



2 September 2024

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Josh via FYI

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Tēnā koe Josh

### **OIA request 24/25 0120 Request for Citizenship by grant online applications**

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 5 August 2024.

You requested –

*Could you provide the following information regarding the Citizenship by grant online applications submitted between June 25th, 2023, and July 5th, 2023, as well as a few general inquiries?*

- 1. How many applications are currently undergoing processing, and can you provide a breakdown by date?*
- 2. How many group applications are awaiting assignment to a case officer, and can you provide a breakdown by date?*
- 3. What is the maximum wait time for ministerial approval?*
- 4. What are the main reasons for failing the automated check?*
- 5. If an applicant's birth documents are not computerized, can this cause the automated check to fail?*
- 6. Can the absence of a last name in an applicant's documents cause the automated check to fail?*
- 7. What are the main reasons for declining an application?*
- 8. If an applicant does not meet the presence requirements and is advised by an officer to withdraw their application, will they face a long queue if they reapply? Can they go through the automated check again, or is there any special consideration given, considering they have already waited a long time with their initial application?*

In response to your request, I can provide you with the following information.

### **Questions One and Two**

Please refer to Appendix A, attached to this response. Appendix A provides you with a breakdown of online citizenship by grant applications received between 25 June and 5 July 2023.

An explanation of the workstreams can be found on the Department's website;

<https://www.govt.nz/browse/passports-citizenship-and-identity/nz-citizenship/how-to-apply-for-nz-citizenship/citizenship-timeframe-differences/>.

### Question Three

This question has been interpreted as asking for the maximum wait time for submissions sent to the Minister for a decision.

I can advise that since January 2023, the maximum wait time has been 152 calendar days. For additional context, please see the table below:

Date to Minister	Date back from Minister	Calendar Days
25/10/2022	26/03/2023	152
13/06/2023	19/09/2023	98
18/05/2023	14/08/2023	88
23/01/2024	15/04/2024	83
23/01/2024	12/04/2024	80

Each of the dates above relates to a single application. I can advise that for the 114 submissions in which an outcome has been reached in this calendar year, decisions were made in as little as 1 calendar day. The average time for a decision was 26 calendar days. The table below sets out the days taken to decide applications, for applications in this calendar year. Please be aware that the data comes from a manually updated spreadsheet.

Calendar days	%
1 to 14	47%
15 to 28	17%
29 to 45	18%
46 and above	18%

In case it may be of interest, further information on the submission process is available on the Department's website [www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2](http://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2) via Official Information Act responses [OIA-2324-0908](#) and [OIA-2324-0823](#)

### Question Four

I can advise that the main reasons for failing automated checks are already available on the Department's website via an Official Information Act response. The response can be found here: [OIA2324-0923](#). I must therefore refuse this part of your request pursuant to Section 18(d) of the Act; as the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

### Question Five

The automated test focuses on dates entered electronically into the system. A birth certificate provided by an applicant is manually verified by the LISO once the application has been assigned to a LISO.

### Question Six

I can advise that the absence of a surname on documents will not affect the automated checks.

### Question Seven

I can advise that most common reason for the Minister not approving applications is that the applicant does not meet 'presence in New Zealand' requirement.

### **Question Eight**

Any new application will be treated by the automated system the same as all other applications. There is no preferential treatment for new applicants regardless of whether they have applied previously.

You may be interested to know that there is a lot of publicly available information online about citizenship and the timeframes for processing citizenship applications. The Department, for example, regularly proactively publishes Official Information Act responses on its website, including information about citizenship timeframes. Responses have been proactively released here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2> and you can search the responses by using 'ctrl' + 'f' and typing 'citizenship' in the search field. The most recent proactively released response will be towards the top of the page.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Department has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on the DIA website. All requestor data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here: [www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2](http://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi



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