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To: Undisclosed recipients::

We are contacting you with new information about visa processing.

While we have been working to provide one regular weekly email update from Immigration New Zealand (INZ), we know that visa processing is of great interest to many of you. We have received many questions on this. It is important to us to provide details as soon as possible so we want to share this new information with you immediately, even though you've already heard from INZ this week.

As you will be aware, all INZ offices are currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some staff are working out of our head office in Wellington or remotely, however visa-processing capacity is currently limited.

To date INZ has focused our processing resources on COVID-19 related applications or requests. We are very mindful that many people are awaiting decisions on their applications and we are now in a position to start processing some visa categories for applicants who are already in New Zealand.

INZ is focusing on processing applications that are a priority and can be processed within the current operational constraints. We appreciate this will be disappointing news for some people whose visas we cannot process at this time, but we are continuing to review how we operate in this changing environment. We are hopeful we will be able to process more visa types in the near future.

Any changes to our processing priorities will be updated on our website.

Visa types that prioritised for visa processing

- Visa applications for Victims of Domestic Violence
- Partnership category temporary visas (including reassessments)
- Full Fee Paying student visas
- Post Study work visas

If you or the person you represent has an application in one of the above categories, you do not have to contact Immigration New Zealand to request the application to be processed.

Due to Immigration New Zealand's limited visa processing capacity, the assessment of these applications or requests may take longer than usual. Applications will generally be assessed in date order and will be allocated to an Immigration Officer as soon as it is practicable to do so.

Applicants will only be contacted if further information is required or once a decision is made on their application. If additional information is required, no deadline will be set to provide this information as we appreciate it may be difficult to obtain documentation in current circumstances.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there will be some changes to the way applications are processed. This may include:

- No indicative timeframes for deciding applications

- No face-to-face interviews or any other activities involving physical interaction
- Some application types may be progressed quicker than others based on priority
- Immigration Officers may be unable to progress applications where mandatory information cannot be obtained due to current circumstances

INZ will not be generally processing application types outside of this list at this time. But immigration officers will retain the discretion to prioritise other applications where the circumstances of the application require particular urgency.

INZ is focusing on processing applications that are a priority and can be done remotely without unforeseen difficulties.

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