

LANGUAGE

FLAG AREA



# GET READY PACK

INFORMATION FOR RSE WORKERS



**IMMIGRATION  
NEW ZEALAND**



A SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR





KIA ORA -  
WELCOME

# Contents

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ISBN: xxx-x-xxx-xxxxx-x

## Welcome!

### **WELCOME TO RSE NEW ZEALAND. YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO BECOME AN RSE WORKER! CONGRATULATIONS!**

RSE stands for Recognised Seasonal Employer. A Recognised Seasonal Employer is an employer that has been given approval by the New Zealand Government to recruit workers from overseas.

New Zealand's horticulture (fruit and vegetables) and viticulture (wine) industries need extra workers during some seasons to help with planting, cultivation and harvesting.

The information in this pack will help you make the most of your time working in New Zealand. Please make sure you take with you when you leave for New Zealand and keep it while you are there. You will find that it will be very useful during your stay.

You should also attend a pre-departure orientation presentation before you leave your home country. This presentation will explain more about what working and living in New Zealand will be like. You will also have a chance to ask questions and get answers about anything that isn't clear to you.

On arrival in New Zealand your employer and the Department of Labour will have more information on hand to help you settle into your new work and make the most of your time in New Zealand.

It's a great opportunity and it's up to you to use it. We wish you well.

*The New Zealand RSE Team*

## Induction

Before you travel to New Zealand, you should attend a pre-departure training session with your local government officials. This will help you understand more about life in New Zealand. Your travel arrangements will also be confirmed then.

On arrival you will attend an induction with your employer. These inductions cover things like:

- Your transport arrangements in New Zealand
- The weather and the type of clothing you'll need
- What you should eat to keep yourself healthy and happy in your new home
- How to budget - this is about how best to use your pay and manage your costs while in New Zealand
- The tax you will pay on the money you earn while in New Zealand
- What happens if you have an accident at work and are unable to continue working
- What happens if you get sick
- Contraception, safe sex and STDs
- What you can do when you aren't at work and how to enjoy your stay in New Zealand.

## Money

You need to ensure you have sufficient money when you arrive in New Zealand to cover your expenses until your first pay.

### **YOUR PAY**

Your money will go into a bank account which your employer will have arranged for you. You will receive a payslip telling you how much you were paid, how you were paid (i.e. into your bank account), and what your deductions were.

As a seasonal worker, you will be paid in one of three ways:

#### **1. Hourly rate**

If your contract says you are being paid an hourly rate, this means you will be paid a set amount for every hour you work.

For example: If you work 30 hours and your hourly rate is \$NZ15.00, you will be paid \$NZ450.00 BEFORE tax and deductions. Tax and deductions reduce your pay.

You cannot be paid less than the minimum rate.

#### **2. Piece rate**

A piece rate means you will be paid a certain amount each time you complete a particular task. For example in the apple industry, you can be paid a set price for every bin you fill with apples. This means the faster you work checking the quality of the apples, the more you will be paid.

For example: if you are paid \$NZ30.00 for every bin of apples you fill, and you fill 15 bins by the end of

the week, you will be paid \$NZ450.00 before tax and deductions.

If you are paid at a piece rate, you still cannot be paid less than the minimum rate. However, as this option is generally made available to experienced workers you will usually make more than this.

### **3. Sliding Rates**

Sliding rates are usually a part of piece or contract rates. This is when you get paid a set amount of money (a value rate) for each unit of work completed. This can be paid as per bin, per basket, per tree, per bay (A bay is part of a row - usually between posts, in the case of apples and grapes), per kilogram, etc. It depends on what the task is and on which unit it is paid under. The idea of a sliding rate is that usually the amount you are paid for each task (the unit rate) is not fixed and can change depending on the circumstances.

For example, if you are doing apple harvesting and are being paid by the number of bins you fill, then the price per bin may depend on such factors as how big the crop is (crop loading), how old the trees are, the variety of apples you are picking, the time of harvest, whether the crop is organic or in-organic and whether it is for the export or local New Zealand market or being used in the production of apple juice. This means that you may be paid NZ\$15.00 per bin for a bin of apples picked for juice and let's say NZ\$45.00 per bin for export quality organic apples.

In this example the employer must detail in your employment agreement that the rate per bin is from NZ\$15.00 (lowest possible dollar value) to NZ\$45.00 (highest dollar value) per bin and explain



why there is the price variance. The employer can always pay above the top rates but can't pay below the minimum.

If you are paid on sliding rates, you still also cannot be paid less than the minimum rate. However, as this option is generally made available to experienced workers you will usually make more than this.

#### **4. Combination rates**

In some cases you might change rates. This can happen when the kind of work you are doing changes. For example, sometimes when you are new to a job you can start on an hourly rate then change to a piece rate when you get more experience and can work faster.

You might be paid differently from your fellow worker if you are doing different work or being paid a different way.

#### ***Holiday Pay***

You are entitled to annual holiday pay at a rate of 8% of your total before tax pay. For example, if you earn \$500 a week you will have an additional \$40.00 a week set aside as holiday pay. You will have to pay tax on your holiday pay. Some employers include holiday pay in your weekly pay and others will pay it to you at the end of your employment. If you are paid each week, tax is taken off automatically as part of the wages, but if your holiday pay is paid at the end of your employment the tax will be taken off then.

**If you have any issues with your payslip, contact your group leader or employer.**

## **DEDUCTIONS FROM YOUR PAY**

The amount you earn will not be the final amount you get paid because you will have deductions taken directly out of your pay.

### ***Tax***

Tax or PAYE is a compulsory deduction — you have to pay this. Tax is money from your pay that goes to the New Zealand Government to pay for essential services such as the public roads and safety (police, the courts etc. Everyone who works in New Zealand is taxed. RSE workers have a special tax code (NSW) at a tax rate of 10.5%. You will also see it on your payslip.

### ***Voluntary deductions***

There are deductions that are voluntary and can only be done with your approval in writing. These deductions usually cover things like transport costs to and from work and accommodation. Allowing your employer to deduct the cost of these from your pay can make it easier for you to manage your money. Your employer must explain to you what you will be paid for, what is in your payslip, tell you about any deductions they are going to make and get your approval. You can stop these deductions at any time. If you do this you will still need to pay for anything you owe and pay for any continuing services in cash or through your bank account.

For your protection, all deductions must be shown to the Department of Labour Inspectors which will check that they are lawful and correct.

### ***Travel cost deductions***

Your employer and you share your airfare costs from your home country to New Zealand — you will pay half each. If your employer has paid the entire

fare you need to pay back half the fare and this is where your employer may deduct that amount from your pay. You may have to pay your travel costs in New Zealand as well. This can include things like air fares, bus and train fares.

### ***Accommodation deductions***

Your employer has to provide safe and suitable accommodation for you at a fair New Zealand price that has been checked by the Department of Labour. You can either agree to your employer deducting money for accommodation from your pay or you can pay it directly.

### ***Power and other living costs***

You should expect to pay for power and other living costs associated with your accommodation. You may also be required to pay some transport costs such as the cost of travel to and from your work. You can get these deducted from your pay or you can pay them directly. Some employers include power in the price of your accommodation. Ask your employer what is included and what must be paid for separately.

After deductions you will have an amount left in your bank account. What you do with this is important!

## **THINGS TO REMEMBER**

**Pay and deductions:** Your rate per hour might sound like a lot but there are deductions, and if you are not careful with the rest of your money and save, you may not go back home with as much money as you expected to.

**Experience:** First time workers in New Zealand may not earn as much as return workers who have become good at what they do. So expect to be learning a lot and getting used to the work.

**Piece rates:** Piece rates are normally better than hourly rates if you are a fast worker who does a good job. This is because they pay you according to how fast and well you work. You will need to talk to your employer about whether you are paid piece rates or an hourly rate.

## **SAVINGS AND REMITTANCES**

### **Savings**

To save as much as you can you need to be strong. There are many things to tempt you to spend money on in New Zealand!

Your employer can help you to save by automatically putting some of your pay in a separate bank account and leaving you enough money to spend every week on living expenses. You must give your written approval for this.

### **Remittances (sending money home)**

For a fee you can send money home. The bank that holds your account will be able to help. But you can use other banks or businesses to send money. Different banks and businesses charge different amounts. The charges vary quite a lot according to the amount of money you send, the country it is sent to and how quickly the money is transferred. The people at your bank will be able to explain these details and help you make the best choice.

You can find out who charges what at the website [www.sendmoneypacific.org](http://www.sendmoneypacific.org). To do this you'll need to use a computer to access the internet. Ask your employer how or where you can access a computer.

It is more expensive if you send money home frequently because there is a cost attached to each transaction. Talk to your employer about the best way to send money home.



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## Relationships

### **WHAT YOU DO FOR YOUR EMPLOYER**

You will be expected to do all the jobs you agree to in the agreement you signed with your employer and do them in the way your employer expects you to. This will include:

- coming to work on time
- looking after the place you are living in
- behaving responsibly at all times both at and after work.

You are expected to work when needed; this may include working on your Sabbath or other holiday. Your hours of work will be set out in your employment agreement. The more work you do, the more you earn.

Team work is important, so talk to your team leader or employer about what is required. It is a good idea to watch and listen in the first few weeks so you get an idea of what's expected. It will take a few weeks to settle in.

You also need to abide by New Zealand laws. If you break the law, the New Zealand police may get involved. If you are dismissed from your employment, you will not be able to remain in New Zealand and will have to return home.

### **AFTER WORK**

What you do after work will play a big part in making your stay here enjoyable. Talk to your employer about activities you can do when you are not working. There will be local church and sports groups you can join and other community activities

you will be able to join in. There may be opportunities to meet with RSE workers from other countries, and local New Zealanders. This will make your time in New Zealand more enjoyable and give you opportunities to do and learn new things.

## **WHAT YOUR EMPLOYER DOES FOR YOU**

Apart from paying you for your work, your employer must take care of several things for you, including:

- finding you suitable accommodation
- providing you with suitable cooking and living facilities
- paying you at least the minimum wage of New Zealand per hour
- providing you with a certain number of hours to work
- providing you with transport to and from your worksite.

Your employer also needs to provide you with pastoral care. Pastoral care is about looking after your well-being while you are in New Zealand. Employers are required to help you find services and community groups that help you with health issues, shopping, sport and attending church.

All RSE employers have to be approved by the New Zealand Government to make sure they are suitable employers and can provide the necessary work and good working conditions. Your employer has to meet all the living and safety requirements set up to protect RSE workers.

**Employers WANT you to go to them if you have a problem. Don't be shy to approach them!**

## **SOLVING PROBLEMS AT WORK**

If you have a problem or there is something you don't understand or feel is dangerous or unfair, the first thing you should do is ask your team leader or employer about it. You can do this yourself or ask your group leader to do it for you. This is often the best way to sort things out, clear up any misunderstandings and settle any problems.

If you are not happy with the employer's response, you should contact your Labour Inspector. Labour Inspectors are government officers who are there to make sure employers meet certain conditions for hiring you.

You can also contact a union. Unions are there to represent the rights of workers in New Zealand and they will probably have a local representative or member who can help.

There are ways to make sure you are heard and that any problems you may have are not ignored. So make sure you talk to someone as soon as possible.

If a problem arises you can contact:

- Your group leader or employer
- Your government representative
- Your Labour Inspector on 0800 20 90 20
- Your union if you are a member

You can also contact your local New Zealand:

- CAB (Citizen's Advice Bureau)
- Community groups
- Free Law service
- Settlement Support Service

A list of contact numbers is provided at the end of this information booklet.



# Employment

## **AGREEMENT**

You will have received an employment agreement as part of your offer of work. Your employer or their representative will have explained the agreement to you.

Every employee in New Zealand must have an employment agreement. This is an important document that explains what you must do for your employer and what the employer must do for you.

Your agreement will set out certain conditions which are law in New Zealand. These include leave, holiday pay, working on public holidays and sick leave.

You should not sign the employment agreement unless you understand everything in it and are happy with its terms and conditions. If there is anything you don't understand or are unsure about, ask the government official, employer or their agent to explain.

## **WORK RELATED INJURIES**

If you have an accident, you can apply through your doctor for financial assistance from the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). You will have paid an ACC levy as part of your tax. ACC is run by the New Zealand Government and provides insurance for personal injuries. Depending on how your injury happened, the ACC can help pay for medical treatment after an accident.

This includes medicine, special surgery or treatment but not general medical conditions like the flu.

## **NON-WORK RELATED ILLNESSES**

ACC does not cover illness. Medical insurance is now compulsory for all RSE workers. This is to cover any illness-related health costs that you may have while in New Zealand.

Medical Insurance can cover expenses such as visits to the doctor; the cost of the medicine the doctor gives you (prescriptions) emergency dental treatment and hospital costs including surgery. If you have a serious illness or disability and you need to return home because of your illness, medical insurance may cover these costs as well. If you are already being treated for an illness or are found to have got an illness before arriving in New Zealand, Medical Insurance may not cover the cost of treatment. These illnesses are known as pre-existing conditions or an on-going illness and you will need to discuss these with your employer when you purchase your Medical Insurance.

Your employer will arrange Medical Insurance as part of the visa process and the cost of this will be deducted from your pay once you start working.

You will have to pay for your Medical Insurance even if you don't claim anything.

Your employer will provide you with information on the Medical Insurance coverage. Make sure you read the information or ask your employer to explain what the insurance covers and what you are entitled to claim for.

## **YOUR VISA**

You will enter New Zealand on a limited visa that allows you to work under the RSE scheme. While in New Zealand you cannot apply for any other type

of immigration visa. If you decide to leave your employer, you will not be allowed to stay in New Zealand. It might be possible for you to move and work for a different RSE employer, but this must always be agreed to by the Department of Labour before it happens.

You must return home at the completion of your work. If you do not comply with your limited visa you may be stopped from returning to New Zealand.

If you comply with the conditions of your visa and are offered employment by an RSE employer, you can return to New Zealand in following seasons. Since your visa expires when you leave New Zealand, if you return to work for another season, you will need to apply for a new visa.

## **JOINT APPROVAL TO RECRUIT (ATR)**

A joint Approval to Recruit (ATR) allows employers to have access to workers at peak work periods by sharing workers with another employer. If you have a joint ATR it will enable you to work for two employers and you will be able to stay longer in New Zealand to earn more money. Both the employers responsible for you will organise your employment agreements including travel and accommodation arrangements. Don't forget to sign both employment agreements.

## **UNIONS**

Unions are there to represent workers. You can join a union in New Zealand for a fee. As part of a union, workers can have their voice heard about issues in the workplace or get support when there is a dispute at work. Some unions have Pacific representatives who may speak your language.



## Living Conditions

### **WEATHER**

Prepare yourself for weather very different from what you are used to. New Zealand weather is a lot colder and you may need to work outside in some very cold temperatures.

You'll need to have appropriate shoes and clothing as you'll need to keep warm and dry while you are at work. Your employer will provide you with blankets and warm coverings for your bed. Your employer will also give you advice on what and where to buy additional clothing and blankets if you need them. You will be provided with heaters and your employer can tell you how to use these efficiently. Having warm showers before and after work will also help to warm you up and keep you healthy.

Even in the warm months, from December to April, New Zealand is not as warm as the Pacific. The coldest months are July, August and September during the New Zealand winter.

Your employer should have discussed with you what you will need if you come in the winter season. They can also tell you what type of weather they get in their region.

### **ACCOMMODATION**

You can check with your employer or RSE agent or representative what accommodation will be provided, and what is provided with the accommodation. Employers understand that you cannot bring large items with you so bedding is supplied and should be used. But there may be some things you can bring from home to make yourself more comfortable.

Cooking facilities, washing machines and hot showers are available for your use. Make use of what has been made available to you and learn how to use them properly and they will save you time and effort.

It's your responsibility to look after your accommodation by keeping it clean and tidy. Any damage caused might have to be paid for by you and this can be expensive.

## **EATING**

You need to pay for your food. New Zealanders have a good variety of food that you can buy from local supermarkets and shops.

Try to eat well, and eat plenty. Three good meals a day should give you the strength and energy needed to work. You may need to eat heavy meals as the weather and the work you are doing require energy. Try not to eat lightly or miss lunch, and drink plenty of water.

If you do not eat well and drink plenty of water, you will be less productive and will earn less money. Also you could become sick and unable to work and have to return home. Remember, no work no pay.

Eating arrangements will have been made by your employer. Different workplaces have different ways of organising food for workers. If you are concerned about your eating arrangements please talk to your employer.

## **STAYING HEALTHY**

The weather and working environment in New Zealand can be hard on your health so keeping warm, washing regularly and wearing clean clothes daily will help.

It is especially important to wash off dirt regularly as this dirt can infect any cuts on your body. Using antibacterial or carbolic soap is the best way to avoid skin infections such as boils. Ask your employer to help find these for you.

Keeping yourself healthy will also help you to fend off illnesses.

There is also another type of health that is important – your well-being. You will be missing your families and your home more than you realise. Keeping in contact with them and sending money home is a way to keep in touch. Your employer may be able to tell you the cheapest ways to keep in touch with home and how to use email and phone cards.

Stay strong and remember that time will pass quickly. Concentrate on what you have come to do and keep working hard.

If you feel unhappy and worried, talk to your group leader or employer, or your government representative as they are there to help you with problems like these.

## **HEALTH**

You should be aware that Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS are common in New Zealand. To protect your health it is recommended that you do not engage in unsafe sex and always use a condom. Family planning sessions are available from a local doctor or from specialist clinics.

## Disciplinary Procedures

These can be the result of either a workplace dispute or criminal offending. An employment-related matter is to do with work, and criminal offending is when you break the New Zealand law.

### **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

If you are dismissed from your employment, you can't stay in New Zealand. If you get into trouble with New Zealand law, your employment may come to an end, and you may have to leave New Zealand.

### **DEPORTATION**

You can be deported if you commit a crime or your employment relationship breaks down, or you fail to comply with the conditions of your visa (such as holding acceptable medical insurance). In these circumstances, the Department of Labour will send you a deportation liability notice and a deportation order.

If you are served with a deportation order, you will be required to leave New Zealand immediately. If you do not leave immediately, the Department may detain and deport you. If we deport you, you will be banned from returning to New Zealand for five years and it may affect your chances to apply under the RSE scheme in the future. You will also have to pay back any costs associated with your deportation. Being deported from New Zealand can also stop you visiting or working in other countries.

Please be aware you must leave New Zealand before your visa expires or you will risk being deported.



## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

The legal age for drinking alcohol in New Zealand is 18 years and older. Some towns have rules which stop you drinking alcohol in public areas such as parks, gardens and public car parks. Smoking in public areas is not permitted. This includes shopping malls, pubs, bars and restaurants and aeroplanes, buses and trains. Drugs and alcohol are not permitted in most workplaces.

You should never be in possession of illegal drugs, substances or associated items. Such behaviour will be dealt with by your employer's disciplinary procedure and may lead to dismissal without any warning.

## **DRIVING IN NEW ZEALAND**

You are not allowed to drive in New Zealand without a licence. If you hold a licence and can drive in New Zealand, always remember to drive on the left hand side of the road. On most of New Zealand's main roads the speed limit is 100 km/h unless a sign says a lower speed applies. In towns, the speed limit is usually 50 km/h unless a sign says otherwise.

## **WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY**

Knowing what to do in case of an emergency is important. Your employer should have a plan to deal with various types of emergencies. An emergency could be an injury incident, a severe illness, a fire, earthquake, flood or storm, a fight or other serious incident. Ask your employer during your induction about emergency preparedness and ask for information about what to do in an emergency.

## Going Home

You will be leaving New Zealand at the completion of your work with your RSE employer. If you have bought goods to take home with you on the plane, remember that if you take more than the weight allowed it will cost extra.

Try to plan to send your items home early. Talk to your employer about freight deals that will help you send goods home at a reasonable cost. The amount you save in freight charges will be more money in your pocket.

Remember to keep your New Zealand IRD number and your New Zealand Bank Account Number. You will need these if you return to New Zealand under RSE in future seasons. If you want to keep your New Zealand bank account open, you will need to leave enough money to cover any bank fees. You should also keep any warm clothing purchased during your time in New Zealand.

To get the most out of your RSE experience, you might want to talk to your government representative about any Financial Literacy or other training opportunities.

## ✎ Before you leave – Checklist for Plane

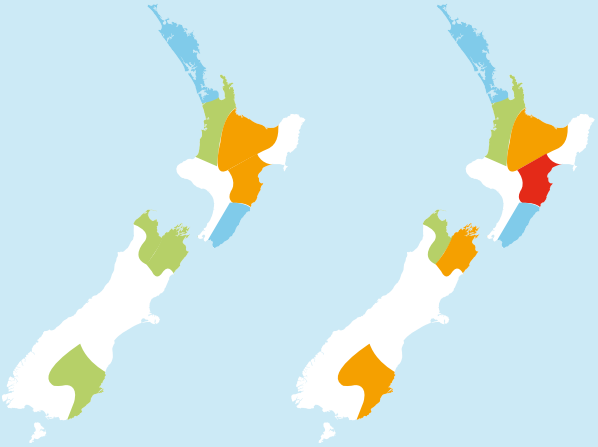
You will be given documents that are needed for you to enter New Zealand and work. You must keep these important documents and bring them with you.

### CHECKLIST

- Passport with New Zealand Visa
- Plane tickets
- Employment agreement
- Medical insurance documents (if applicable)
- Drivers Licence (if you have one)
- Money for the time before you are paid
- List of contact numbers for home
- New Zealand IRD number (if you have one)
- New Zealand bank account number and EFTPOS card (if you have one)

Please ensure that your name and date of birth on your plane tickets and medical insurance documents are spelt the same as your name in your passport.

# 📍 Demand for work



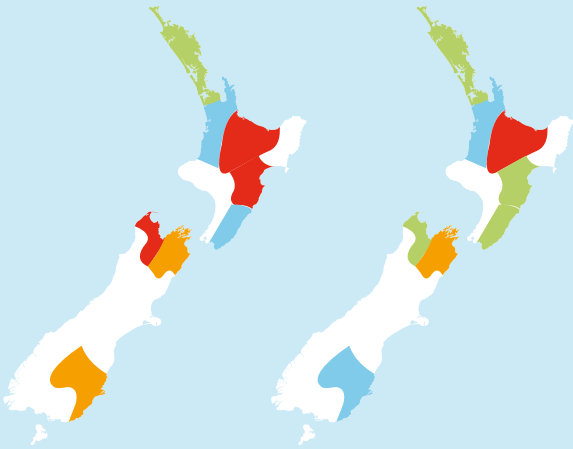
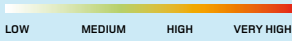
**Spring**  
September to November

**Summer**  
December to February

	September	October	November	December	January	February
Northland	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	LOW
Auckland	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Waikato	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
Bay of Plenty	HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
East Coast	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Hawkes Bay	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	MEDIUM	VERY HIGH
Wairarapa	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Nelson	LOW	LOW	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	VERY HIGH
Marlborough	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Canterbury	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Central Otago	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM

■ LOW   
 ■ MEDIUM   
 ■ HIGH   
 ■ VERY HIGH

## KEY



## Autumn

March to May

## Winter

June to August

March	April	May	June	July	August
LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH
LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
LOW	MEDIUM	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
LOW	LOW	LOW	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW

## Contact Numbers

Labour Inspectors

**0800 20 90 20**

RSE Unit at Department of Labour  
(Immigration New Zealand)

**0508 55 88 55**

Healthline

**0800 611 116**

Settlement Support New Zealand

**0800 776 948**

Citizens Advice Bureau

**0800 367 222**

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions

**0800 698 646**

Emergencies: Police, Fire, Ambulance

**111**



[newzealand.govt.nz](http://newzealand.govt.nz)



**SETTLEMENT SUPPORT**  
NEW ZEALAND