

NEW ZEALAND DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Persons to whom diplomatic passports may be issued:

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE
Permanent Staff [on official travel overseas or an overseas assignment]
Partners (accompanying staff member on overseas posting only)
Dependant children under 21 (accompanying staff member on overseas posting only)
Chief Executive (and spouse)
Seconded Maintenance Officers
Contractors [tradespersons/technicians eg building inspector, electricians, painters, plumbers, carpet-layers travelling to Posts where a diplomatic passport might be more appropriate than a standard passport]
Diplomatic Couriers

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
The Governor-General (and spouse)
Aide-de-Camp to Governor-General
Personal Assistant to Governor-General
Official Secretary

NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT
The Prime Minister (and spouse)
The Speaker of the House of Representatives
Cabinet Ministers (and spouses)
Senior Private Secretaries, Chiefs of Staff, Private Secretaries, Press Secretaries, Executive Assistants, Advisors, Chief of Staff (accompanying Prime Minister, Ministers on official travel only)
The Leader of the Opposition (and spouse)
Officers of Parliament (and spouses)

NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
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Chiefs of Service (and spouses): Chief of Defence Force Chief of Naval Staff Chief of Air Staff Chief of Army General Staff
The Chief Justice (and spouse)
Commissioner of Police (and spouse)
NZ Police – Protection Services
Permanent Heads/Chief Executives (and spouses)
Governor of Reserve Bank (and spouse)
NZ Inc Officials on Overseas Assignments (and dependants)
New Zealand Representatives on International Bodies
Senior Government Officials – Dep Sec or above [On short-term travel of a diplomatic nature (delegates to international conferences on behalf of the Government, or often accompanying Ministers as members of the

official party, travel to countries where a diplomatic passport would facilitate entry/exit etc)]

COOK ISLANDS
The Queen's Representative
The Prime Minister (and spouse)
Deputy Prime Minister (and spouse)
Cabinet Ministers (and spouses)
The Speaker of the Cook Islands' Parliament
The Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs
The Cook Islands Representatives in New Zealand
High Commissioner in Canberra

NIUE
The Premier
Cabinet Ministers
The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
The Secretary to Government
The Niue Representative in New Zealand

TOKELAU
Cabinet members of the Government of Tokelau

INFORMATION SHEET FOR DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS HOLDERS

Integrity and Conduct

A New Zealand diplomatic passport brings with it certain responsibilities. High standards of integrity and conduct are expected of all holders of diplomatic passports. Any security violation, personal or professional misconduct, controversy or dispute with overseas authorities, non-compliance with the laws of another country, or any action which may bring either the New Zealand Government or any of its staff into disrepute will be viewed seriously and must immediately be reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

Understanding Diplomatic Status

A diplomatic passport does not confer diplomatic status on the holder and therefore does not provide privileges, immunity or inviolability. Diplomatic status is accorded by a foreign government to diplomats and their recognised family members on an overseas assignment in the form of a diplomatic visa or official identity card.

Holding a diplomatic passport may indicate to a foreign government a level of recognition by the New Zealand Government, however, as mentioned above it does *not* of itself provide immunity or inviolability from search at airports of person or baggage.

Visa Requirements

It should be noted that diplomatic passport holders may require a visa to enter countries even if there is a visa waiver arrangement in place. Visa requirements should be checked with the relevant foreign diplomatic mission.

If a diplomatic passport holder encounters any difficulty, particularly as it may relate to possession and use of their diplomatic passport, or their status as a diplomatic passport holder, they should immediately seek guidance, and assistance as necessary, from the nearest diplomatic mission or consular post, or inform MFAT.

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MFAT STAFF:

Use of Passport: *MFAT staff based in NZ* must not use their diplomatic passports for private travel. Standard passports must be used for all private travel. Family members travelling privately with staff who are on official travel must not use their diplomatic passports if they hold them.

MFAT staff assigned to an overseas post, and their families, should use their diplomatic passports for all travel, both official and private, to satisfy host (and accredited) country immigration regulations. Staff are responsible for the safekeeping of their own and their family's diplomatic passports.

Code of Conduct: MFAT's Code of Conduct prescribes the standards of integrity and conduct required by all MFAT employees. All staff should be familiar with the Code of Conduct.

Travel to Certain Locations: MFAT staff must notify Security Division of travel to certain countries - please see Security Division's Policy Guide "Notification of Travel". It is also recommended that staff check the www.safetravel.govt.nz website before travelling to any country.

Renewing or Cancelling Your Diplomatic Passport: Some countries require six months' validity on a passport after exiting that country. MFAT staff should refer to the Ministry's intranet for how to renew or cancel their passport. Staff can retain their cancelled passports.

AGENCY STAFF:

Use of Passport: *Agency staff based in NZ* must not use diplomatic passports for private travel. Standard passports must be used for all private travel. Diplomatic passports must only be used for the purpose for which they were issued, e.g. travel with a government minister.

Agency staff assigned to an overseas post, and their families, should use their diplomatic passports for all travel, both official and private, to satisfy host (and accredited) country immigration regulations.

Staff are responsible for the safekeeping of their own and their family's diplomatic passports.

Code of Conduct: For agency staff who are posted offshore in a diplomatic or consular capacity, MFAT's Code of Conduct forms part of the terms and conditions of the posting. It is important that staff familiarise themselves with the MFAT Code of Conduct. The relevant agency's own Code of Conduct will also apply to diplomatic and consular staff.

Travel to Certain Locations: Agency staff should check with their employer to determine what security policies might apply for travel to certain countries. It is also recommended that staff check the www.safetravel.govt.nz website before travelling to any country.

Renewing or Cancelling Your Diplomatic Passport: Some countries require six months' validity on a passport after exiting that country. Agency staff based offshore should contact their own agency in Wellington in the first instance for renewal, cancellation or any issues to do with a diplomatic passport. Staff can retain their cancelled passports.

Diplomatic passports are the property of the New Zealand Government and must be returned to Protocol Division, MFAT, if requested.

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