

# Health Response for 2022 Special Ukraine Visa holders

## Key messages for 2022 Special Ukraine Visa holders

- As a 2022 Special Ukraine Visa holder, you are eligible for all publicly funded health care in New Zealand. This means that if you go to a hospital during an emergency, it will be free. To see a doctor at a general practice, you will have to pay (the same as New Zealand citizens), but it will be discounted if you are enrolled with the practice.
- You are eligible for a free initial health assessment. For more information on how to access this service please go to <https://www.tewhaturora.govt.nz/ukraine-health-check>
- Your current Visa will not be affected if any health issues (including tuberculosis) are found during this health assessment.
- The free initial health assessment is voluntary, but it is best to have any health conditions (like tuberculosis) diagnosed and treated early, to protect yourself and your family and ensure future visa applications are processed smoothly.

## Questions and Answers

### For the Visa holders and their sponsors

**As a Ukrainian who arrived in New Zealand via the 2022 Special Ukraine Policy, what health services am I entitled to?**

You are eligible for all publicly funded health care. Government funding of health and disability services means that you may receive free inpatient and outpatient public hospital services, subsidies on prescription medication and a range of support services for people with disabilities.

You are also eligible to enrol with a general practice – but they may charge you a consultation fee when you go to see them. If you enrol with a general practice, your care will be subsidised – so you will pay a reduced consultation fee.

The following links have more information:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/visiting-doctor-or-nurse>

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/eligibility-publicly-funded-health-services/guide-eligibility-publicly-funded-health-services/work-visa-holder-eligible-be-nz-two-years-or-more>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/publicly-funded-health-and-disability-services>

### **Where do I go for health services?**

#### *Non-emergency*

If you are sick but it is not an emergency, you should visit a doctor at a general practice. We call these doctors 'general practitioners' (GPs). You will have to register with a general practice to be considered 'enrolled'. This involves completing enrolment paperwork and showing proof of identity/including visa status. Please see the following link for further detail:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/visiting-doctor-or-nurse>

#### *Emergency*

If it is an emergency, call 111 or go to a hospital. You will always be seen if you need emergency care and go to a hospital, and you will not have to pay.

However, if you call 111, you may have to pay for the ambulance transfer cost depending on the situation.

For more information see the following link: <https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/publicly-funded-health-and-disability-services/hospital-visits>

### **Do I have to pay for these health services?**

Health care in New Zealand is a mixture of free services and subsidised services (where you pay to cover some of the costs). Most public hospital visits are free in New Zealand. For GP visits, you will have to pay a fee that is partly subsidised by the Government.

Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) is a government agency that helps pay for a range of medical, health and treatment costs if you have an accident. As a 2022 Special Ukraine Visa holder you are eligible for ACC coverage.

### **I have been told I can have an initial health assessment as a 2022 Special Ukraine Visa holder. Do I need to pay anything?**

No, you do not pay for this initial health assessment.

### **When will this service be available?**

The free health assessment is available from 17 October 2022.

### **What will happen in the health assessment?**

In this free one-off health assessment, you will:

- be supported to enrol with a doctor (if you have not already)
- be assessed for tuberculosis, including being offered testing to screen for tuberculosis
- find out what vaccinations you may be eligible for and where to get them.

If your test results are not normal, you will be offered a free second consultation to discuss the results and next steps.

If any other health concerns are identified, you will need to book another appointment to talk about these concerns. You will have to book these consultations separately and there will be a payment required. Seeing your doctor at the general practice you are enrolled with will be cheaper than seeing one at a practice that you are not enrolled with.

### **How can I access this free health assessment?**

If you would like to do an in-person consultation and are already enrolled with a general practice, you just need to get in touch with them and mention that you would like to have the free initial health assessment being offered to 2022 Special Ukraine Visa holders.

If you are happy with a phone consultation or are not enrolled with a general practice, you can get in touch with a service called Healthline by calling 0800 945 375 or 09 306 8739. They will do a consultation by phone and support you to enrol with a general practice.

### **Do I have to undergo this health assessment?**

No, you do not have to – it is your choice. But it is best to have any health conditions (like tuberculosis) diagnosed and treated early, to protect yourself and your family and ensure future visa applications are processed smoothly.

### **Who will provide the health assessment?**

The assessment will most likely be provided by a doctor but can also be offered by a nurse practitioner. It will be done either in person (at a general practice) or over the phone (through Healthline).

### **What if I can't speak English?**

You will be offered the use of interpreter services in the language of your choice for free.

**Do I need to be enrolled with a general practice first before I get the health assessment?**

No, you do not need to be enrolled with a general practice before getting the health assessment.

You can receive the free assessment from a doctor over the phone by calling Healthline on 0800 945 375 or 09 306 8739.

If you are not enrolled with a general practice, Healthline can support you with this process. It is important for your longer-term health care that you are enrolled with a general practice. Healthline cannot manage any long-term issues that are identified.

**Why will I be screened for tuberculosis?**

Tuberculosis is seen as a priority because Ukraine currently has a high rate of tuberculosis, and you may have it without realising. If you have tuberculosis in your lungs, you may pass it to other people in the household who can then become sick from it- especially children and people who are immune-compromised. Tuberculosis treatment is free in New Zealand.

**What do I tell the doctor?**

It is important to tell the doctor if you have any symptoms of feeling unwell. Some symptoms to tell the doctor about include:

- Coughing – including coughing up blood
- Fever
- Night sweats
- Swollen glands, usually in the neck
- Weight loss
- Fatigue

It is also important to tell your doctor about your past medical history including any vaccinations you have had or medical conditions you may have.

**Who will my information be shared with?**

If you have your free health assessment with Healthline, they will share your information with the general practice you enrol with.

If you are suspected or confirmed as having tuberculosis, your information will be shared with the local Public Health Service so that they can make sure that you and your family stay healthy. They will contact you to find out if anyone in your family is at risk of getting tuberculosis. This is to protect your family and the wider community.

**What if I am identified as having tuberculosis after the health assessment? Will this affect my New Zealand residency application in future?**

If you have tuberculosis, you can get free treatment. Any visa application you make in the future will have to be assessed by Immigration New Zealand at the time of that application to determine whether you have an acceptable standard of health.

It would be better for you to have had tuberculosis diagnosed earlier and treatment completed well before a future visa is applied for.

**Why does my child need to be screened for tuberculosis?**

Children benefit most from early tuberculosis screening as they are usually more affected if they become sick from tuberculosis. Children will also benefit from vaccination against preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, and whooping cough.

**What vaccinations are available, and will they be done during the health assessment?**

In New Zealand, there are recommended vaccinations that are free. It is important to be vaccinated against these preventable diseases, especially measles and whooping cough. The health assessment will work out what vaccinations you are eligible for, and you will be told where and when you can get them.

Getting vaccinations, you are eligible for in New Zealand, is usually free through your enrolled general practice and is also your choice.

The following link has more information:

- <https://www.immune.org.nz/new-zealand-national-immunisation-schedule>

**Where do I go for more information?**

<https://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/keeping-well/2022-special-ukraine-visa-holders>