

## Investor Plus Visas and Buying Property in New Zealand

The New Zealand Government has announced a significant change to its overseas investment regime, allowing certain foreign investors to purchase high-value residential property under strict conditions.

### Q: What are the “Golden Visas”?

**A:** There are two subcategories of Investor Plus Visa which are eligible to buy or build in New Zealand:

- **Growth Investment Category:** Requires a minimum investment of NZD \$5 million into Invest New Zealand-approved managed funds or direct investments, with a 36-month investment period. Investors must spend at least 21 days in New Zealand over the three-year period.
- **Balanced Investment Category:** Requires a minimum investment of NZD \$10 million, with broader investment options and a 60-month investment period. Investors must spend at least 105 days in New Zealand over five years.

Also, individuals who obtained Investor Visas under the previous Golden Visa regime, can benefit from this change, namely those with an Investor 1 or Investor 2 Visa.

### Q: What change has been made to New Zealand’s “Golden Visa” rules on buying property?

**A: Golden Visa holders** (i.e. those with New Zealand’s **Active Investor Plus** residency visa) are now permitted to **purchase or build one residential property** in New Zealand, provided the home is valued at **NZ\$5 million or more**.

### Q: What conditions or limits apply to these property purchases?

**A:** The new rule comes with strict conditions. Only one residential property per Golden Visa investor may be bought under this exemption. The property must be valued at NZ\$5 million or above, targeting the ultra-luxury segment. In practice this means Golden Visa holders can buy or build an existing or new home in New Zealand only if it is a single property worth at least NZ\$5 million.

### Q: Can an investor get a Golden Visa simply by buying a NZ\$5 million house?

**A:** No, New Zealand’s scheme is investment-led. Buying a high-value home itself does not automatically qualify you for the visa. To obtain the Active Investor Plus (Golden Visa), an applicant must still invest in New Zealand as per the Visa requirements. The ability to purchase property is a benefit available after the visa is obtained, not a substitute for the core investment requirement.



## What type of property can be purchased?

The property must:

- Be classified as “residential” or “lifestyle” land on the district valuation roll
- Have a purchase price (or combined land and build cost) exceeding NZ\$5 million

The pathway does not allow the purchase of:

- Farmland or large rural blocks (over 5 hectares)
- Land adjoining the foreshore, seabed or certain lakes
- Island land or other land classified as “sensitive” under the Overseas Investment Act

## Can eligible investor visa holders now buy property freely?

No. Investor visa holders must still:

- Obtain **OIO consent** before purchasing
- Buy or build **only one** residential property
- Meet a **minimum value threshold of NZ\$5 million**

This is not a blanket exemption and does not open the wider residential market to overseas buyers.

## Can the property be used as a holiday home or for other purposes?

Yes. Once consent is granted, the property may generally be:

- Occupied as a main home
- Used as a holiday home
- Used for other lawful purposes, subject to planning rules

However, the property **cannot be treated as a qualifying investment** for the purposes of meeting Active Investor Plus visa investment requirements.

## Is the consent process simpler than standard OIO applications?

Yes. A **new streamlined consent pathway** applies to qualifying investor visa holders.

Key features include:

- Expected processing times of around **five working days**
- Lower application fees compared with standard OIO pathways
- Ongoing reporting obligations once the property is acquired or built

Sale and purchase agreements must still be conditional on OIO consent.

## Can property be purchased through a trust or company?

In some cases, yes. Property may be acquired through a trust or company **where the investor visa holder has sufficient ownership and control**. This is a technical area and requires careful structuring and advice before contracting.

## What should investor visa holders do before buying property?

Before committing to a purchase, investor visa holders should:

- Confirm visa eligibility and timing
- Obtain property-specific Overseas Investment Act advice
- Ensure contracts are correctly conditional
- Consider tax and investment implications alongside immigration planning.

**Contact our immigration team** today for expert advice tailored to your situation.

## Contact us



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