

2018

PITCAIRN ISLANDS IMMIGRATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Pitcairn is one of the most isolated islands in the world. There is no airport on the island. Our supply ship 'MV Claymore II' currently visits on four rotations a year, calling three times in each rotation. When you travel on board the MV Claymore II, you will be at sea for at least two nights before arriving at Pitcairn Island.

GENERAL INFO

What is the population of Pitcairn?

There are currently around 55 people living on Pitcairn Island, including both permanent residents and expatriate contracted staff and their partners. The population includes 3 children under the age of 13 but it does not include 4 Pitcairn children over the age of 13 who are studying in New Zealand, nor permanent residents who are temporarily absent from Pitcairn.

What is the climate like?

Pitcairn's average summer temperature ranges from 20-30 degrees centigrade. In winter it can drop as low as 17 degrees centigrade. The humidity ranges from 60-100% all year round. Winter temperatures can be felt from May to October. Roads and walkways can become very muddy and slippery after heavy rain and the island can become tinder dry and very dusty during dry periods.

What religions are practiced on Pitcairn?

A successful Seventh-day Adventist mission was established in the 1890s, and Seventh Day Adventism remains the main religion on Pitcairn. However, all faiths are welcome as part of the community, and visitors and new settlers are always welcome at the church. The Sabbath (Saturday) is observed as the day of rest by most Islanders.

I have a disability, can I still move to Pitcairn?

The Government of Pitcairn Island does not discriminate on the grounds of disability. However, you should be aware of several factors with regard to access and services. The terrain on Pitcairn is rough, with very steep hills, a lot of dirt tracks and few paved roads. Transport is

generally either on foot or by quad bike. It is recommended you discuss your particular requirement with our resident Doctor before applying for settlement.

Do I have to visit Pitcairn before applying for settlement?

You can apply for settlement on Pitcairn at any time and a visit is not required. However, moving to Pitcairn is a big step and we encourage you to find out as much as possible about Pitcairn before applying for settlement; visiting is a good way of doing this. You can visit without a visa for up to 14 days, while long-term visit visas are valid for up to 6 months.

Can I bring my children to settle on Pitcairn?

Yes you can. We encourage families with children to apply and there are no restrictions on families with children coming to live on Pitcairn. If you wish to settle on Pitcairn with children under the age of 18 you should contact the Deputy Governor, who will provide further information. A children's welfare charter is in operation to ensure children's safety and wellbeing on the island.

Can I get married on Pitcairn?

Yes, it is possible to marry on Pitcairn. Same sex couples are also welcome on Pitcairn and can legally marry. Please ask the Administrator for further details: administrator@pitcairn.gov.pn.

Is there a school on Pitcairn?

Yes, Pulau School provides pre-school and primary education for resident children. The New Zealand curriculum is taught. Teachers are appointed on one-year contracts. Higher Education from 13 years is usually completed at boarding school in New Zealand: qualifying criteria apply for subsidised attendance.

If I move to Pitcairn am I entitled to a British Passport?

No. Permanent residence on Pitcairn does not lead to eligibility for a British passport.

PRACTICALITIES

How will my possessions get to Pitcairn?

A supply ship carries freight to Pitcairn every three months. If your application for settlement is successful we will provide full information about shipping your goods to Pitcairn.

How do people travel to/from Pitcairn?

The Government of Pitcairn Islands charters a passenger/cargo vessel. This currently carries supplies and passengers to the island every three months. To view the Passenger Travel Terms & Conditions go to www.pitcairn.pn or contact admin@pitcairn.gov.pn. To view the current schedule go to the [Visit Pitcairn](#) website.

Are there shops on Pitcairn?

There is a General Store, a Warehouse and a Post Office on the island. All are open three times a week. The General Store stocks a range of foodstuffs, household and general goods. Additional orders for food and general items from New Zealand can be placed through the store on a quarterly basis. The Warehouse sells construction materials, electrical hardware and similar items.

Is there Internet/phone/television on Pitcairn?

Yes, there is internet on the island, provided by satellite and supplying all homes. Owing to the high cost of supplying the island, there is a sole provider. A new LTE contract started in January 2018. However, potential settlers should not expect speeds or service comparable with other, less isolated countries. Internet is provided on a “user pays” system. Owing to the high cost of supplying the island, costs are likely to be higher than in many countries.

The satellite also provides telephone connectivity for all houses. Calls within the island are free, while calls to New Zealand, Australia and Europe are charged at reasonable rates. There are two mobile satellite phones on Pitcairn for emergency use only, should the main telecommunications system fail.

Television coverage at present consists of one channel – Australia Plus, a news, current affairs and sports channel. The channel may change in the future. There is also the Hope Channel, broadcast by the SDA Church. The possible provision of further channels remains under review.

What facilities are there on Pitcairn?

The island has a well-appointed health clinic staffed by an expatriate doctor and a local Enrolled Nurse. It contains a well-stocked pharmacy. The clinic opens three mornings a week but the doctor and nurse are available on call at all times in case of emergency. The medical team is able to deal with most day to day issues and minor emergencies but serious or acute conditions may require the patient to be sent to Tahiti or New Zealand for treatment. Subsidies are available for such treatment for permanent residents. Individuals on settlement visas are required to have health insurance to cover this eventuality. Note that if a medical evacuation is required, transport may not be quickly available, as outside our supply ship schedule the island has to rely on passing vessels.

In addition, there is a school for children up to the age of 12, a tourism centre (including an artisan gallery), a library, a museum and a treasury, where residents and visitors can withdraw cash, pay bills, and receive wages.

What is the plan for the future of Pitcairn?

The UK Government is committed to working with the people of Pitcairn to develop a sustainable future for the community. Attracting new immigrants is key to building Pitcairn's future.

FINANCES

How much money do I need to have to move to Pitcairn?

Anyone wishing to settle on Pitcairn must have evidence of sufficient funding available to support them and any dependents until they gain permanent residence. This is likely to be at least NZ\$30,000 per adult.

What sort of evidence of funds will I need to provide?

Normally six months' bank statements, savings accounts, credit card statements or other evidence of assets in your name. Pitcairn Island Office admin@pitcairn.gov.pn will ask you for this once you have submitted your application for settlement and paid your fee. Please do not send it to the Immigration Officer.

Can I receive public funds i.e. benefits?

If you move to Pitcairn you will need to have sufficient funds to support yourself for at least the first two years until your residency is approved. You are able to work on Pitcairn under a settlement visa. There are no unemployment benefits on Pitcairn Island. The qualification period for a Pitcairn pension is five years from being granted settlement, provided you have resided on Pitcairn throughout that time.

You would qualify for subsidised medical treatment at the clinic on Pitcairn Island after six months of your settlement period, but your private medical insurance should be in place to cover off-island medical costs and any emergencies until your permanent residency visa is granted. Your insurance policy details must be provided prior to travel.

What currency is used on Pitcairn?

All government transactions are carried out using the New Zealand Dollar - this includes the store, medical centre, utility bills etc.

Private enterprise, including Pitcairn Island Accommodation costs and local souvenirs, are priced in US Dollars. You can access cash on credit cards and exchange currency at the Government Treasury. There is a 5% fee for credit card transactions.

ACCOMMODATION

Is there accommodation to buy or rent on the island?

The Pitcairn Island Tourism Department can help arrange accommodation for you with a local family on a charged basis; alternatively there are a couple of private self-contained houses and units for rent. In both cases, accommodation will be subject to availability. There are currently no properties for sale on the island.

I would like to build my own house, is this possible?

Yes. Once your settlement application is approved an application can be made to the Pitcairn Islands Land Court for a plot on which to build your home. You can also apply for additional land for garden, forest or orchard, based on reasonable need.

To construct your home you may like to employ local labour, work on the project yourself or bring in an external contractor.

How much is it to buy land on Pitcairn?

Land is granted on a leasehold basis and there is currently no charge. You must be a permanent resident of Pitcairn Island to apply for land.

On average how much does it cost to build a house on Pitcairn?

Costs will vary depending on the size and type of dwelling and the materials used.

A Home Loan Scheme is available on attractive terms to first-time home builders, providing up to NZ\$40,000 to cover purchases of materials and freight costs. This is subject to qualifying criteria.

Are there builders/electricians/plumbers etc. on island who could build me a house? There are a number of skilled trades-people on the island who have assisted in house building in the past and could be approached on a private basis.

EMPLOYMENT

Do I have to settle on Pitcairn permanently or can I come for 6 months to work?

You can apply for a long term visa. There is no compulsion to settle on the island.

Do I need a visa to work on Pitcairn?

If you have not been granted a settlement visa and are not a permanent resident of Pitcairn you will need to obtain written permission from the Island Council before taking up paid employment or entering into business on Pitcairn.

Is everyone employed on Pitcairn?

No, we have a number of residents who are not currently employed.

Do I need to work if I move to Pitcairn?

If you are able to support yourself financially there is no requirement to find work.

Do I need to have certain skills to move to Pitcairn?

No, however, Pitcairn would like its settlers to be able to contribute to the island's sustainable future in the same way that current residents do, and if you do have skills they will be put to good use. As Pitcairn is isolated geographically, many residents are multi-skilled.

What sort of work is available on Pitcairn?

Pitcairn Island offers private enterprise opportunities, externally-funded project work, and public sector work. However, there is no guarantee that Government jobs will be available and residents are encouraged to consider private enterprise. Government jobs include manual jobs, skilled trades, administrative and management jobs, and social welfare jobs. Project work funded by the EU or other external bodies includes construction, road-building, and development of tourism infrastructure. Private sector opportunities exist in agriculture, apiculture, tourism and other areas. In addition, many community members make and sell curios and souvenirs to visiting cruise ships and other visitors. Settlers are welcome to participate in private enterprise and to apply for Government work and project work when jobs are advertised.

What is the retirement age on Pitcairn?

In accordance with age equality legislation there is no compulsory retirement age on Pitcairn. Some islanders do take the option to retire at 65. Pensions are paid from the age of 65 for qualifying individuals.

APPLYING/NEXT STEPS

Do I need a visa to visit Pitcairn?

You do not need a visitor visa if you intend to stay for less than 14 days. If you wish to stay longer you will need to apply for a long term visit visa, which is valid for up to six months, or a business visa. Applications can be downloaded from Pitcairn's [Repopulation](#) website.

Do I have to have a sponsor?

No. But if you do have a sponsor on Pitcairn Island please give details about them on the Settlement Application form.

How long does it take to process a settlement application?

Following your application, if all documents are in order and you have paid the fee, you will normally be informed within six weeks whether your application has been refused, deferred for further documentation, or progressed to the next stage.

If your application progresses to the next stage, you and your partner/spouse (if applying with you), will be invited to attend an interview with the Deputy Governor.

If you attend for interview, you will normally be informed in writing of the outcome of it within one month of it taking place.

Is there a charge for settlement applications?

Yes. The current fee is NZ\$500 per person. This is non-refundable, regardless of the outcome of the application. Therefore, please make sure you consider your application carefully before applying and include all relevant information on your form.

What are the criteria for settlement on Pitcairn?

Under the Immigration Control Ordinance, applicants for settlement must demonstrate that they have arranged adequate accommodation in advance and have the means to construct a dwelling after two years; that they will not be a charge on public funds for any reason including medical condition; and that they intend to remain permanently on Pitcairn Island for the indefinite future without retaining domicile in any other country. Applicants without any immediate family (spouse, parent, sibling or child) on Pitcairn also need to satisfy the Island Council and Governor that they are able to support themselves and their dependents; and that they have relevant skills to contribute to the welfare of the community. In all cases the Governor must be satisfied that granting settlement entry clearance is likely to be in the public interest.

In practice, this will mean that applicants must show that they have sufficient funding and/or income to enable them and their dependents to live on Pitcairn Island for up to two years, which is the period before permanent residency can be granted. Insurance must be in place in case of the need for emergency medical evacuation.

In assessing the potential contribution to the community and public interest in settlement, the Immigration Officer, Council and Governor will take into account evidence of:

- (a) Relevant skills.
- (b) The age of the applicant(s), with priority given to young families and young, working-age couples.
- (c) Viable business ideas, in particular for business that will benefit the whole community.
- (d) Whether the applicant has undertaken research into what life on Pitcairn might be like; understands the challenges associated with living in a small, remote community, and has a positive attitude to life on the island. A prior visit to Pitcairn Island would be helpful to gain understanding of life here.
- (e) The applicant's reason or motivation for moving to Pitcairn;
- (f) Good character, including whether the applicant or anyone included in the application has any criminal convictions or has provided any false information; and
- (g) Any other relevant matter.

In general, applications will be refused if they have failed to provide necessary documentation or include false representations or false documents; if they include any person with a criminal conviction for which they have been sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months or more, or with a history of deportation or provision of false information; or where the reason for seeking entry does not align with Pitcairn's public interest.

How do I apply for settlement?

Download the on-line form from the Pitcairn Islands [immigration](#) website and complete all sections. Please make sure you fill in all sections, or your application may be delayed. If you have a sponsor on Pitcairn Island or elsewhere, please include their details. Scan the completed form and send it by email, together with a copy of the photo page of your passport, to immigration@pitcairn.gov.pn, copied to admin@pitcairn.gov.pn. Do not send financial evidence or your application fee at this stage (see below).

What happens once I have submitted my application?

Once you have submitted your application, Pitcairn Island Office (PIO) will contact you. PIO will inform you how to pay the fee, ask for any further documentation needed, and ask you to complete any sections of the form you have missed. You must pay the fee before your application can be considered.

Your application will then be considered by the island Immigration Officer and Pitcairn Island Council. The Council will make a recommendation to the Governor's Office. Following these deliberations you will be advised one of the following:

- a) Your application has progressed to the next step.
- b) Your application has been deferred – you will be told the reason and any requirements you need to meet in order to progress.
- c) Your application has been refused – you will be told the reason.

If your application proceeds to the next step you may be asked for further information by Pitcairn Island Office, including evidence of funding and (if applicable) your sponsor's income. You should send this to Pitcairn Island Office at admin@pitcairn.gov.pn. You will be invited for an interview with the Deputy Governor, based in Auckland. This can take place in person, by Skype or by phone.

Following your interview, the Governor will make the final decision on your application. You will be informed in writing of the outcome of your application. This will be either:

- a) Your application is successful.
- b) Your application has been deferred. You will be told of any requirements you need to meet.
- c) Your application has been refused. You will be told the reason. The Governor's decision is final.

If your application is successful you will receive a letter from the Governor formally offering you entry clearance for settlement on Pitcairn. Under Pitcairn's Immigration Control Ordinance you must arrive on Pitcairn within 12 months of the date of this letter. If this is likely to cause difficulties you should raise it at the earliest opportunity with the Immigration Officer on Pitcairn: immigration@pitcairn.gov.pn.