

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION

Dear Kris Faafoi, Minister for Immigration

Our vision for immigration is a system that upholds the dignity and humanity of migrants. Migrants are respected as welcome members of our communities, not reduced to economic units.

Migrant communities are flourishing in Aotearoa, as people come from around the world to create a good life for them and their families. All migrants deserve to have their dignity, rights, and humanity honoured by Immigration New Zealand and our Government.

But in Aotearoa, we have an immigration system that discriminates and separates, treating migrant workers as cheap labour and second class citizens. Migrants on temporary visas have no clear pathways to residency, are left dependent on dodgy employers, and are separated from their families and loved ones through rules that discriminate on wealth, nationality, and relationships.

We have a plan to start fixing our broken immigration system. We are calling on you to:

1 Create pathways to residency

The government must ensure there are clear and achievable pathways for all migrants to gain residency, including transparent and honest communication with temporary visa holders to enable their transition to permanent residence.

Use the powers granted by legislation to enable migrants already here to gain residency.

A broad overhaul of the visa scheme presents major opportunities to address family reunification issues, vulnerabilities to migrant exploitation, and barriers to obtaining permanent residency faced by those with disabilities and health conditions.

2 Create a broad amnesty programme for people who overstay

By granting residency to people who overstay their visa, a broad amnesty programme will uphold their mana, will recognise their contribution to Aotearoa, and will ensure people aren't left vulnerable to exploitation.

By also creating pathways to residency, we will have removed the conditions in which people end up overstaying in the first place.

3 Decouple work visas from single employers

Migrant workers must have full labour rights, including the right to switch employers to seek more equitable wages or better working conditions without risking their visa.

4 Require Immigration New Zealand to stop visa processing delays

Immigration New Zealand must operate in a way that is consistent, prompt, transparent, and fair. That includes ending the visa processing delays, and resourcing Immigration New Zealand properly to do so.

5 Remove salary criteria for the skilled migrant category and parent reunification category visas

Immigration New Zealand must ensure that migrants are not excluded by unreasonable salary thresholds, and it should be easy for parents and family to gain residency in Aotearoa New Zealand.

6 Review partnership visas to ensure they are culturally competent

Immigration New Zealand must recognise a broader range of relationships when determining eligibility for a partnership visa, including arranged marriages, queer relationships, and other relationships that aren't traditional or common in Western cultures.

Migrants from non-visa-waiver countries must have the same eligibility criteria as migrants from visa-waiver countries. The tougher rules for non-visa-waiver countries discriminate based on nationality.

Immigration New Zealand needs to respond to the experiences of ethnic communities to combat prejudice, and develop fair, compassionate, and effective immigration and migrant settlement processes.

7 Devolve resources to hapū, iwi and whānau to link between migrants and local communities

Recognise the sovereignty of iwi, hapū, and whānau that is affirmed in Te Tiriti, and adequately resource iwi, hapū, and whānau to support migrants within their communities.

The Government must work with tangata whenua to determine how the Crown can work with Māori on immigration decisions and reviews as a Te Tiriti based process.

Yours Sincerely



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Green Party spokespeople for Immigration and Pacific Peoples



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