



18 April 2024

Nessy-Rose

fyi-request-26164-ec6c20e4@requests.fyi.org.nz

DOIA 2324-2051

Tēnā koe Nessy Rose

Thank you for your correspondence of 19 March 2024 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

Pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following information from Immigration New Zealand.

- 1. Detailed explanation and documentation of the criteria used by INZ to assess whether the "compelling personal circumstances" threshold is met to expedite case officer allocation for Family Category visa applications. This request seeks to understand the framework, guidelines, or quantifiable measures that guide decision-making in these assessments.*
- 2. Any available categorisation or examples of circumstances previously recognised as "compelling" for expediting case officer allocation. This includes, but is not limited to, any internal memos, guidelines, or case studies that may illustrate the application of these criteria.*
- 3. Statistical information on the number of Family Category visa applications expedited due to "compelling personal circumstances" over the past six months, including a breakdown by the nature of these circumstances.*

This request aims to clarify how INZ ensures consistency and fairness in applying its criteria for expediting case officer allocation for "compelling personal circumstances," particularly in the absence of publicly available, detailed guidelines. Understanding the basis for these decisions is crucial for applicants to navigate their options and ensure transparency and accountability in the immigration process.

This request is made with a complete understanding and respect for the privacy and confidentiality obligations that Immigration New Zealand must adhere to. Therefore, I seek aggregated or anonymized data where necessary and do not request any personal information that could potentially identify individual applicants. My interest lies in the procedural aspects and the application of policies by INZ, rather than the specifics of individual cases.

I understand my request should be responded to under the Official Information Act within 20 working days. Please do not hesitate to contact me here if you require any clarification regarding this request.

I am writing to advise you that MBIE has decided to extend the period of time available to make a decision on your request under section 15A(1)(b) of the Act, as consultations necessary to make a decision on your request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit.

As such, a proper response cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit. MBIE will notify you of a decision on your request no later than 9 May 2024.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision to extend the time limit. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Jack Price', written in a cursive style.

Jack Price
Manager, Ministerial Services
Associate Deputy Secretary Immigration Branch
Immigration New Zealand