

Migrant applications for AEWV open 4 July 2022

Employers who have followed the employer accreditation and job check stages of the new Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV), can ask migrants to apply for their visa from 4 July 2022 by using Immigration NZ's 'job token' number.

Once their visa is approved, the migrant can accept the job under the terms of their visa.

Source: [Immigration NZ](#)

Government outlines plans for future COVID-19 variants

On 22 June COVID-19 Response Minister Dr Ayesha Verrall announced that "The Government has undertaken preparatory work to combat new and more dangerous variants of COVID-19."

"This is about being ready to adapt our response, especially knowing that new variants will likely continue to appear. We have undertaken a piece of work to look at possible scenarios for the evolution of the pandemic. This is to ensure there is more certainty for New Zealanders for how we would respond to future variants.

"I want to be clear, lockdowns and other strict measures will be a last resort. Our starting position will be more target measures aimed to protect the most vulnerable while also avoiding wider societal disruption.

"We already have a much stronger base of protection measures in place such as access to vaccinations and anti-viral drugs, our PCR testing capacity, contact tracing system and an integrated surveillance system. These reduce our need to use more stringent measures.

"This is part of our All-of-Government response to COVID-19, with agencies assessing their preparedness to deploy measures and undertake ongoing activity to ensure they can be activated rapidly in the future.

"Preparedness planning doesn't commit us to following a set path should a different variant of COVID-19 emerge, it is about maintaining the capabilities to respond to a range of possible scenarios.

New Zealand's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to date has been based on strong public health advice and characterised by a willingness to adapt and learn in response to the evolving nature of the virus.

Our ongoing surveillance for new variants, especially at the border keep us in a good position to identify future variants.

"Based on public health advice Ministers will continue to make decisions about how to respond in the event of new variants. This process is well established and has served our country well," Dr Verrall said.

More information and the Ministry of Health variants of concern framework summary can be found [here](#).

Source: [Beehive.govt.nz](https://www.beehive.govt.nz)

Fair Pay Agreement Bill update

The Fair Pay Agreements Bill was introduced into Parliament on 29 March 2022 and is going through the full parliamentary process. The Bill is at presently at the Select Committee stage.

People have had the opportunity to make a submission to the Select Committee on the Bill. The submissions period closed on 19 May 2022.

In addition to the Fair Pay Agreements Bill, a [parliamentary paper](#) was lodged on 31 March 2022. This paper explains that the Government proposes to change the Bill, to make the default bargaining party role voluntary, and add a new process (the backstop) where, if no eligible representative steps forward to be a bargaining party on one side, then the Employment Relations Authority will set the terms of the Fair Pay Agreement.

The Committee received public submissions on this backstop proposal alongside the Bill through the Select Committee process.

For a refresher, a summary of the proposed Fair Pay Agreement system can be found [here](#).

Next steps

The Select Committee will now hear from submitters who would like to present their evidence and it will then consider any amendments to the Bill. The Select Committee is due to report back to Parliament in early October 2022.

The Fair Pay Agreement system is expected to commence shortly after the Bill has passed, anticipated to be at the end of 2022.

Source: [MBIE](#)

This article is brought to you by AdviceWise People, who provide WGANZ's free employment helpline 0800 692 384. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the article, please call Philip or Anthony.