



BRIEFING

New parent visitor visa - key design options

Date:	6 March 2025	Priority:	High
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	REQ-0010049

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Erica Stanford Minister of Immigration	Agree which options to include in a draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial and agency consultation	10 March 2025

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Telephone		1st contact
Polly Vowles	Manager, Immigration (Skills & Residence) Policy	04 978 3106	Privacy of natural persons	✓
Lee Gerrard	Principal Policy Advisor	04 830 7396		

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry for Ethnic Communities and the Treasury

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



BRIEFING

New parent visitor visa - key design options

Date:	6 March 2025	Priority:	High
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	REQ-0010049

Purpose

To provide initial advice on, and seek agreement to, the key design parameters of the new parent visitor visa (Parent Boost) to include in a draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial and agency consultation.

Executive summary

Following a discussion with officials on 18 February 2025, we have completed some initial analysis of how the Canadian super visa could be adapted to be made suitable for New Zealand. This work has been informed by initial discussions with our Canadian counterparts, New Zealand based insurers and initial feedback from your Advisor Reference Group (ARG).

We are now seeking your agreement to the key design parameters of the new Parent Boost Visa to include in a draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial and agency consultation. We have used Canada's model as a starting point and have recommended a suite of upfront requirements to reduce risks. These include requirements that ensure applicants have access to sufficient financial support through sponsorship obligations, income and/or sufficient funds requirements (aligning with existing Parent Category Resident Visa requirements and New Zealand Superannuation), and requirements to reduce risks to the health system, including an upfront health assessment (set at the higher residence bar) and mandatory health insurance.

You have choices about the level of health insurance you require under the visa which will impact the cost of accessing the visa, appetite of insurers to provide coverage and risks that applicants/sponsors incur health debts in New Zealand they are unable to cover. Based on the Canadian model you could focus requirements on emergency care, repatriation and return of remains (in the case of death). Focusing on emergency care (as opposed to extending coverage to General Practitioners and other non-urgent care) will significantly reduce costs (e.g. \$4,000-\$6000 average per annum as opposed to \$8,000-\$10,000 average per annum) and may be appropriate in the context of other proposed requirements (income/funds and sponsorship). For higher coverage you could consider extending coverage to General Practitioners and other non-urgent care and/or pre-existing conditions.

These requirements (notably health insurance) will increase the cost, reduce the potential attractiveness and limit access to the Parent Boost Visa. In this context (and given unquantifiable risks), we recommend allowing visa holders to stay onshore for up to five years at a time to increase attractiveness (this will have the added benefit of reducing complexity). We have recommended that in order to be able to apply for subsequent Parent Boost visas, visa holders be required to spend a period offshore (e.g. six or 12 months). This will reduce but not eliminate risks of "de-facto" settlement and signal the temporary nature of the visa.

We are also seeking your agreement whether you would like the visa to cover only parents (i.e. only adult children can sponsor) or also include grandparents (i.e. the adult grandchild can sponsor). There are differing approaches across existing parent policies with Parent Category Resident visas only being available to parents (except in specific circumstances) and the temporary Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa including grandparents. To align with Canada,

grandparents would be included but this could also increase volumes (including at higher ages) and mean there would be no pathway to residence for these grandparents.

Further work is required on the detailed design on the visa and an appropriate fee/levy for the visa. We recommend the draft Cabinet paper seek delegated authority for you to take decisions on the detailed design of the visa, in consultation with other relevant Ministers as required. Should a new fee type be required for this visa, changes to regulations will be required. We'll provide further advice on this shortly following Cabinet agreement.

We note that there has been limited time for analysis and there is considerable uncertainty about potential volumes and associated risks of the new visa. We recommend that you seek Cabinet's agreement to review the visa one year after its introduction to ensure that it is fit for purpose and no unintended consequences have arisen (e.g. significant demand and pressure on the health system or unacceptably low uptake if costs/insurance ends up being prohibitive).

Your decisions in this paper will inform a draft Cabinet paper which will be provided to you to circulate for Ministerial and agency consultation. At this stage we are aiming for decisions from the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee (ECO) on 9 April 2025 and Cabinet on 14 April 2025, with implementation in September 2025.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a. **Agree** which options to include in a draft Cabinet paper for consultation:
 - a. Applicants must be sponsored by an eligible New Zealand citizen or resident who is 18 years or older
Agree / Disagree / Discuss
 - b. Sponsors will be liable for any costs incurred by the Government in relation to the visa holder during the visa duration (including health, welfare and deportation)
Agree / Disagree / Discuss
 - c. Sponsors/applicants must meet **ONE** of the following requirements:
 - i. The sponsor/s income aligns with requirements under the Parent Category Resident Visa (1.5x the current New Zealand median wage for a single sponsor (currently \$98,623.20 per annum) and 2x the current New Zealand median wage for joint sponsors (currently \$131,497.60 per annum) to support one parent which increases by half the New Zealand median wage for each additional parent)
Agree / Disagree / Discuss
 - ii. The sponsored parent has ongoing income equivalent to New Zealand Superannuation (approximately \$30,000 gross per year)
Agree / Disagree / Discuss
 - iii. The sponsored parent has at least \$150,000 available to support themselves throughout the duration of the visit
Agree / Disagree / Discuss
 - d. Applicants will be required to meet the Acceptable Standards of Health for residence, meaning parents with named or costly pre-existing conditions will not be eligible (as outlined in **Annex Two**)
Agree / Disagree / Discuss

EITHER

- e. Applicants be required to obtain and maintain health insurance which covers emergency medical cover (for example up to \$250,000 NZD), repatriation and return of remains;

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

OR

- f. Applicants be required to obtain and maintain health insurance which covers all medical costs, including General Practitioners

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

OR

- g. Applicants be required to obtain and maintain health insurance which covers all medical costs, including General Practitioners and pre-existing conditions

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- h. A year of health insurance coverage will be required upfront with an ongoing visa condition that medical insurance is required while onshore

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- i. The Parent Boost visa will enable multiple entries with a maximum stay onshore for up to five years

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- j. Parent Boost visa holders will be required to spend a period offshore (e.g. six or twelve months) prior to accessing a subsequent visa

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- k. Migrants can only access two Parent Boost visas and must apply offshore

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- l. Applicants will be required to declare they understand the visa is temporary and unless they are granted residence while onshore, they will need to leave New Zealand at the end of their visa

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- m. Grandparents will be able to access the visa subject to meeting all eligibility requirements and having an eligible sponsor

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- b. **Agree** to seek Cabinet's authority to make further policy decisions on the design of the visa, in consultation with other relevant Ministers as required

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- c. **Agree** to seek Cabinet's invitation to review the visa a year after operation and report back with findings and any recommendations for change

Agree / Disagree / Discuss

- d. **Note** that further work will be required to determine the appropriate fee and levy for the new visa and this may require changes to regulations **Confidential advice to Government**

Noted

- e **Note** that subject to your decisions in this paper officials will provide you with a draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial and agency consultation.

Noted



Polly Vowles

Manager, Immigration (Skills and Residence) Policy

Labour, Science and Enterprise Group,
MBIE

Hon Erica Stanford

Minister of Immigration

..... / /

06 / 03 / 2025

Background

1. In the Coalition Agreement between the New Zealand National and ACT parties there was a commitment to: *Introduce a five-year, renewable parent category visa, conditional on covering healthcare costs, with consideration of a public healthcare levy.*
2. We previously provided you with advice on the scope and timeframes for work on a new parent visitor visa as well as information about existing parent visa pathways in New Zealand, Australia and Canada. This advice noted that the design of a new parent visa will depend on where you choose to strike the balance between facilitation and attraction (both compared to our comparator countries and existing pathways for parents) and risk mitigation. Key design choices include the duration of the visa (and any periods required offshore within the visa duration) and what, if any, requirements will be in place to manage health costs [0009473 refers].
3. In a discussion with officials on 18 February 2025, you confirmed you would like to progress to Cabinet in April 2025 (and implement the new visa in September) and, to support moving at pace, you agreed to limit the scope of the work to considering an adaptation of the Canadian super visa to a New Zealand context. An overview of Canada's parent pathways is attached at **Annex One** for ease of reference.
4. You also directed officials to engage with our Canadian counterparts and some New Zealand based insurers.¹ We also sought initial feedback from your Advisor Reference Group (ARG) on the Canadian super visa and its applicability to New Zealand (with a further discussion planned for 6 March 2025). Insights from these engagements have informed our initial advice and recommendations and are reflected throughout this paper as relevant.

Proposed policy settings for the new Parent Boost Visa

In line with the Canadian model, we recommend a number of upfront requirements to mitigate risk

Sponsorship obligations

5. To mitigate the risk that parents are unable to support themselves while onshore or increase costs for the government/taxpayers, it is common for parent visas to come with sponsorship requirements for the child/grandchild. These requirements are present in the Canadian super visa and existing parent visas in New Zealand.
6. In a New Zealand context, the sponsor² is responsible for:
 - making sure the parent has the things necessary for their health and welfare while onshore like food, clothing and healthcare;
 - providing somewhere suitable to stay, whether this is with the sponsor or funded by the sponsor; and
 - covering the cost of the parent travelling back to their home country if they cannot/do not pay for it themselves.
7. These obligations apply for the entire duration onshore (for Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visas) and for the first 10 years of settlement (for Parent Category Resident Visas). If

¹ Officials had an initial meeting with Canadian immigration officials on 25 February 2025, **Commercial Information**
[REDACTED] 27 February 2025.

² Sponsors must be New Zealand citizens or residents aged 18 or over and be eligible based on their relationship to the sponsored person.

sponsorship obligations are not met, then the sponsored person could be liable for deportation. If the government has incurred costs that the sponsor was responsible for (including the cost of deportation) that debt can be recovered from the sponsor even if the sponsored person is no longer in New Zealand or has a new visa.

8. We recommend existing sponsorship requirements apply to all sponsors under the new Parent Boost Visa. We note that there are concerns about the efficacy of sponsorship requirements at meeting their objectives if not actively monitored and enforced (these concerns have been raised about existing parent categories). We will do further work alongside detailed design to consider the most appropriate approach to monitoring and enforcing obligations associated with this visa, noting this may have resourcing and cost (fee/levy) implications.

Income and/or sufficient funds requirements

9. Having an income and/or sufficient funds requirement helps to ensure that sponsors have the financial means to meet their obligations and/or that visa holders have the financial means support themselves while onshore. Previous evidence suggests an income requirement also reduces the chance visa holders rely on government funded services and support.³
10. From an initial discussion with officials, we understand you are interested in having multiple avenues for sponsors and/or parents to demonstrate their ability to fund their time onshore. This would support the objective of income/funds requirements while reducing the risk of limiting access to the policy significantly. We have designed an option which would allow for income/funds requirements to be met through one of three avenues:

- **An income requirement for the sponsor** – There is no precise methodology to determine the income threshold that is appropriate (given different family arrangements and fixed costs). However, aligning with the existing Parent Category Resident Visa requirements would target higher skilled workers, increase financial means available (compared to a lower threshold) and would mean parents eligible for the Parent Boost Visa would be more likely to be eligible for residence under the Parent Category Resident Visa should they wish to remain in New Zealand.

To align with the Parent Category, income requirements could be met by one or two sponsors and would vary based on the numbers of parents sponsored. The amount a sponsor needs to earn to sponsor one parent is **1.5x the current New Zealand median wage for a single sponsor** (currently \$98,623.20 per annum) and **2x the current New Zealand median wage for joint sponsors** (currently \$131,497.60 per annum). The minimum income increases by half the New Zealand median wage for each additional parent, up to a maximum of six parents.

- **An income requirement for the parent** – Income/funds requirements for visa holders already exist in our system at varying levels. For example, we ask visitors to have \$1,000 per month per person for the duration of their visit if they do not have accommodation pre-paid (i.e. up to \$12,000 per annum) and Parent Retirement Visa holders to have \$60,000 per annum. There is no exact way to determine the appropriate level of income (as costs will vary based on the person and sponsors income). However, officials consider it would be appropriate to link it to the cost of New Zealand Superannuation. While rates could vary⁴, this could be set at approximately

³ Sapere conducted analysis for MBIE in 2017 on the fiscal impacts of the Parent Category and examined the November 2011 and June 2013 annual cohorts of arrival on Parent Category visas. The 2011 cohort did not have an income threshold for sponsors, whereas the 2013 cohort did. The uptake of benefits decreased significantly once there was an income threshold for sponsors - approximately 33 per cent of the 2011 cohort accessed some form of benefit within the first five years of residence, while only three per cent of the 2013 cohort accessed benefits.

⁴ Rates differ based on whether the superannuitant is in a couple or single and living alone.

\$30,000 (gross) per parent per year.^{5,6} This assumes accommodation costs (i.e. by not including the rate of an Accommodation Supplement in the calculation) and significant health costs (as superannuitants are eligible for publicly funded healthcare) are covered elsewhere which aligns with the intent to have sponsorship and health insurance requirements.

- **A sufficient funds requirement for the parent** – Sufficient funds requirements for the visa holder already exist for some visa products, notably students⁷ and Parent Retirement.⁸ However, these are not entirely comparable to the proposed new Parent Boost Visa as students maintain part-time work rights (so will have greater ability to support themselves than parents) and Parent Retirement provides residence whereas these parents will only be onshore temporarily. While the sufficient funds requirement could vary significantly, we consider aligning it with the proposed income requirement and New Zealand Superannuation is a sensible approach. This could see a requirement for upfront funds of approximately \$150,000 per parent to cover a five-year duration.

11. We note that any/all of these requirements will limit access when compared to the existing Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa and that the level they are set will determine the scale to which this reduces access (and potential attractiveness).
12. The ARG recommended a meaningful alternative to the high-income threshold for sponsors under the Parent Category Residence Visas be considered, noting that migrant communities may be highly critical if the income thresholds are set too high. They recommended parents' incomes/assets could be considered as an alternative. We consider the above meets this intent but will have further discussions with the ARG on this point prior to Cabinet. We note that having alternatives to the sponsor/s' income requirements will mean some people who access a Parent Boost Visa will not be eligible under the Parent Category (unless their sponsor's income changes).

Upfront medical assessment

13. An upfront medical assessment is the key lever to reduce possible pressure on the health system. While other settings can mitigate costs for the health system (i.e. if they are covered by health insurance) an upfront medical standard is key to reducing pressure (i.e. reducing the need for visa holders to access medical care).
14. As discussed with officials on 18 February 2025, we consider that applying the higher Acceptable Standard of Health for residence (as opposed to temporary entry) would be appropriate for this visa type. This would exclude a number of pre-existing conditions and health conditions with significant associated costs as outlined in **Annex Two**.
15. This aligns with the requirements for the Parent Category Resident Visa and will reduce the risk of adding significant pressure to the health system. We note that in discussions with insurers they expressed this would increase the appetite to offer coverage to these visa holders also (discussed further in the section below).

⁵ Currently, a single person living alone receives \$606.67 gross per week, approximately \$31,546.84 gross per annum.

⁶ While subject to further detailed design work, income could include a pension, earnings from rental properties, dividends from share portfolios, interest from investments, profits from owning a company and/or share market trading profits.

⁷ Students are required to provide proof of NZD \$20,000 per year of tertiary, English language, or other non-compulsory school study or \$1,667 per month if their study will be shorter than one year. If they're studying in compulsory education (years 1-13 at a school), they need NZD \$17,000 per year or \$1,417 per month in addition to living costs being paid.

⁸ The Parent Retirement Resident Visa requires holders to have at least NZD \$500,000 to support their settlement alongside an annual income of NZD \$60,000 or more.

16. Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
17. Confidential advice to Government [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] a change in the visa holder's health would impact applications for further Parent Boost Visas and/or Parent Category Resident Visas.

Mandatory health insurance

18. A core part of the Canadian super visa is a mandatory health insurance requirement. To meet the super visa requirements the insurance must offer at least \$100,000 Canadian Dollars in health care, hospitalisation and repatriation⁹. Confidential information entrusted to the Government [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
19. Health insurance requirements already apply in some New Zealand policies (e.g. the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme and students) with varying degrees of coverage required¹⁰.
20. The extent of the coverage required will impact the overall cost of the insurance and the appetite of insurers to provide coverage.^{11,12} It will also impact the level of risk that costs are not able to be covered by the sponsor or visa holder. To support this work, [REDACTED]
Commercial Information [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] have done an **initial estimate** to cost possible insurance offerings, based on different scenarios to provide an illustrative outline for what costs could be incurred:

- Emergency + repatriation only: Unforeseen hospital and surgical medical expenses and repatriation (up to \$250,000¹³) and death benefits (up to \$50,000) – this would include emergency/unforeseen medical costs in a public or private facility, repatriation for the insurance holder and an accompanying relative and the costs to return the body or cover the funeral should the holder die onshore. *It would not cover pre-existing conditions or foreseeable medical expenses.* Commercial Information this would have an **average cost of \$4,000-\$6,000 per annum** but this is highly influenced by the age of the applicant. The estimated costs by age are as follows:
 - For a 45 - 65-year-old \$2,400 per annum
 - For an 80-year-old - \$4,800 - \$9,600 per annum - *Note: of Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visas granted in 2024 less than 4 per cent were for those 80 and older.*
- Emergency + repatriation + GP/prescriptions: As above plus **increased medical expenses coverage to \$400,000 (maintain repatriation and death benefits) and include GP and prescriptions**, ongoing treatment, specialist appointments and

⁹ Confidential information entrusted to the Government [REDACTED]

¹⁰ To be acceptable, health insurance for RSE must cover: all medical expenses (including diagnosis and treatment, prescribed medicines, ambulance, hospital and post-hospital discharge care, home nursing care), emergency dental care (including the provision of antibiotics and treatment for the relief of sudden and acute pain), evacuation/return home in the event of serious illness or disability, and the return of remains to the visa holder's country of origin in the event of death.

¹¹ Initial discussions with New Zealand based health insurance providers highlighted that some providers do not offer the option to cover pre-existing conditions.

¹² The ARG noted that there is only one insurance provider in New Zealand offering appropriate insurance for the temporary retirement visa and that premiums are circa \$20,000 per annum.

¹³ Commercial Information [REDACTED]

¹⁴ Noting that this is high level and subject to full and more detailed analysis of claim data for the demographic (and product benefits).

diagnostics. **Commercial Information** this would have an **average cost of \$8,000-\$10,000 per annum** but this is highly influenced by the age of the applicant. The estimated costs by age are as follows:

- For a 45 - 65-year-old \$4,200 per annum
- For an 80-year-old - \$8,400 - \$16,400 per annum

21. A key consideration for the level of coverage to require will be the potential cost and impact of parents needing to seek general (non-urgent) medical care (e.g. GP appointments to access/renew prescriptions) for new and/or pre-existing conditions. Medical practices can set their own rates to charge casual patients or visitors and prescriptions will not be subsidised (i.e. medications will need to be paid for in full). While pre-existing conditions/GP/prescription cover could be required as part of the health insurance requirement this is likely to come at significant additional cost to the visa holder (as outlined above) and may limit the coverage options available.
22. In the context of the recommendations to progress sponsorship, income and/or sufficient funds requirements and apply the residence Acceptable Standard of Health requirement, officials consider that only requiring emergency medical coverage (for example up to \$250,000), repatriation and return of remains may be sufficient (and aligns with Canada). Noting that parents could opt to receive greater coverage (in the context of sponsors otherwise being liable for costs incurred) if they wished. This would reduce the overall cost of accessing the visa which could, if insurance requirements were expansive, become prohibitive (particularly if requiring coverage of pre-existing conditions).
23. We note regardless of whether non-urgent medical care (and/or pre-existing conditions) are covered by insurance this will still add demand for GPs and broader health services and increase pressure. Not requiring GP cover but requiring emergency cover may also mean those who could otherwise have been seen by a GP will choose to take up emergency medical care instead. The extent of this impact is subject to the volume of applications which officials will monitor closely.

Providing evidence of insurance upfront

24. Aligning with Canada, we recommend that insurance is required to be paid for and valid for a minimum of one year to support a successful application. While there would be a risk that visa holders cancelled their insurance while onshore/decided not to renew, this could be mitigated by an ongoing visa condition that holders must maintain valid insurance while onshore. **Confidential advice to Government** evidence could be required as part of further applications for Parent Boost Visa or Parent Category Resident Visas).
25. We do not recommend requiring insurance to be valid for five years upfront for two key reasons. Firstly, as this will be a multi-entry visa, parents may travel in and out of New Zealand and requiring coverage for the whole duration add unnecessary cost and reduce attractiveness. Secondly, in initial discussions with insurers they noted that a requirement for five years coverage upfront would be a significant financial undertaking and/or may reduce appetite from insurers to provide the insurance offering.

Allowing for offshore insurance providers

26. From initial discussions with some New Zealand based health insurers, there appears to be appetite from the market to offer a product suitable for this visa type (subject to final design). However, we note that only allowing for New Zealand based insurers would reduce competition and may drive prices up.

27. Recent changes to the Canadian super visa settings have allowed for health insurance to be provided by insurance companies outside Canada (as opposed to previously only allowing Canadian based insurers). Confidential information entrusted to the Government
28. Officials are undertaking further work on how best to deem which offshore insurance providers would be suitable (Canada has a set register/list) which could include leveraging comparator countries' existing registers (e.g. Australia and or/Canada) and/or allowing insurance companies with a strong credit rating or equivalent from an internationally recognised credit rating (for example Standard and Poor's). We will provide you further advice on this as part of the detailed design work.

In the context of high upfront requirements, the duration of the visa will be key to ensuring its attractiveness, but is not without risk

Total visa duration

29. As existing visas and pathways are being maintained, the key way this visa will differ and provide attraction benefits is by allowing longer stays onshore. While a generous visa duration will likely be key to attraction it does come with some risks, notably that parents "de-facto" settle in New Zealand and lose ties to their homeland and/or their health deteriorates while onshore making it difficult or impossible for them to return home (some examples from existing visas are included at **Annex Three**).
30. Canada currently offers a five-year duration for their super visa. Confidential information entrusted to the Government
- Confidential information entrusted to the Government
32. You could consider requiring a period offshore during the five-year visa period, for example, allowing for two years onshore followed by three to six months offshore. As noted by the ARG this would help ensure visa holders maintained connections with their home country. It would however reduce the attractiveness and increase operational complexity.
33. On balance, we recommend allowing visa holders to stay onshore for the entire five-year visa duration to support increased attraction. To mitigate risks with de-facto settlement we propose that visa holders:
- be subject to the usual bona fide/genuine visitor assessment as part of the application;
 - be required to sign a declaration that they understand the visa is temporary and unless they are granted residence while onshore they will need to leave New Zealand at the end of their visa;
 - only be able to apply for a Parent Boost Visa while offshore and that they will have to be offshore for a minimum period of time (e.g. six or twelve months) prior to reapplying.

- cannot access more than two Parent Boost Visas (i.e. they cannot stay longer than a 10-year period).

34. Maintenance of the law

you could consider a shorter visa duration and/or require a period offshore within the visa. However, there is no way to entirely remove these risks (to some extent they already exist with existing temporary visas) and these options would reduce the overall attractiveness of the visa.

Other eligibility considerations

Extending coverage to grandparents

35. The Canadian super visa applies to parents and grandparents, similarly to the Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa in New Zealand. You have a choice whether you would like to extend eligibility to grandparents (e.g. the adult grandchild sponsors because the parent cannot) or not. We note that the current Parent Category Resident Visa only applies to parents except in some situations e.g. grandparents could be eligible if both of the sponsors parents are deceased.
36. To align with Canada and existing temporary parent policies in New Zealand you may want to extend to coverage to grandparents, but we note this reduces alignment with the Parent Category (and therefore would leave this group without a pathway to residence). It may also increase the risk of greater volumes (at a higher age) coming to New Zealand under this visa.

Interaction with existing visas

37. As noted above, we have recommended that at most, migrants can receive two Parent Boost visas. However, we have not proposed that this is a limited visa¹⁵. That means that those on Parent Boost visas could (following their 10-year period) apply for, and if eligible, be granted other visas e.g. Parent Grandparent Visitor Visas to continue to visit for periods of up to six months at a time and the Parent Category Resident Visa. Officials consider this to be low risk but can provide further advice alongside detailed design if requested.

Sponsorship and other definitions

38. We have assumed the existing eligibility for who can sponsor a parent will apply, noting this limits sponsorship to New Zealand citizens and residents. The ARG noted that (assuming the existing Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa remains) sponsorship could be limited to permanent residents and New Zealand citizens to demonstrate a more ongoing commitment to New Zealand. Officials consider that aligning with existing sponsorship requirements is low risk and reduces complexity, further work on tightening sponsorship to permanent residents would require legal advice (as sponsorship is set out in the Immigration Act 2009).
39. We have assumed the existing parameters for which parents/grandparents can be included will apply. This would include biological/legal parents and grandparents but wouldn't, for example include all step-parents (except in some cases e.g. where other parents are deceased) which the ARG noted should be considered. While some step-parents will be able to be included as partners of the primary applicant (and as noted above in some other cases), extending the definition more broadly could increase operational complexity and risks of gaming/fraud. Whether this definition was too restrictive could be considered as part of a future review.

¹⁵ The ARG noted making this a limited visa might mitigate the risk of appeals and provide a stronger indication that this is a temporary visa.

40. As with existing parent visas in New Zealand, we recommend that parents be able to include a partner but not dependent children in the application.

Further work is required to determine the appropriate fee and levy for the visa

41. Immigration fees are set to recover the direct and indirect costs of processing and assessing visa products (i.e. the 'cost-to-serve'). We expect this visa will require greater immigration processing effort than the existing Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa, with processing effort likely to be more akin to the Parent Category Resident Visa – particularly greater health (including insurance) and funds/income requirements. The current fee for a Parent and Grandparent visitor visa is \$300, while the fee for a Parent Category Resident Visa is \$1,940.
42. Immigration levies, which cover the wider costs of running the immigration system such as border and identity activity, settlement support, migrant attraction, and compliance and investigations activity, are set to reflect a combination of the benefits that users of the immigration system receive or the risks they create, as well as their ability to pay. For example, there is a higher levy for residence visas compared to temporary visas, and a higher weighting for work and student visas relative to shorter-term temporary visas such as visitor or group visitor visa. Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa applicants are currently charged a levy of \$41, while applicants for the Parent Category Resident Visa are charged a levy of \$3,420.
43. Further work will be required on appropriate fees and levies following Cabinet decisions and prior to implementation. If a new fee and levy are required (i.e. if we cannot link this to an existing fee), changes to regulations will need to be agreed by Cabinet. We will provide you with advice on this shortly following Cabinet agreement. This advice will include the timing for progressing regulations changes (noting this couldn't be done during Budget moratorium [REDACTED])
- Confidential advice to Government
[REDACTED]

Risks and considerations

Uncertainty of volumes

44. There is significant uncertainty about the volumes of migrants who will access this visa.¹⁶ We expect to see some substitution effects from existing visas (Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa with 7,601 approvals in 2024) and General Visitor Visas¹⁷ (noting that the volumes of parents who use a General Visitor Visa are unknown). Those currently in the ballot for the Parent Category are likely to be incentivised to apply (while they wait to be drawn) and more likely to be eligible (there are approximately 15,000 people currently in the pool¹⁸).
45. Existing visas do not have the exact same requirements as proposed for the Parent Boost Visa so looking to Canada can also provide us with insights on what volumes we might expect. While Canada has a lower proportion of migrants in their overall population, if we saw similar volumes to Canada in a New Zealand context that may be approximately 9,500 parents/grandparents a year at peak. Based on this, it would be reasonable to assume we may see somewhere between 7,000 and 17,000 parents seeking to use this pathway, but this is subject to how stringent the financial/sponsorship and health insurance requirements are.

¹⁶ Industry/ARG feedback is that there is strong interest in this visa. However, officials note this may be subject to the final design/cost.

¹⁷ Those from visa waiver countries or not planning multiple trips would be less incentivised to apply for the Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa and more likely to use existing NZETA/General Visitor Visa pathways.

¹⁸ Noting there may be duplication with visitor visa numbers in this pool.

46. With uncertainty of volumes, there is a degree of uncertainty about the potential impact on the health system and broader infrastructure. We recommend seeking Cabinet's invitation to undertake a review of the policy a year after its implementation. This review could ensure the visa is working as intended and that, in the context of the volumes of applications and approvals, either:
- If high uptake – whether any further health funding, upfront requirements or a cap is required to mitigate impacts for the health system/broader infrastructure; **OR**
 - If low uptake – whether the upfront requirements, particularly around health insurance, are too prohibitive. We note that the cumulative impact of the income/sufficient funds requirement, health insurance and the visa fees and levies may be significant and will reduce access to the visa, however, the extent of this is uncertain.

Impacts on the health system

47. The Ministry of Health advises that there will be impacts on the capacity of the health system to deliver care for those already living in New Zealand and public health system costs. Groups entering under the proposed parent visa, even with additional health screening, are likely to have higher health needs than the average population, and their use of health services (private and public) will place some additional pressures on the health system capacity and impact access to timely, quality health care for those already living in New Zealand.
48. Proposals for private health insurance requirements, and restrictions on this group's eligibility to general publicly funded health services, seek to limit costs to the public health system. However, some costs on the public health system will likely be incurred by this group, especially as older people's health can deteriorate over a five-year period. Some parents may access emergency care where the individual is unable to reimburse Health NZ, including where insurance may not cover due to the type of treatment or insurance payment caps being exceeded. Some people will also have health conditions where health care is needed, such as cancer treatment, and is outside of emergency care from their private health insurance. Unless the parent returned to receive treatment in their main country of residence, there would be pressure to access health services within New Zealand. This could be from the sponsoring family funding private health care costs, if they have the financial resources, or put pressure on the public system to provide essential care, where sometimes the ability to recover costs from the individual, or their estate, may be limited.

“De-facto settlement”

49. We have already received correspondence regarding this new visa noting that parents will want to remain onshore rather than return home if they've spent five or 10 years here with their family, therefore the “de-facto settlement” risks are likely to be high. While some will be eligible and may be selected from the Parent Category ballot during their visa durations, others (e.g. whose health may deteriorate while onshore or grandparents) would likely have no pathway to residence. Maintenance of the law

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Maintenance of the law

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Further risks may be identified in detailed design

50. This work has been progressed at pace which means some risks and may not have been identified. We recommend seeking Cabinet authority to delegate further design decisions to you in your role as Minister of Immigration (in consultation with other Ministers as relevant) so that, if any issues are identified during the detailed design you have the authority to agree policy interventions as required without needing to return to Cabinet.

Next steps and timing

51. Subject to your decisions, officials will provide you with a draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial and agency consultation. We are currently working to the timeframe outlined in the table below.
52. We note that this timeframe is tight and meeting an April Cabinet date may be challenging should you wish to receive further advice/consider broader options prior to circulating a Cabinet paper for consultation.

<i>What?</i>	<i>When?</i>
Agreement to options to include in a draft Cabinet paper	10 March
Cabinet paper provided to the Minister for Ministerial and agency consultation	13 March
Ministerial and agency consultation	17 March – 28 March
Final Cabinet paper provided to the Minister	1 April
Lodge	3 April
ECO	9 April
Cabinet	14 April
Detailed design work, including on the fees/levies	April – May
Implementation	September

Annexes

Annex One: Overview of Canada's parent visa pathways

Annex Two: Conditions not eligible under the Acceptable Standard of Health for residence

Annex Three: Examples of visa holders having health issues once onshore

Annex One: Overview of Canada's parent visa pathways

	Temporary	Residence
General overview	A "super visa" allows parents and grandparents to visit for up to 5 years at a time and provides multiple entries for a period up to 10 years	A program to sponsor parents/grandparents to become permanent residents of Canada
Applicant requirements	<p>Applicants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have an immigration medical exam and meet health requirements have health insurance which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should be valid for a minimum of a year from the date of entry (<i>the policy notes they 'should have a valid insurance policy while in Canada so may need to renew or maintain insurance during their stay. Insurance must be valid for each entry into Canada)</i> is paid in full or instalments with a deposit covers health care, hospitalisation and repatriation provides a minimum coverage of \$100,000 must be a genuine visitor (<i>this includes consideration of ties to their home country and the overall economic and political stability of their home country)</i> must meet character requirements 	<p>Applicants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meet health and character requirements
Requirements for sponsor	<p>Sponsors must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be the applicant's child or grandchild hold citizenship/residence meet an income threshold (<i>varies by size of household; CAD \$29,380 for 1 person, up to CAD \$77,750 for 7 people (+ CAD \$7,916 for each added person)</i>) provide a promise of financial support for the duration of the visit 	<p>Sponsors must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be the adult child of the applicant/s. hold citizenship/residence and primarily reside in Canada undertake sponsorship requirements including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> financially supporting the parent/grandparent for 20 years (or in Quebec, 10 years) making sure no social assistance is granted to the parents, if they receive assistance during the sponsorship window, the sponsor would not be able to sponsor again until they had repaid the cost providing for basic needs including food, clothing and shelter, dental, eye and other health needs not covered by public health Meet an income threshold (<i>varies by size of household; CAD \$44,530 for 2 people, up to CAD \$94,658 for 7 people (+ CAD \$9,636 for each added person)</i>)
Annual cap	N/A	For the 2024 intake, 35,700 invitations to apply were issued with a goal to accept up to 20,500 applications

Annex Two: Conditions not eligible under the Acceptable Standard of Health for residence

Immigration New Zealand may decline a residence visa if the applicant, or somebody else in the application, have any of the following conditions:

- Hepatitis B-surface antigen positive and meeting criteria for anti-viral treatment in New Zealand.
- Hepatitis C-RNA positive and meeting criteria for anti-viral treatment in New Zealand.
- Malignancies of organs, skin (such as melanoma) and haematopoietic tissue, including past history, or currently under treatment. Exceptions are:
 - treated minor skin malignancies
 - malignancies where the interval since treatment is such that the probability of recurrence is below 10%.
- Requirement for organ transplants (with the exclusion of corneal grafts), or following organ transplant when immune suppression is required (with the exclusion of corneal grafts).
- Severe, chronic or progressive renal or hepatic disorders.
- Musculoskeletal diseases or disorders such as osteoarthritis with a high probability of surgery in the next 5 years.
- Severe, chronic or progressive neurological disorders, including but not limited to:
 - any dementia including Alzheimer's disease
 - poorly controlled epilepsy
 - complex seizure disorder
 - cerebrovascular disease
 - cerebral palsy
 - paraplegia, quadriplegia
 - poliomyelitis
 - Parkinson's disease
 - motor neurone disease, Huntington's disease, muscular dystrophy
 - prion disease
 - relapsing or progressive multiple sclerosis or both.
- Cardiac diseases, including but not limited to:
 - severe ischaemic heart disease
 - cardiomyopathy
 - valve disease with a high probability of surgical and or other procedural intervention in the next 5 years
 - aortic aneurysm with a high probability of surgical or other procedural intervention or both in the next 5 years.
- Chronic respiratory disease, including but not limited to:
 - severe or progressive restrictive (including interstitial) lung disease or both
 - severe or progressive obstructive lung disease or both
 - cystic fibrosis.
- Significant or disabling hereditary disorders, including but not exclusive to:
 - hereditary anaemias and coagulation disorders
 - primary immunodeficiencies
 - Gaucher's disease.
- Severe autoimmune disease which may require treatment in New Zealand with immune-suppressant medications other than Prednisone, Methotrexate, Azathioprine or Salazopyrin.
- Severe (71-90 decibels) hearing loss or profound bilateral sensori-neural hearing loss after best possible correction at country of origin, where significant support is required, including cochlear implants.
- Severe vision impairment with visual acuity of 6/36 or beyond after best possible correction at country of origin, or a loss restricting the field of vision to 15-20 degrees where significant support is required.

- Severe developmental disorders or severe cognitive impairments where significant support is required, including but not exclusive to:
 - physical disability
 - intellectual disability
 - autistic spectrum disorders
 - brain injury.
- Major psychiatric illness or addiction or both, including any psychiatric condition that has required hospitalisation or significant support or both.
- A history, diagnostic findings or treatment for MDR-TB or XDR-TB, unless cleared by a New Zealand Respiratory or Infectious Diseases specialist upon review of any file or applicant according to the New Zealand Guidelines for Tuberculosis Treatment.

Immigration New Zealand may also decline the visa application if in the medical assessor's opinion the health services costs are likely to be more than NZ\$81,000 (NZ\$41,000 if you applied for a visa before 4 September 2022).

