Department does not hold information as to whether the Minister determined that the applicants approved were of good character, or whether she waived the requirement for the applicant to be of good character.

Therefore, I must refuse this part of your request pursuant to section 18(e) of the Act; that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

Question five

I can advise that 10 applications are currently under review that were submitted during the period of October 2023 to November 2024.

Question six

It is important to note that applicants are advised that there are no timeframes with the submission process.

I can advise that the average timeframe for making decisions on applications from October 2023 to November 2024 was 19 days.

In case it may be of interest, the median timeframe for that period was 11 days. The minimum was 1 day, and the maximum was 168 days.

Question seven

This information is already available in the Citizenship Guidance Document which is published on our website: www.dia.govt.nz/Citizenship-Guidance-Document . This guidance reflects the Minister of Internal Affairs' current policy. It is intended to support transparency and guide applicants, officials and the Minister in decision-making on citizenship applications.

Therefore, I must refuse this portion of your request under section 18(d) of the Act; that the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Department has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on the DIA website. All requestor data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here: www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Julia Taylor
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence
Regulatory and Identity Services