

# Guide to Immigration Requirements for Midwives Seeking to Work in New Zealand

These notes are intended to give a basic explanation of the immigration requirements relevant to midwives considering a move to New Zealand. Hopefully they will help to ask the right questions in a complex area. Questions should be directed to the nearest office of Immigration New Zealand. In New Zealand you can ring 0508 55 88 55. Contact details for branches in New Zealand and offshore can be found on the page [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz) (scroll down and look at the list on the left hand side).

Please note that the Midwifery Council of New Zealand is not involved with immigration matters. The Council does not offer immigration advice. Immigration status is not considered when assessing an application for registration as a midwife in New Zealand.

## Skilled Migrant Category - Permanent Residence

This is the primary category under which Midwives move to New Zealand.

Persons wishing to be considered for permanent residence in New Zealand should submit an Expression of Interest to Immigration New Zealand. Each fortnight a number of Expressions of Interest are drawn, with the aim being to meet the Government's overall target of approvals for the year. At times the number of Expressions of Interest being received is less than the number to be drawn. In this situation all persons meeting the minimum requirements will be considered. When applications exceed the quota, applicants are ranked and those with the highest ranking are invited to apply for residence.

As at the date of publication, points are awarded for

- skilled employment in New Zealand, or offer of skilled employment,
- recognised work experience outside New Zealand (ascending scale to 10 years),
- basic qualification,
- post graduate qualification,
- age (descending scale to 55)

Bonus points are awarded for

- skilled employment or offer of skilled employment in an area of absolute skill shortage (the Long Term Skills Shortage List). Midwifery is on the Long Term Skills Shortage List.
- skilled employment or offer of skilled employment outside the Auckland region
- partner skilled employment or offer of skilled employment
- work experience in New Zealand
- work experience in New Zealand in an area of future growth, or absolute skill shortage
- New Zealand qualification (minimum two years study)
- qualification in an area of future growth, or absolute skill shortage
- partner qualification.

The main points table can be viewed at the Immigration New Zealand internet site here <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/skilledmigrant/caniapply/eoi/pointstable.htm> .

The bonus points table can be found here <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/skilledmigrant/caniapply/eoi/bonuspoints.htm>

The nature of the points categories and the fact that midwifery is on the Long Term Skills Shortage List mean that most midwives who gain registration in New Zealand will be able to qualify under this policy.

Midwives must obtain registration with the Midwifery Council in New Zealand before an application under this category can be approved. Applicants under this category must meet health, character, and language criteria (and family members must also meet these criteria – character and language only apply to partners and older children).

### **Work to Residence – Work Permit**

This category applies to persons working in an occupation on the Long Term Skills Shortage List, holding cultural or sporting expertise, professional qualification, or looking to establish a business. Midwifery is on the Long Term Skills Shortage List. This category grants a 30 month work permit but not immediate residence. An application for residence may be made after the applicant has completed two years of work in New Zealand.

This avenue is suited to for persons who do not know for certain that they wish to stay in New Zealand permanently. It is also a path for entry for skilled migrants who do not have enough points to gain a place under the Skilled Migrants Category.

Although applicants who intend to go into self employment cannot normally apply under this category, Immigration New Zealand has recognised the nature of midwifery practise in New Zealand. Midwives intending to go into employment, and those intending to go into independent practise (Lead Maternity Carer), can apply under this policy. Midwives must gain registration in New Zealand. Midwives intending to go into independent practise must also obtain a provider contract with the New Zealand health funding agency (HealthPAC) before their immigration permit will be granted. Extra time should be allowed for this.

Applicants including partners and older children under this category must meet health and character criteria. There is no immediate language requirement for immigration purposes although this must be demonstrated later when the residence application is made. However any midwife applying under this category must be registered with the Midwifery Council and must meet a high fluency level for registration purposes.

### **Accredited Employers**

This is a sub category of the Work to Residence Scheme. Employees who require non-New Zealand workers to supplement their own New Zealand workforce in their core activity of business can apply for accreditation with Immigration New Zealand.

The employer must show that they are financially viable, are committed to employing and training New Zealanders, and have sound HR and workplace policies and practices. The positions must pay at least \$50,000 per annum (\$55,000 from 28 July 2008) and the employment contract must be for a minimum of two years. A number of midwives' employers (e.g. District Health Boards) are accredited under this policy.

Midwives must gain registration in New Zealand before they will be granted a permit under this category.

Applicants under this category must meet health and character criteria and be less than 56 years old. If the person applies for residence after two years they will not need to meet any language requirement for immigration purposes. However the midwife must demonstrate a high level of fluency in English in order to gain registration with the Midwifery Council. Partners and any dependent children aged 16 or over will need to meet language requirements. If this requirement is not met, the family members must pre-purchase English language training.

### **Short Term Work Permit**

There are a number of policies that allow the granting of a temporary work permit. The time period varies with the purpose but can be up to three years.

Midwives could apply under this category. This does not grant residence directly, but New Zealand work experience of two years or more counts if individuals later applied for residence under the Skilled Migrant Category.

Midwives would need to be registered here before practising. Some midwives do come to work in New Zealand intending to stay only for a year or two.

### **Working Holiday**

A midwife who wanted to come to New Zealand primarily for a holiday but also wanted to work for some of the time to gain some New Zealand experience or finance the trip could consider the working holiday category. Different schemes apply for different countries and there are a number of conditions that apply to these schemes. Detail should be sought from Immigration New Zealand. Midwives must be registered with the Midwifery Council to work here but this is not an immigration requirement for the issue of the working holiday visa.

### **Students Who Complete a Midwifery Qualification in New Zealand**

Some people complete studies in New Zealand and wish to stay and work. The Government wishes to retain qualified graduates (especially those in areas of absolute shortage). Students who qualify in New Zealand and gain registration would be eligible to apply for a one year graduate job search permit. Once an offer of employment has been obtained, a number of avenues are available – these include a two year “practical work experience” permit or a 30 month work permit under the Long Term Skills Shortage List.

During the currency of these permits, an application for residence under the Skilled Migrant Category could be made. New Zealand qualifications and New Zealand work experience in an area of skill shortage would mean that their application would almost certainly be successful.

## **Internet Information**

General migrant information can be found at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant>

Information on the various immigration categories can be found at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/>

There are navigation links to the various immigration categories described above on the left of the page,

The Long Term Skill Shortage List can be found at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/063ECB35-F5D5-44D8-8325-7041A727A9D5/0/1093.pdf>

The points tables for the Expression of Interest under the Skilled Migrant Category can be found at: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/skilledmigrant/caniapply/eoi/pointstable.htm>

Information on how to obtain a police certificate from your country can be found at: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/formsandfees/formsandguides/policecertificate/>