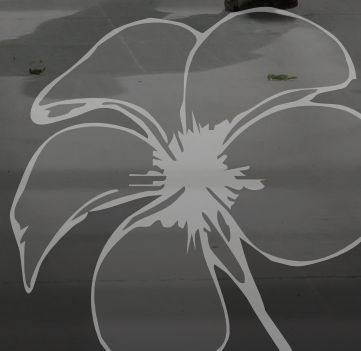


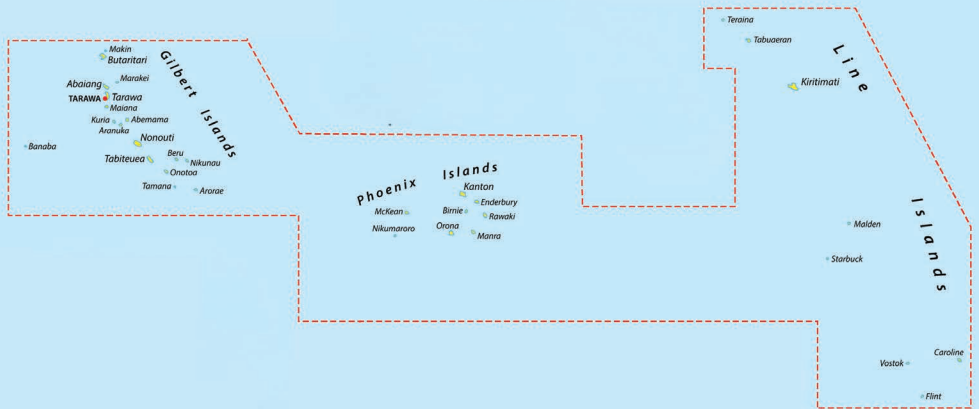
Recognised Seasonal Employer

Information booklet -

Kiribati



Kiribati



Official name: The Republic of Kiribati is a small island nation in the Pacific – part of the Micronesian Islands.

Capital: Tarawa

Languages: English and Gilbertese or Taetae ni Kiribati, also Kiribati (sometimes Kiribatese), is an Austronesian language spoken mainly in Kiribati.

Religion: Christianity

Currency: Australian dollar (AUD)

Population: 119,438

Kiribati joined the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme in 2007. It was one of the first countries to join.





What Ministry oversees the RSE scheme in Kiribati?

The Kiribati Labour Sending Unit sits under the Ministry of Employment and Human Resource.

What is the role of the Kiribati liaison officers?

The two New Zealand based liaison officers report to the Ministry of Employment and Human Resource. They represent Kiribati workers in New Zealand; they advocate, support and intervene to resolve any concerns or major issues and report back to the Labour Sending Unit with recommendations for endorsement and/or directive.

The liaison officers will work with employers and New Zealand government officials to understand the expectations of Kiribati in relation to operations under the mandate of the Labour Sending Unit.



How do you recruit from Kiribati?

Interested candidates must apply to their island councils. The councils will determine suitability before referring to the Ministry of Employment and Human Resource for further screening before entering in the work-ready pool.

Employer can select from:

1. **The ministry work-ready pool** – potential candidates that have passed the English and fitness tests.
2. **Direct recruitment** – employer travels to Kiribati to meet with workers and conducts recruitment themselves. A list is then provided to the Ministry of Employment and Human Resource.

Note: The Kiribati government has adopted a new policy that limits workers to only one referral.

What is the recruitment timeframe?

The recruitment timeframe from when the Labour Export and Employment Unit is in receipt of the Agreement to Recruit to when the worker is expected to board a flight is eight weeks.

What is the length of an RSE visa and where are they assessed?

I-Kiribati workers are deployed to New Zealand for up to nine months in an 11-month period.

Visa applications are assessed and approved by the Immigration New Zealand office in Fiji.

What is the recruitment process?

Screening, council level

Candidates register with the island council. The list is provided to the Ministry of Employment and Human Resource for further screening.

(Must register with the island council to be eligible for the RSE work-ready pool).

Worker selection, Ministry of Employment and Human Resource

- Employer informs the Labour Sending Unit, emails Agreement to Recruit, contracts and deduction form.
- Conducts pre-screening interviews.
- The Labour Sending Unit provides profiles (curriculum vitae of each potential candidate to employers) to examine before the interview process. Employer holds either virtual or face-to-face interviews with candidates during their visit to Kiribati to recruit.
- Five weeks English test.
- Four weeks fitness training.
- Police clearance report.
- Medical health check-up.
- Selected candidates go through five weeks training.
- Selected candidates go through three to five days of pre-departure training.
- Selected candidates must see panel doctor (have xrays and lab tests).
- Candidates must have a valid passport.
- Visa lodgement (five working days).

Departure

The Labour Sending Unit checks that workers have the following:

- Passport
- Visa
- Ticket/itinerary
- Vaccination card.

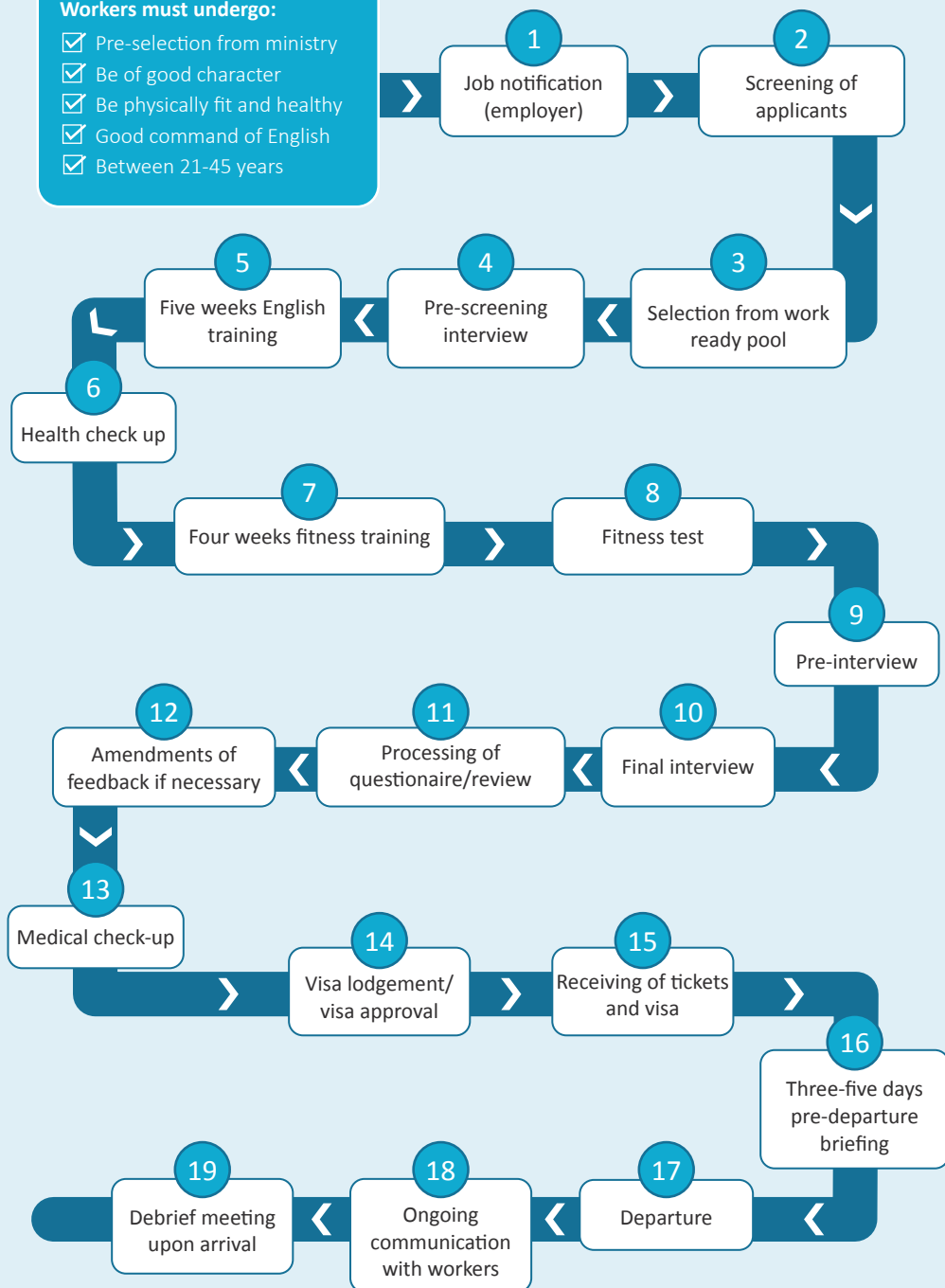
The Ministry of Employment and Human Resource communicates with workers and liaison officers on worker wellbeing and addresses any concerns.

What flights can be booked for workers?

- The main island on South Tarawa is connected through commercial flights with Fiji Airways and Air New Zealand.

Workers must undergo:

- ✓ Pre-selection from ministry
- ✓ Be of good character
- ✓ Be physically fit and healthy
- ✓ Good command of English
- ✓ Between 21-45 years



Pastoral care

What does good pastoral care look like?

Immigration New Zealand provides information for employers on pastoral care as part of the Agreement to Recruit application process and maintaining RSE status: (<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/assets/inz/documents/employer-resources/rse-employer-pastoral-care-guide.pdf>)

The Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme is complex and to be able to support workers from diverse backgrounds, experiences and beliefs requires patience and understanding.

Workers may wish to participate/attend the following ceremonies:

- Church
- Funerals
- Weddings
- Independence Day – July

There will be workers who have a sense of responsibility to attend certain ceremonies/or church depending on their status in their family and/or village.

Practical advice for closer collaboration with workers

- Be patient and understanding when communicating with workers and their families in Kiribati and New Zealand.
- In Kiribati, English is taught in all schools and all classes are taught in English. Kiribati workers may have difficulty communicating with employers. Kiribati people are generally shy and often reluctant to speak up.
- Employers should take the time to listen and explore all avenues to provide workers with the support to be comfortable to engage.
- A no answer does NOT mean they are guilty or rude. It can mean they are shy, fearful, do not understand, do not know how to respond, or speaking up can be seen as disrespectful.
- Family (immediate/extended) is important to workers, be understanding of when family want to visit the workers. Put in place visiting rules but avoid prohibiting workers from seeing family.
- Have a good induction programme (not rushed) when welcoming and/or inducting new and/or returning workers around the rules and expectations in the orchards, accommodation, and behaviour in public/community. Clearly demonstrate the **how** in basic English and in their language.
- Use signs in both English and their language of how to operate a washing machine, microwave, clean their room, wash their dishes, put out the rubbish etc.
- Hold leadership trainings – use liaison officers/Pacific representatives to support content.

- If workers are all from different villages, treat them all the same.
- Reach out to liaison officers/High Commission representatives to provide support on mitigating serious incidents.
- Champion performers by working with team leaders to ensure information is disseminated accurately and behavioural concerns are managed and addressed appropriately.
- Avoid making assumptions when workers do not reply immediately.
- Don't put down a team leader or someone of high status (chief) in front of the team. This may damage hierarchy status.
- Avoid derogatory words or gestures as this is a sign of disrespect and suggest the employer does not value their contribution to their business. There is a difference between being assertive and being disrespectful.
- Take the time to ensure workers understand company work values and practices.
- Treat all workers the same regardless of what village they are from.
- Never house men and women in the same accommodation or have them sharing bathroom facilities. Be sensitive to cultural appropriation of the different regions and/or provinces.

Addressing issues amongst workers

- Build trust that you are there to help resolve the matter.
- Reach out to the team leader (if the team leader is not involved) for support and language barriers.
- Depending on the severity of the case, reach out to the following people for support:
 - RSE engagement partners
 - Liaison officers/Pacific representatives
 - Village/district representative.
- Depending on the matter, reach out to a family member of the worker.
- Be patient and respectful when explaining things to the workers. What an employer sees as normal, may appear foreign for workers.

Note: Employers are encouraged to communicate with the Country Recruitment Officer and Labour Sending Unit regarding worker welfare issues. (e.g. is a worker injured at work, admitted to hospital, sent home due to personal circumstances or if disciplinary action has been taken against a worker).



Other considerations

- Staying in touch with families at home in Kiribati is important as is staying in touch with Kiribati workers around New Zealand.
- Dress appropriately and research the customs and relations between men and women from the villages/regions you recruit from.
- Mocking or joking around is common and may appear to be offensive by others.
- I-Kiribati RSE workers do not share the same values and beliefs. Get to know workers and understand their cultural practices and preferences.

Note: Many of the workers are recruited from rural or outer villages. They will not have been exposed to things they will see/or have access to in New Zealand. Many of the men would not be expected to cook, clean or make their own beds as this is the responsibility of others back home.

Process for employers when a worker dies while in New Zealand

1. Handle the situation with care and sensitivity particularly around family members of the deceased worker.
2. Reach out to liaison officers/Pacific High Commission representatives to understand cultural protocols and government requirements.
3. The definition of family member extends to more than their immediate family.
4. You may come across involvement of a church pastor or chief of the village or family who has the blessing from the next-of-kin to speak on behalf of the family of the deceased worker.
5. You may come across a situation where the next-of-kin may not always have the say when it comes to organising the repatriation of the deceased worker; the decision can sit with the wider family.
6. Communication to other teams to refrain from sharing information about the deceased on social media until the family has been informed.
7. Depending on cause of death, the employer, will need to be aware of insurance and ACC policies and the support available for the deceased worker's family.
8. During the entire process keep the Labour Sending Unit/High Commission and family updated if you are in direct contact with the next-of-kin or family representative.

Note: The process will vary depending on government protocols, cultural practices, and repatriation requirements of each country and what the families of the deceased want to do. The next-of-kin and/or immediate family of the deceased (either in New Zealand or overseas) are the decision makers.



Key steps to aid employers:

Step 1: Report the death

Employer to inform:

- 1.1 The next-of-kin immediately. Ascertain what the family would like to do with the body of their loved one.
- 1.2 The Immigration New Zealand RSE engagement partner on visa and pastoral requirements.
- 1.3 Medical insurance providers and arrange a pre-approved insurance quote for body repatriation to country of origin or New Zealand burial.

Depending on the country's protocols inform:

- The Labour Sending Unit – they will require information including the name of the deceased, date/place/cause of death etc. This will assist them with their briefing to the respective Minister(s).
- The Office of the High Commission – RSE workers are non-citizens of New Zealand and therefore it is important the Heads of Mission are informed of the passing of one of their citizens.
- Liaison officers- they will provide support around government protocols, translation and/to cultural advice.

Note: Protocols and processes will vary and remedial intervention will be necessary depending on circumstances surrounding the death. It is important you reach out to the right people for guidance.

Step 2: Engage a funeral director

Liaise with a funeral director to progress and discuss requirements.

Step 3: Documentation

The following documentation is required to facilitate clearance for the body to be repatriated home and to process deceased worker's benefits and entitlements.

- 3.1 Death certificate to confirm cause of death.
- 3.2 Clearance from respective government organisations (Ministry of Health, Customs New Zealand Service and Immigration New Zealand).

Note: Employer will need to liaise with the Labour Sending Unit/liaison officers regarding the documents required to clear repatriation.

Step 4: Payroll and benefits

Employer to initiate the process for final payments and necessary paperwork.

Step 5: Facilitate family/funeral service

There may be customary practices requested before repatriation of the deceased worker. The employer is encouraged to work with the liaison officers/spokesperson of the deceased to obtain advice.

Note: As an employer you may witness customs and practices that are not aligned to beliefs/customers.

Step 6: Transportation

The employer in conjunction with the insurance provider is to facilitate travel arrangements for one family member from Kiribati to accompany the deceased worker.

Note: The employer may choose to travel with the deceased worker and family. The liaison officer or selected official may also accompany the worker back home.



What do you need to do before visiting Kiribati?

Employers are encouraged to visit the country and homes of their workers.

Things to note:

- Gifts are sometimes exchanged at meetings
- Dress respectfully when meeting with officials and visiting provinces or families of workers.
- Take something with you whenever you visit someone at their home. Food or souvenirs from New Zealand are often appreciated gifts, e.g. New Zealand chocolate.
- Inform the Labour Sending Unit of your visit including your agenda/itinerary.
- Driving is on the left-hand side.

Useful words/phrases to enhance communication with Kiribati workers

Hello – Ko na mauri (sg), Kam na mauri (pl), Kam na bane ni Mauri (addressing large crowds), Mauri

Goodbye – Ti a boo, Ti a kaboo

Have a nice day – Tekeraoi am bong

Please – Taiaoka

Thank you – Ko rabá, Ko bati n rabá

Family, household, relatives, society, congregation – Útu

Yes – E eng

No – Tiaki



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