



A Guide to **New Zealand**

We are so excited that you have decided to join Beca and relocate to Aotearoa, New Zealand. We know that the coming weeks and months will be full of excitement, stress and anticipation. We are here to help you to make your move as smooth as it can be.

We have pulled together this handy guide to help you get set up in making Aotearoa your home.





Your Move

Across Beca, we are one team of 72 nationalities and over the last 100 years, we have been supporting people to make the move to Aotearoa.

There are a couple of things that we can work with you to help make your move more stress-free. We have an in-house travel team that can help you organise **Flights, Shipping, Pet Relocation, Rental Vehicles, and Temporary Accommodation**. If you decide to go with a quote that our travel team have found, we will have the cost invoiced to us directly and will deduct the amount from your relocation allowance. You may be able to find quotes cheaper elsewhere and encourage you to find an arrangement that will work best for you, in this instance if you would like to claim it against your relocation allowance, we will cover the cost through an expense claim once you have commenced employment with us.

Immigration can sometimes be tricky. We do not have any licensed immigration advisors in-house we are only able to provide publicly available information. We do however have access to an external immigration lawyer who has worked with Beca for over ten years, so if you do need help, we are more than happy to put you in touch with them.

Aotearoa has something for everyone. On our doorsteps, we have breathtaking landscapes, from lofty mountain

peaks and glaciers to mesmerizing blue lakes. We are known for our wine, rugby and the Kiwi way of getting things done as well as our adventure activities and gorgeous journeys across the country.

The Kiwi accent can be pretty confusing for newcomers. A Kiwi can sound Australian, South African and American in the space of five words. You should forget everything you've ever learnt about vowel sounds. An 'i' sounds more like 'uh', so 'fish and chips' becomes 'fush and chups'. Meanwhile, an 'e' sounds more like an 'i', which can cause a whole world of confusion. '

Aotearoa is a hotbed of tectonic activity. The Pacific Ring of Fire is home to the majority of Earth's volcanoes and earthquakes, and New Zealand sits right on top of it. This means the Kiwis experience around **14,000 earthquakes** every year, although only about **100-150** of them can be felt by humans. Across our offices, we hold earthquake and civil defence drills yearly to help our teams prepare for the event of an earthquake, tsunami or other natural hazards. It is important to have a plan for what to do if you are at home. [Get Ready](#) has some great resources to help you make a plan for you and your family.

We have 11 public holidays in Aotearoa that are recognized nationally. Each region also has a Regional Anniversary Day that is normally observed on a Monday nearest to the actual day. These holidays are only celebrated within each province, and not nationwide. You can find more about public holidays and their dates [here](#).



Getting Set Up

In preparation for your move, there are several things you can do ahead of landing in New Zealand, however, there are some things where you will have to be physically in the country to organise.

Bank Accounts

You can open bank accounts online in New Zealand ready for your arrival. Once you arrive you will need to go to your nearest branch with your passport to finalise the opening of the account. In most cases, the branch will be able to give you an EFTPOS card on the spot to access your funds.

You can then request a debit card that you will be able to use online that will be sent out to your address when you are more settled. There are lots of banks to choose from, and it is a personal choice, Beca banks with [Westpac](#) and [ANZ](#) and for some of their banking products employees get better rates and returns.

Most people still use a bank to transfer their savings into New Zealand dollars. Another alternative worth investigating is [a specialist currency brokering firm](#). They generally don't charge fees and offer highly competitive exchange rates. A difference of 3-4% can be worth a lot.

Inland Revenue (IRD)

The IRD is New Zealand's tax department, you can apply for your IRD number using the information on your visa [online](#) or when you arrive in New Zealand at an AA

centre. Your IRD number identifies you for all the tax-related events in your life. Your IRD number is unique to you, and you keep the same IRD number for life. You need an IRD number for any tax-related obligations you have or entitlements you get. Beca will need your IRD number in your first month of employment to ensure we tax you at the correct rate. Normally you will receive your number within 2-10 days of applying.

KiwiSaver

KiwiSaver is the pension scheme in New Zealand, once you are a New Zealand resident you can enrol. Once you are enrolled, you can choose how much you pay into the scheme each month from your pay, you can choose to contribute 3%, 4%, 6%, 8% or 10%. Beca will contribute 3% on top of your taxable pay.

Converting your driver's license

To convert your driver's license, you will need to go to an [overseas conversion site](#), fill out the application form along with your passport and current driver's license, have an eye test and the agent there will take your photo and signature and pay a fee. You will be issued a temporary license and you will receive your New Zealand license in the post about two weeks later.

You can convert your driver's license and get your IRD number at the same time if you visit an AA conversion site.

Cost of Living

The cost of living in New Zealand may be different from your current geography. This will depend on the region you are choosing to settle in and where you are coming from. You may find that the cost of living is more or less than you are expecting. You can use the [Cost of Living Calculator](#) to find out what your income and expenses maybe when you arrive.





Renting a Property

A great website to check for rental properties or properties to purchase is [TradeMe](#) or [Real Estate](#).

Both have listings from all real estate agents, so you get all of what you are looking for in one spot. Rental listings don't always show the whole picture. Layout and scale are hard to judge virtually. While homes listed for sale typically share current photos of every room and floor plan, rental listings tend to have fewer photos and often from several years (and tenants) prior. The standard of the Kiwi housing is variable, so it's not always possible to gauge build quality - for better or worse - until you're standing in the property.

Insulation, heating, and cooling are not a given in New Zealand homes. Because of the damp climate, a drafty place can be uncomfortable during the winter months, even in more northern parts of the country. And a beautifully sunny place has the potential to be unbearably hot in the summer without a good cross breeze. You can't know what you're getting until you use your senses to investigate.

It's good to get a feel for how the property will be managed. Will you be subject to regular inspections? Will you be working directly with the landlord or with a property manager? How responsive and dependable are

they when you're interacting with them? What aspects of the tenancy are negotiable?

In most cases to be considered for a rental property in New Zealand, you must have viewed it, provide references and pay a bond for the property (normally this is two or four weeks' worth of rent). You can use Beca as a reference for you and if you have been living in a home you owned before your move to New Zealand, consider getting a reference from the real estate agent who sold your house on its quality and value.

Purchasing furniture & homewares

If you are needing to buy furniture or homewares [TradeMe](#) and Facebook Marketplace is great for purchasing (and selling) second-hand goods. If you are looking for new items, the following places are worth a visit and have sales regularly.

- [Briscoes](#)
- [iFurniture](#)
- [Nood](#)
- [Freedom](#)
- [Kmart](#)
- [The Warehouse](#)

For larger purchases, it pays to shop around. The online shopping information company [PriceMe](#) has a price comparison tool you can use to get an idea of who the main retailers are here and what you might expect to pay for things.



Food and **Supermarkets**

New Zealand supermarkets are open seven days a week until quite late in the evening. As well as food and drink, supermarkets here sell various household items. If you are aged 18 or over, you can also buy wine and beer in supermarkets.

There are two main supermarkets called Countdown and New World. Most towns and suburbs will have at least one if not both of these stores. Pak'n'Save is another supermarket chain that can be very cheap and often has good deals (but it isn't as common). You can check the links below to see where your nearest store is.

- www.newworld.co.nz
- www.countdown.co.nz
- www.paknsave.co.nz

If you are not able to get to a supermarket, you can choose from a smaller range of food items at a local 'dairy'. A dairy is the Kiwi name for a small convenience or corner store.

Getting around

Our larger cities tend to be cycle-friendly and have good travel links including driving, bus and in some cities catching the train or ferry. In rural areas, driving is often the only option.

- **Public Transport** – Depending on the region you are relocating to in New Zealand the Public Transport options will differ. Our Larger cities tend

to have good travel links, including buses and in some cities trains and ferries. You can discover the public transport options available in your region on the Waka Kotahi website.

- **Uber**– Most cities and some towns in New Zealand will have Uber and most trips around the City will cost somewhere between \$10 - \$40 depending on where you need to get to.
- **Car Sharing** – Companies like Mevo and [CityHop](#) are car-sharing services where you can hire cars and vans by the hour. You can sign up online and collect key cards from a lot of accessible places around the city.
- **Buying a car** – There are lots of places to buy cars including [TradeMe](#) for second-hand vehicles. Most car yards also have a good selection of new and used cars if you are looking to purchase your own.

Any car you buy:

- must have a WoF (Warrant of Fitness, the Government's safety check). You can and should insist on the WoF being less than one month old. Alternatively, a vehicle may be sold 'as is, where is'. That means its WoF is more than a month old and any risk of not getting a new one is your problem
- should be currently registered with the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA). Look for the expiry date on the white licensing sticker on the left of the windscreen. No matter how long the registration has to run, once you buy you must re-register the vehicle in your name.





Healthcare

For all non-urgent care, you will need to make an appointment with your local Doctor. You will need to register with a local practice and dentist when you arrive. All the information about the local hospitals, GP Practices and Dental care can be found on the [Healthpoint website](#).

If you have a long term work visa valid for a minimum of two years, you will meet the Ministry of Health criteria for publicly funded healthcare and will be eligible to join the Beca Southern Cross Medical insurance scheme. The amount Beca will contribute each year will be outlined in your letter of offer. Once you start with us, you will meet with a Southern Cross representative who will discuss your health insurance options for you and your family.



Childcare & Schooling

If you have children, finding a good school and getting them settled in will be a priority for you. Fortunately, you can feel confident about New Zealand's education system. [Immigration New Zealand](#) have a useful guide on childcare and schooling to help you discover our education system.

[Plunket](#) provides a range of free services aimed at improving the development, health and wellbeing of children under the age of five within New Zealand. Plunket offers free health and development checks, a 24/7 parenting helpline, and a range of local services doing everything from antenatal classes to car seat installation. It is free to enrol with Plunket and they also run parenting groups across New Zealand once set up, you can find one in your area to grow your network of other families.

Early childhood education, while not compulsory, is widely available in varying forms from play centres where parents participate in care to full day drop-off day-care. For children aged three and four, the first 20 hours a week of early childhood education is funded by the New Zealand government regardless of means. As you may expect, some centres run long waitlists while others have standing availability, and not every type of care is available in every neighbourhood.

Choose the school that's best for your family.

Children typically start year one at primary school on or near their fifth birthday, regardless of when it falls in the

year, though parents may opt to start a child at age six. There are 13 'Years' in the New Zealand system, divided into two (primary, college) or three schools (primary, intermediate, college), depending upon the zone.

For state (public) schools, enrolment is determined by a geographic zone with some schools accepting applications from students outside their catchment area. There are also private schools with offerings ranging across secular and religious models.

Education goes beyond academics.

State schools follow a national curriculum overseen by the Ministry of Education, which is focused on giving students a broad general education. Students tend to move through year levels with similarly aged peers, and teachers adapt curriculum to the ability of the student.

New Zealand culture is a big part of the learning experience. Māori culture (tikanga Māori) and language (te reo Māori) are integrated into the curriculum in most schools, starting in early childhood education. Key national values show up in the way that schools reward their students and operate classrooms.

Outside of the classroom, kids are encouraged to participate in sport, through both robust physical education and extracurricular activities. Although competition is often present, there is emphasis on working as part of a team. When the effort is what's rewarded, the outcome becomes less important.



The School Year

The academic year is the calendar year: it begins in late January or early February and ends in mid December.

There are four terms with a 2-week break between terms and national and regional holidays sprinkled throughout the year.





Key Contacts – Resources

Who to contact	Contact Details	When to contact them
Emergency Services	Dial 111	If there is an emergency
Beca	Details of your talent acquisition partner and section manager will be on your Letter of Offer or if you have already commenced you can contact us through Microsoft teams. If in doubt call 09-300 9000	If you need support or information whilst you settle in.
Immigration New Zealand		For information regarding immigration-related matters, including the border exception process and individual immigration cases.
Healthline	0800 611 116	If you have any health needs or questions that don't require urgent medical attention.
Community Pharmacies	You should be able to find your community pharmacy's contact details here: www.healthpoint.co.nz	If you have health needs or questions.
General Practices (GP's)	find them here: www.healthpoint.co.nz	To find a local general practice to enrol.
Benestar	0800 360 364 www.benestar.com Company ID: BECA // Token: (case sensitive): BECA01	Benestar provides three free confidential counselling sessions. All Beca employees and their partner or spouse are entitled to use this service.
Migrant Connect	www.cab.org.nz/find-a-cab/migrant-connect/	Support getting settled into New Zealand through an independent, confidential and free service.
New Zealand Now	https://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/	A New Zealand Government website is packed with useful, reliable information to help you get settled.
Ministry of Ethnic Communities	https://www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/	The Ministry for Ethnic Communities is the government's chief advisor on ethnic communities, ethnic diversity and the inclusion of ethnic communities in wider society.
Human Rights Commission	https://www.hrc.co.nz/	The Human Rights Commission Advocate and promote respect for human rights in New Zealand and provides information to the public about discrimination and helps resolve discrimination complaints.
Citizens Advice Bureau	https://www.cab.org.nz/ 0800 367 222 Or find your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau https://www.cab.org.nz/find-a-cab/	The Citizens Advice Bureau provides free, confidential, independent information and advice to everyone. They help you understand your rights and how to access the services you need.





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better.**