

KPMG

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration

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New Zealand – Minimum Age and Evidence Rules Introduced for Partnership-Based Visas

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) announced that effective 25 September 2026, applicants under specified New Zealand partnership-based visa categories and their supporting partners must both be aged 18 or older when the application is submitted. INZ recognizes partnership evidence only from the date on which both people have reached age 18.[1]

WHY THIS MATTERS

The changes may affect the timing of applications for individuals seeking New Zealand residence, work, or visitor visas through a partnership-based pathway. Couples who began living together before one or both partners reached age 18 cannot count that earlier period toward the applicable partnership requirements.

Global mobility and immigration teams may need to conduct more detailed preapplication reviews of the partners' ages, relationship timeline, and supporting evidence. Applicants may also check the latest INZ requirements before submitting their applications, as some online application forms may not reflect the changes immediately.

Key Highlights

- **Minimum age requirement**: Both the visa applicant and the supporting partner must be age 18 or older when the application is submitted.
- **Partnership evidence**: INZ recognizes partnership evidence only from the date on which both people have reached age 18.
- **Residence applications**: Partnership-based residence applicants must have lived together for at least 12 months. Under the new evidence rule, the 12-month period cannot begin before both people have reached age 18.
- **Temporary partnership visas**: Temporary partnership visas do not have an express 12-month living-together requirement. Applicants must nevertheless provide sufficient acceptable evidence that, after both people reached age 18, they have been living together in a genuine and stable relationship.

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- **Affected visa categories**: The changes apply to the following visa categories:
  - Culturally Arranged Marriage Visitor Visa;
  - Partner of a New Zealander Resident Visa;
  - Partner of a New Zealander Visitor Visa;
  - Partner of a New Zealander Work Visa;
  - Partner of a Worker Visitor Visa;
  - Partner of a Worker Work Visa;
  - Partner of a Student Visitor Visa;
  - Partner of a Student Work Visa; and
  - Partner of a New Zealand Scholarship Student Work Visa.
- **Excluded applications**: The changes do not apply when a partner is included in a residence application under the Skilled, Business, International, Humanitarian, or other non-partnership-based Family streams. They also do not apply to general visitor visa applications.
- **Transitional treatment**: The changes do not apply to resident visa applications submitted before 25 September 2026, or to visas granted before that date.

KPMG INSIGHTS

Applicants and organizations supporting them might wish to consider the following actions:

- Identify potential applications involving relationships or periods of cohabitation that began before one or both partners reached age 18.
- Review the date from which the couple's partnership evidence may be recognized.
- Check whether sufficient acceptable documentation is available from the period after both people reached age 18.
- Assess whether the new rules affect the proposed application date.
- Confirm the current requirements on the INZ website before submission, particularly if the applicable online form has not yet been updated.

If assignees and/or their programme managers have any questions or concerns about the scope of the update, its application and potential impacts, and appropriate next steps, they should consult with their qualified immigration professional or a member of the GMS immigration team with KPMG in Australia (see the Contacts section).

ENDNOTE:

1 Immigration New Zealand, "New age and evidence requirements for some partnership-based visas," published on 25 September 2026.

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Contacts

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or following professional with the KPMG International member firm in Australia:



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** Please also note that the KPMG International member firm in Australia is currently providing New Zealand immigration services.*

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