

Making immigration work for New Zealand

ACT is announcing new policy to make immigration work for New Zealand. One that welcomes people, but only if they share values of tolerance, freedom and democracy, help build infrastructure, and play by the rules.

01 Deport serious offenders

Residency is a privilege. When you commit a crime serious enough to receive a 10-year sentence, your victims don't have a time limit on their suffering, so there shouldn't be a time limit on accountability.

ACT will ensure Resident Visa holders convicted of offences carrying sentences of 10 years or more can be deported no matter how long they've been here. This goes further than the Government's current proposal to extend liability to 20 years.

02 Skilled visas for skilled jobs

Accredited Employer Work Visas are meant to fill crucial skills gaps, but too often the gaps close and the categories remain wide open. Since July 2022, 2480 fast food workers were approved, compared to just 1,052 software engineers. 2,119 beauty therapists were approved, compared to

just 30 biomedical engineers. New Zealand even approved visas for 35 newspaper deliverers.

ACT would have each skill category automatically expire every year. To remain open, they would need to show up-to-date evidence of demand.

03 Opportunity, not dependency

Coming to New Zealand should be a path to opportunity – not a path to welfare.

ACT will introduce a five-year welfare stand-down for all residence class visa holders. That means no jobseeker support, accommodation supplement, or income-tested benefits for a migrant's first five years here.

04 A fair contribution for infrastructure

New Zealand has an infrastructure deficit. More people means more pressure on our roads, schools, and hospitals – new capacity has to be paid for.

ACT will introduce a \$6 per day infrastructure surcharge on temporary work visas, on top of existing charges. This ensures migrants contribute to New Zealand's infrastructure from day one, before they start paying tax. The fee is expected to raise around \$80 million a year, while remaining more affordable than comparable visas in Australia and the United Kingdom.

05 Stronger English language requirements

If you want to live for any serious amount of time in New Zealand, you should be able to credibly speak the local language. Yet, for three of the five AEWV levels, there are no English language requirements.

ACT will extend basic English language requirements to all AEWV types, with higher standards for student and resident visa holders. Lower standards will be permitted for seasonal workers.

06 Enforce the rules

There are 20,980 known overstayers in New Zealand right now. We need a clear, dedicated Government response.

ACT will establish a dedicated overstayer enforcement unit within Immigration New Zealand. Platform employers such as Uber and DoorDash will be required to verify and report work rights. Employers who facilitate overstaying will lose their accreditation.

ACT's policy restores the basic bargain that New Zealand was built on. People are welcome here if they contribute, respect our democratic values, and help build the country.



Authorised by Todd Stephenson MP,
Parliament Buildings, Wellington