

28 August 2020

## **BRINGING PRODUCTION CAST, CREW AND ASSOCIATED TRAVELLERS TO NEW ZEALAND**

### **1. Background and NZFC role**

After New Zealand borders were closed to overseas travellers due to COVID19 in March 2020, NZFC provided information about the film industry and its benefits for the New Zealand economy to the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

This led to a provision for productions to apply to the Minister for some critical workers to be permitted to come to New Zealand to start or restart international productions stalled by the COVID19 pandemic. The aim was to trigger a significant spend and jobs for New Zealanders and the New Zealand economy. The process is relevant for any production – international or local - that requires some limited international crew or cast to trigger production.

This phase resulted in seven major productions getting up and running.

Since then, responsibility for approval of these critical worker exemptions has moved to Immigration New Zealand. Immigration New Zealand does not share applications it receives with NZFC, and NZFC advice is not sought on specific applications. NZFC can supply some advice on what is typically considered in any submission, but does not influence or play a role in the approval or feedback process.

Once border exemptions are approved, NZFC's role is to work with production companies in collating information about incoming travellers to provide to MBIE and specifically MIQ, a cross-agency taskforce managing isolation and quarantine on arrival in the country. Further details are outlined in section 4 of this document.

NZFC is also able to provide support to international clients and New Zealand line producers as they go through these processes, noting again that we do not play a role in the approvals process. Contact [philippa.mossman@nzfc.co.nz](mailto:philippa.mossman@nzfc.co.nz) if you are starting the process for a production and would like further advice beyond this fact sheet.

### **2. Applying to bring film personnel to New Zealand**

New Zealand's border is currently closed to all but two groups of travellers:

- people to whom the border closure doesn't apply - returning New Zealand citizens and residents, for example
- people who Immigration New Zealand considers have a critical purpose while the border is closed. This group includes some film cast, crew and associated travellers.

Productions (ie. employers) can apply for border exemptions to bring critical workers to New Zealand using the online form at <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/formshelp/employer-request-for-critical-worker>

Productions can put in one border exemption request for all the employees they believe to have a critical purpose to come into New Zealand. This includes cast, crew and associated travellers (eg. partners, dependent children).

In the assessment of applications, Immigration New Zealand will determine if the employees you have applied for meet a 'less than/more than 6-month' criteria. If your application states that your employees are undertaking a time-critical role for work which brings significant wider benefits to the national or regional economy, the assessment will consider the amount of economic stimulus your production will bring for New Zealand. This includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of how many people you would like to bring into the country in relation to the number of jobs the production will create for New Zealanders, and in relation to how much money the production is likely to spend in New Zealand.

You're welcome to speak with the NZFC about including supplementary information in your application – please email [philippa.mossman@nzfc.co.nz](mailto:philippa.mossman@nzfc.co.nz).

- To enter the country, productions (employers) must apply for and be granted a critical worker exemption for incoming cast, crew, and other travellers. **This process is currently taking around five weeks.**
- Workers whose employers receive approval for a border exemption will be contacted by Immigration New Zealand and invited to apply for a Critical Purpose Visitor Visa with work rights or a Critical Purpose Variation of Conditions visa to allow for travel to New Zealand – a [Visa to enter the country](#). **This process is taking less than two weeks for most applications received.**  
NB: This classification of visa does not require a letter of non-objection (LONO) from a Guild. A LONO may be useful to support a Critical Worker application for those skill sets that might appear available in NZ, but it is not compulsory under the critical worker request or for the visitor visa with work rights.

New Zealand citizens or permanent residents do not need to complete this process.

### **3. Mandatory managed isolation and accommodation**

Upon entry to New Zealand, your cast, crew and other travellers are required to enter 14 days managed isolation or quarantine at an approved government facility. **You will be required to pay for your travellers' quarantine.** You can find more information on the fees here: <https://www.miq.govt.nz/being-in-managed-isolation/charges-for-managed-isolation/>. Please note that due to capacity constraints it may not be possible for your personnel to travel on their preferred dates or isolate in their preferred city.

Please contact [eleisha.mcneill@nzfc.co.nz](mailto:eleisha.mcneill@nzfc.co.nz) if you would like more information about user pays accommodation for film personnel.

All travellers are tested for COVID19 twice while in managed isolation – usually around day 3 and around day 12 of quarantine.

#### 4. Working with NZFC on Entry and Quarantine Process

Once your application process for border exemptions is underway, please email [eleisha.mcneill@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:eleisha.mcneill@nzfilm.co.nz) for a spreadsheet which outlines travel details (or anticipated travel details) for cast, crew, and any other travellers. The information in this spreadsheet is collated with other productions' information and provided to the team at MIQ (managed isolation and quarantine), which is a cross-agency taskforce.

- Please ensure each name is on a separate line in the spreadsheet with each of their details. If the traveller is a family member, please indicate the essential worker they're travelling with.
- In the spreadsheet, ETA refers to scheduled arrival time of the flight.

The NZFC provides an updated spreadsheet to MIQ every day at 5pm, so **please let us know ASAP if any details change** (exemptions granted, flights changes, new travellers, people no longer travelling etc).