



# MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION

## GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

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### IMMIGRATION COOK ISLANDS

#### Entry into the Cook Islands

No person is entitled to an entry, residence or work permit in the Cook Islands as of right.

The Cook Islands does not issue Visas under any circumstances.

For most travellers to the Cook Island, what is generally required is either an entry permit or an exemption from the requirement for an entry permit.

Entry permit means a permit to enter the Cook Islands duly issued and in full force and effect.

#### Transit Visas

If a person is travelling to the Cook Islands via Australia, French Polynesia, New Zealand, or the United States of America, they must ensure that they hold valid transit visas for these countries.

#### Visitors Intending to Join a Tourist Boat or Yacht

Visitors who are intending to join a tourist boat or yacht or other sea-going vessel to travel beyond the Cook Islands must apply for permission to enter the Cook Islands via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFAI) – see contact details. Applications can be submitted electronically together with an electronic copy of the bio-data (personal details) page of the applicant's passport.

#### Visitors & Entry Permit Exemption

An entry permit is not required by persons who are entering the Cook Islands as bona-fide visitors.

A bona-fide visitor refers to any person who enters the Cook Islands for recreation or vacation/holiday and is exempted from requiring an entry permit for a stay of not more than 31 days. It also applies to any person who enters the Cook Islands for the purpose of exploring investment opportunities.

Those intending to attend business meetings, conferences, exhibitions and sports activities, including tournaments may also travel as bona-fide visitors. An extension beyond 31 days is however available only to those undertaking holiday or recreation.

#### Visitor Requirements

All visitors must have adequate financial means of supporting their stay, hold valid tickets for their return journey to a port of origin or next port of destination and their passports valid for a period of at least six (6) months beyond the contemplated period of stay. New Zealand citizens travelling on New Zealand passports are not required to have proof of onward passage.

#### Extension of stay as a Bona-fide Visitor

Bona-fide visitors may extend their stay beyond 31 days by making an application at MFAI. Extensions of stay may be granted on application on a monthly basis for up to a maximum stay of 6 months.

### **Holders of Passports with less than 6 months validity**

With the exceptions indicated below, holders of passports that are valid for less than six (6) months beyond the intended period of stay in the Cook Islands must seek authority to travel to the Cook Islands from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Immigration in Rarotonga.

Exceptions:

This travel restriction does not apply to Cook Islanders and Permanent Residents of the Cook Islands.

From 30 August 2010, New Zealand (NZ) and Australian passport holders may also travel to the Cook Islands without seeking authority from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration provided their passports are valid for at least seven days beyond their intended period of stay in the Cook Islands.

Evidence Required:

For **Cook Islanders**, the personal details in the passport will usually show the place of birth in the Cook Islands. **Descendants of Cook Islanders born outside the Cook Islands** are issued, upon application, with a "Cook Islander" status stamp in their passport. For **Permanent Residents**, their passports are endorsed, upon application, with a "Permanent Resident" status stamp. In the absence of a passport, a document confirming status as a Cook Islander or Permanent Resident from the Cook Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, Consulate-General in Auckland, NZ or High Commission in Wellington, NZ may be accepted as sufficient authority to travel to the Cook Islands.

### **Criminal convictions**

If you have had any criminal convictions in any country, you must apply for permission to enter the Cook Islands via MFAI. A person with criminal convictions could be refused entry into Cook Islands if prior approval was not granted prior to entry.

### **Health insurance**

Visitors are expected to meet their own costs for medical treatment in the Cook Islands, including costs for medical evacuation to New Zealand for specialist care.

It is recommended that visitors take out health insurance for themselves and family members to cover possible, including unexpected costs each time you travel to the Cook Islands.

### **Air Crew**

As with Merchant Seamen, the same requirements apply to crew arriving by ship or aircraft. If not intending to depart in the same aircraft or ship, entry permit exemption requirements may apply. The air crew or merchant seaman must apply for this before their ship or aircraft departs.

### **Merchant Seamen**

Bona-fide Merchant Seamen are not required to hold an Entry permit when travelling to the Cook Islands. They must however depart in the same ship when it leaves the Cook Islands.

### **Fees**

A fee is payable with each application and an application must be made within 5 working days prior to the expiration of the authorised period of stay. The fee is NZ\$50.00 each for persons 15 years and older plus a \$20 application fee for stay up to 3 months. While children under 15 years of age are exempt from the fee they must be included in a parent's or guardian's application.