

## Pathways to Residency in Aotearoa through investment

**With landscapes straight out of The Lord of the Rings, a reputation for being one of the world's safest and most stable countries, and a well-known, laid back Kiwi attitude, New Zealand has long been regarded as one of the world's most desirable places to live, consistently ranking highly in global relocation surveys.**

Appeal continues to rise. The Wall Street Journal recently published that the number of US citizens approved as New Zealand residents has jumped 37% between 2018 and 2025 and that the draw is lifestyle, political stability and safety.

While skilled work remains the primary pathway to residence, New Zealand has significantly reshaped its business and investor routes in recent years, including major reforms to the Active Investor Plus Visa and the introduction of the Business Investor Work Visa in 2025, in a bid to "roll out the welcome mat" to investor migrants.

### Active Investor Plus Visa

The Active Investor Plus (AIP) Visa is New Zealand's main investor residency pathway, designed to attract substantial foreign capital. It replaced the older Investor 1 and Investor 2 categories.

The visa requires applicants to invest either:

- NZD \$5 million for three years in acceptable investments under the Growth category, or
- NZD \$10 million for five years in acceptable investments under the Balanced category

Acceptable investments for the Growth category focus on higher-risk investments which include direct investments or managed funds. There are a wider range of acceptable investments for the Balanced category and the ability to choose lower risk investments, which can include direct investment, managed funds, listed equities, philanthropy, bonds, or certain property developments.

AIP visa holders can apply for permanent residence after the investment period ends.

Since April last year, 573 applications for AIP visas have been made, resulting in bringing \$3.39 billion into New Zealand.

A recent policy change means AIP visa holders can now purchase or build a residential property in New Zealand over \$5 million, without needing to spend 6 months a year here. We expect this to encourage an increase in application numbers.

### Business Investor Work Visa

The Business Investor Work (BIW) Visa is for foreigners who want to invest and operate a business in New Zealand. It replaces the now closed Entrepreneur Work Visa.

Applicants must invest at least NZD \$1 million in an acceptable established New Zealand business that they intend to actively run. Applicants must also have NZD \$500,000 in settlement funds.

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## Pathways to Residency in Aotearoa through investment (Continued)

The business must have been in trading for at least five years and employ at least five full-time equivalent staff. Applicants must intend to create at least one new full-time job for a New Zealand citizen or resident.

Applicants need to demonstrate business experience and be 55 years old or younger.

A BIW Visa is valid for up to four years and offers a 3-year or 12-month pathway to residence, depending on how much you invest.

### Parent Retirement Resident Visa

Alongside the AIP and Business Investor Work Visa options, New Zealand also offers a dedicated pathway for families through the Parent Retirement Resident (PRR) Visa. The PRR is designed for parents of New Zealand citizens or residents who want to reunite with their children living here and contribute to the local economy. It enables financially independent individuals to secure residence without relying on the ballot-based Parent Resident Visa system. It is also a good option for individuals who cannot meet the AIP visa requirements.

Applicants must:

- Have a child who is a New Zealand citizen or resident
- Invest at least NZD \$1 million in acceptable New Zealand investments for a minimum of 4 years
- Have an additional NZD \$500,000 in settlement funds
- Demonstrate a minimum annual income of NZD \$60,000

PRR Visa holders can apply for permanent residence after four years of keeping their funds invested in New Zealand.

### Conclusion

New Zealand has multiple routes to residence for foreigners prepared to make a genuine economic contribution to our country, reflecting a broader

commitment to attracting high-value migrants who can support growth in Aotearoa.

### Want to know more?

If you have any questions about investment visas please contact our specialist [Employment and Immigration Team](#).