

# Skilled Migrant and Essential Skills visas – changes to remuneration thresholds

## Friday, 9 November 2018

Remuneration thresholds in Skilled Migrant and Essential Skills policies will be increasing on 26 November 2018.

The Essential Skills work visa and Skilled Migrant Category resident visa remuneration thresholds have been updated as part of our annual review. The new thresholds are based on the New Zealand median salary and wage rate of \$25 per hour (up 2.9% from last year), equivalent to \$52,000 per annum for a 40-hour per week job.

## Hourly rates from 26 November 2018

From 26 November 2018, we are making changes to what an applicant in the Skilled Migrant Category must earn.

<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Between 15 January 2018 and 25 November 2018</b>	<b>From 26 November 2018</b>
Threshold for skilled employment in an occupation at ANZSCO 1-3	\$24.29 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)	\$25.00 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)
Threshold for skilled employment in an occupation at ANZSCO 4-5, or which is not included in ANZSCO	\$36.44 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)	\$37.50 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)
Threshold to earn bonus points	\$48.58 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)	\$50.00 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)

After 26 November 2018, we are making changes to what an applicant in the Essential Skills work visa category must earn.

<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Between 15 January 2018 and 25 November 2018</b>	<b>From 26 November 2018</b>
Threshold for mid-skilled employment in an occupation at ANZSCO 1-3	\$20.65 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)	\$21.25 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)
Threshold for higher skilled employment in any occupation (including those at ANZSCO 4-5)	\$36.44 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)	\$37.50 per hour or above (or the equivalent annual salary)

## **What if I am a current Essential Skills work visa holder and my job does not meet the new threshold? What if I'm an employer and one of my staff hold a current visa but their wage does not meet the new threshold?**

Visas that people already hold will not be affected. Changes to the income thresholds will not affect the duration or conditions of visas that have already been granted.

If you apply for, or have applied for, an Essential Skills work visa and your application was received by INZ before 26 November 2018, the old thresholds will be used to assess your application and determine your visa application. Only new applications made on or after 26 November 2018 will be assessed against the new threshold.

This may mean the conditions or visa duration of the next visa could be different. For example, a chef paid \$21 an hour would currently be considered mid-skilled, as the occupation is ANZSCO level 2 and the pay is above the existing threshold of \$20.65. However if they applied for a further visa after 26 November they would be considered low skilled, unless their pay increased to above the new threshold of \$21.25.

## **If I am an employer who has already advertised and prepared to support an Essential Skills work visa, but the person cannot get his application in before 26 November 2018, what happens then?**

If an application is received and accepted after 26 November 2018, the new thresholds will apply, even if, for example, the employment agreement has been signed prior to 26 November 2018.

## **What happens if I was invited to apply for the Skilled Migrant Category under the old thresholds?**

We will assess your application against the thresholds in place on the date your expression of interest (EOI) was selected from the Pool, if that selection results in an invitation to apply. For example, if your EOI was selected on 21 November and you were invited to apply before 30 November, the old remuneration thresholds will apply, even though you weren't invited to apply until after the new thresholds were introduced.