International Purchasers

Seeking a New Zealand Residence and Residency

New Zealand Active Investor Plus Visa

(Informally Referred to as “Golden Visa”)

Overview

Holders of New Zealand's Active Investor Plus Visa—informally known as the Golden Visa—can purchase one residential property valued at NZD $5 million or more under streamlined rules introduced in early (March) 2026, though this property purchase does not count toward a mandatory visa investment threshold.

The AIP is New Zealand’s modern “Golden Visa” which requires either:

- NZD $5 million invested for three years in higher risk, active investments; or
- NZD $10 million invested for five years in more passive investment classes.

Eligible AIP, Investor 1 and Investor 2 visa holders may now buy or build one residential property, provided that:

- The total value exceeds NZD $5 million
- Overseas Investment Office (OIO) consent is obtained before purchase
- The land is classified as residential or lifestyle on the local council rating roll

Importantly:

- The purchaser does not need to be ordinarily resident
- The property does not count toward the visa’s investment requirement
- The home may be used for any purpose (residence, holiday home, or otherwise)

The reform is narrowly framed and does not apply to:

- Commercial property
- Large rural landholdings
- Land that is “otherwise sensitive”, such as:
    - Large lifestyle blocks (generally over 4–5 hectares)
    - Coastal or lake adjacent land
    - Protected or conservation areas

Lifestyle properties, for these purposes, are typically low density residential holdings, often up to around 4 hectares (10 acres), used primarily for residential living rather than productive farming. Given these limits, careful legal due diligence on land classification is essential.

OIO consent remains mandatory in all cases. However, the Government has committed to a streamlined process, with applications expected to be processed within five working days.

Only one home may be owned at any time under this pathway. If a visa holder later wishes to purchase a different home, the original property must first be sold before a new OIO application can be made. Where a home is being built, the combined land and construction costs must exceed the NZD $5 million threshold.

Most investor residence applications include a main applicant, their partner, and any dependent children. As each individual is granted an investor resident visa in their own right, it is technically possible for more than one family member to qualify to purchase a home under this policy. However, no purchaser may have any beneficial interest in another qualifying home, including one owned by a family member. Where multiple purchases are contemplated, specialist legal advice is important.

Separately, and unchanged by the March 2026 reforms, any resident visa holder (under the investor or any other categories) who is not yet “ordinarily resident” may apply to the OIO to purchase one home to live in, provided they genuinely intend to relocate to, and live in, New Zealand.

The opportunity is real, and the rules are precise. Careful structuring, correct use of OIO consent pathways, and early professional advice are essential to ensure compliance and avoid costly mistakes.

Property Purchase Rules

The $5M Rule: You can buy or build one high-value residential home worth at least NZD $5 million without needing to meet the standard 183-day ordinary residency requirement. [1, 2]

Separate Investments: The luxury home purchase is an independent privilege and does not fulfill your required NZD $5 million (growth) or NZD $10 million (balanced) program investment requirements.

Sensitive Land: Restrictions remain firmly in place; you cannot purchase farmland, conservation land, or other sensitive land under this residential exemption.

Development vs. Personal Use: While standard residential property bought for personal use doesn't qualify as a visa investment asset, property developments (such as new builds increasing housing supply or commercial upgrades) can qualify under the Balanced investment category if they meet specific criteria.