



COVID-19 : Immigration

This fact sheet has information for people who are in Australia on a visa and are worried about the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19).

What are the main types of visas held by people in Australia?

There are two main types of visas held by people who are migrants in Australia. They are permanent visas and temporary visas.

A permanent visa (also called permanent residency) allows you to stay in Australia indefinitely. However, if you intend to leave Australia and return, you must ensure that your Resident Return Visa is current. To be able to easily return to Australia if you are overseas, you must reapply for your Resident Return Visa every 5 years.

A temporary visa allows you to stay in Australia for a specific period of time. There are many types of temporary visas. Some are visitor's visas, work visas, and partner visas.

Recent government decisions due to COVID-19 may affect people on temporary visas.

What if you are on a visitor's visa?

If you are currently on a visitor's visa and are concerned that you will have to return home to quarantine or other circumstances, you should check your immi account to see if you are eligible to apply for an extension to your visitor's visa.

The earlier you do this, the easier it will be for you to get an extension of the visa to ensure that you may remain legally in Australia.

What if you are on a temporary work visa?

If you are on a temporary work visa, you should keep in touch with your case manager at the Department of Home Affairs.

You should also regularly check your immi account.

The Australian government is currently trying to make changes and give help to people on temporary work visas where their work has ceased because of COVID-19 restrictions or who find themselves unable to leave Australia but also unable to stay.

What if you are on a partner visa?

If you are on a partner visa and separated from your sponsor, you may be able to remain in Australia and obtain permanent residency.

There are three circumstances that allow this application to be made:

- » if your sponsor dies,
- » if you have a child of the relationship
- » if you are a victim of family violence.

In all these situations, you should inform the Department of Home Affairs.

The Department of Home Affairs will ask you for documents or other information to process your application.

Legal Aid WA, The Humanitarian Group and private migration agents may be able to assist people on partner visas in these situations.

This fact sheet contains information only. It is not legal advice. If you have a legal problem, you should speak to a lawyer. Legal Aid WA aims to provide accurate information but does not accept responsibility if it is not.

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