REINZ REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE OF NEW ZEALAND

Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand

# Buying a home in New Zealand

## If you are not a New Zealand citizen

**New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who meet the criteria to be 'ordinarily resident' can buy property without restrictions.**

Overseas people cannot buy a house or land in New Zealand.

If you have a residence class visa but you are not yet 'ordinarily resident', you can buy or build one home to live in if you get consent from the Overseas Investment Office. You must be committed to living in New Zealand for the long-term.

There are different consent requirements depending on what type of land you are buying.

There are different rules for Australian and Singaporean citizens and permanent residents under free trade agreements.

### Are you 'ordinarily resident'?

To be able to buy property without restriction you must be ordinarily resident in New Zealand. This means you must meet all four criteria:

- hold a residence class visa, and
- have lived in New Zealand for at least the last 12 months, and
- have been present in New Zealand for at least 183 days of the last 12 months, and
- be a tax resident of New Zealand.

### What type of land are you buying?

Consent is only available for land that is classified as 'residential' or 'lifestyle'.

Land may also be sensitive for another reason like being on an island, or next to a beach, river, or conservation area. This means the land is classified as 'otherwise sensitive'.

It is important to check the type of land carefully; you can do that at www.qv.co.nz. If you are unsure, we encourage you to get expert advice.

## At a glance

**Check your eligibility**
Check what sort of visa you hold and whether you need consent to buy.

**Check the land**
Consent is available for 'residential' and 'lifestyle' land. Check whether the land is also sensitive for another reason.

**Apply online**
Apply for consent on the Overseas Investment Office website before you buy a property.

**Comply with conditions**
Consent will be given subject to conditions that you must meet.

## Get pre-approved for up to a year

You can apply for pre-approved consent that lasts for up to a year and lets you buy one property classified as 'residential' or 'lifestyle' land without further approval from the Overseas Investment Office. You must have pre-approval to buy a property in an auction.
*The preapproval does not apply to land that is also sensitive for another reason. Conditions apply.*

**Do you need consent?**

| No consent needed | Consent needed | Cannot buy |
|---|---|---|
| • New Zealand citizens.<br>• Anyone 'ordinarily resident' in New Zealand.<br>• Australian or Singaporean citizens for residential or lifestyle land that is not 'otherwise sensitive'.<br>• The partner or spouse of any of the above when purchasing a relationship property. | Not ordinarily resident but:<br>• Have a New Zealand residence class visa, or<br>• Are an Australian or Singaporean permanent resident, or<br>• Are an Australian or Singaporean citizen buying 'otherwise sensitive' land. | • Work visa.<br>• Student visa.<br>• Work-to-residence visa.<br>• Working holiday visa.<br>• Visitor visa.<br>• Any other overseas person. |

## When to get consent

If you need consent to buy a property, this must happen as early as possible in the house buying process. There are strict requirements for making an offer to buy a property if you need consent.

You can apply for pre-approval which lasts up to a year before you find a property. The Overseas Investment Office recommends this option.

You can also find a property and then apply for consent. You must include consent under the Overseas Investment Act 2005 as a condition of your offer.

You cannot buy a property in an auction unless you have pre-approval.

## How to apply for consent

You can apply for consent on the Overseas Investment Office website www.linz.govt.nz/overseas-investment. Standard consent applications take up to 10 working days to process.

There is an online form to fill in with your details, including information about your visa.

If you have already found a property you want to buy, you will also need to provide details of the land.

There is a fee for all consent applications.

The consent you receive will include conditions you must comply with.

## Further information and advice

Further information on the rules and requirements is available on the Overseas Investment Office website www.linz.govt.nz/overseas-investment.

If you are unsure about your eligibility or any aspect of the rules we recommend you get legal advice.