



## Stronger migration and visa services

### Changes to lodgement and processing arrangements for Sponsored Family Visitor visas

The Sponsored Family Visitor visa allows eligible people to travel to Australia for a holiday or to visit their family. The applicant must be sponsored by a family relative in Australia who is eligible to be a sponsor, or by an Australian Government official who is willing to sponsor them. The sponsor provides a guarantee that the visitor will leave Australia before the visa expires. Support from the sponsor is taken into account by the visa decision-maker.

As of 1 August 2010, all Sponsored Family Visitor visa applications will be assessed and decided at one of two Sponsored Family Visitor processing centres (SFVPC) in Queensland and New South Wales, Australia.

#### Lodging an application

##### As of 1 August 2010

You are required to complete form 48S *Application to visit Australia as a sponsored family visitor*. Your sponsor is required to complete form 1149 *Application for sponsorship for sponsored family visitors*. Both application forms should be lodged together at one of the processing centres in Australia by post or courier, according to the address of your sponsor at the time of lodgement.

1. Sponsors who live in **New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory** should lodge their forms by post or courier, directly with the **SFVPC (NSW)**.

#### Sponsored Family Visitor Processing Centre (NSW)

Street address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (NSW)  
26 Lee Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 (*courier access level 3*)

Telephone: 131 881

Fax: 02 8862 6352

Postal address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (NSW)  
PO Box 9984  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Australia

2. Sponsors who live in **Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia or Western Australia** should lodge their forms by post or courier, directly with the **SFVPC (Qld)**.

#### Sponsored Family Visitor Processing Centre (Qld)

Street address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (Qld)  
Ground Floor  
299 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000 (*courier access level 2*)

Telephone: 131 881

Fax: 07 3136 7152

Postal address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (Qld)  
GPO Box 9984  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Australia

## **Before 1 August 2010**

If you lodged an application and sponsorship form for a Sponsored Family Visitor visa prior to 1 August 2010, it will be finalised at the departmental office in Australia where it was lodged.

## **Contacts**

### **Before lodging your application**

We encourage you to visit our website at <http://www.immi.gov.au> .

General information on all temporary and permanent visa categories, including visitors, students, family migration, temporary business visas and refugee and humanitarian applications is available by calling 131 881.

The general enquiries telephone number 131 881 is only available if you are calling from within Australia. If you are outside Australia and want to make an enquiry, please contact your nearest overseas office. <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/overseas/>

### **After an application is lodged**

You will receive an email or a letter acknowledging that we have received your application forms and payment of the visa application charge within one week of the office receiving it. This acknowledgement letter will contain your reference number and the case officer's contact details for your application.

If any additional information or documents is required to make a decision on your application, your sponsor will be contacted by a case officer within one week of the acknowledgement letter being sent.

If your sponsor is asked to provide further information in support of your application, the case officer will advise your sponsor where to send this information. Alternatively, your sponsor can post or fax the additional information to the appropriate SFVPC contact details above.

Please be aware that the department may make a decision on your application without asking for additional information.

## **More information**

For more information, please see *Frequently asked questions – Changes to lodgement and processing arrangements for Sponsored Family Visitor visas*.



## Stronger migration and visa services

### Changes to lodgement and processing arrangements for Sponsored Family Visitor visas

#### Frequently asked questions

##### How do I lodge my sponsored family visitor visa application?

You must complete form 48S *Application to visit Australia as a sponsored family visitor* and your sponsor is required to complete form 1149 *Application for sponsorship for sponsored family visitors*. Both application forms should be lodged together at one of the processing centres in Australia according to the address of your sponsor at the time of lodgement.

From 1 August 2010, the sponsor should send the forms directly to the Sponsored Family Visitor Processing Centre (SFVPC) as described below. This will ensure there are no delays in the processing of the application.

1. Sponsors who live in **New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory** should lodge their forms by post or courier, directly with the **SFVPC (NSW)**.

##### **Sponsored Family Visitor Processing Centre (NSW)**

Street address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (NSW)  
26 Lee Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 (*courier access level 3*)

Telephone: 131 881  
Fax: 02 8862 6352

Postal address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (NSW)  
PO Box 9984  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Australia

2. Sponsors who live in **Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia or Western Australia** should lodge their forms by post or courier, directly with the **SFVPC (Qld)**.

##### **Sponsored Family Visitor Processing Centre (Qld)**

Street Address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (Qld)  
Ground Floor  
299 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000 (*courier access level 2*)

Telephone: 131 881  
Fax: 07 3136 7152

Postal Address:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
SFVPC (Qld)  
GPO Box 9984  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Australia

See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/australia/processing-centres/sfvpc/>

## How do I pay the visa application charge?

Acceptable payment methods for applications paid and lodged in Australia at a processing centre are:

- credit card
- Australia Post money order made payable to 'Department of Immigration and Citizenship'
- bank cheque
  - drawn on a bank with representation in Australia
  - in Australian dollars
  - made payable to 'Department of Immigration and Citizenship'
- international money order:
  - drawn on a bank with representation in Australia
  - in Australian dollars
  - made payable to 'Department of Immigration and Citizenship'

### Note:

1. Personal cheques are **not** accepted
2. Travellers' cheques are **not** accepted

See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/990i/how-to-pay.htm>

## Who do I contact for information after the application is lodged?

If your application was lodged prior to 1 August 2010 you need to contact the office where you lodged the application.

See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/australia/>

If your application was lodged on or after 1 August 2010, you need to contact the relevant visa processing centre using the contact details listed above.

In addition, receipt of the application forms and payment of the visa application charge will be acknowledged in writing (either by mail or email) within one week of the office receiving the application. This acknowledgement letter contains your reference number and case officer contact details for your application. If your sponsor is asked to provide more information in support of your application, the case officer will advise your sponsor where to send this information. Please include the reference number, if known, in any correspondence.

**Note:** The department may make a decision on your application without requesting additional information.

## How do I notify changes to my circumstances?

It is important that you tell us about any changes to your circumstances including name, passport, contact details, address or family members as soon as possible. You are required to do this in writing.

To make it easy to advise us of these changes in circumstance, we have a number of forms available on our website at <http://www.immi.gov.au>, or from any of our offices.

## Withdrawing this application

You may withdraw this application at any stage during the process. If any applicant wishes to withdraw their application, they or their sponsor must advise the department in writing. This letter should identify all applicants included on the application who wish to withdraw.

## How long will it take for the decision to be made?

The current service standard for complete applications to be processed is six (6) weeks. During peak periods (September to December) this may be longer (*see note below*). Please note that the service standards are a guide only and apply to visa applications which have been lodged with complete documentation. You can expect your application to take longer than the processing time service standard if it was lodged without all of the required documentation.

Please do not finalise your travel arrangements until you have received notification of a decision on this application.

**Note:** The department receives a high volume of Sponsored Family Visitor visa applications each year during the December/January holiday period. People intending to lodge applications for their overseas family members to visit Australia during the December/January holiday period are advised to do so early — at least eight (8) weeks prior to their intended travel. The department will seek to assess and finalise all applications lodged on or before this date to allow for travel before 25 December 2010 wherever possible.

**See:** <http://www.immi.gov.au/visitors/tourist/whats-new.htm>

### **How do I know when an application has been decided?**

A notification will be sent to the sponsor when a decision has been made. If your visa application is approved, you should obtain the grant notification details as proof of your status, as your passport may not need a visa label.

Your visa information is stored electronically by the department and is linked to the passport number provided in your visa application. Your sponsor may view information online regarding your visa at [http://www.immi.gov.au/e\\_visavevo.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/e_visavevo.htm).

### **Why has the lodgement and processing been changed?**

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship is transforming its business practices to become the best immigration and citizenship organisation in the world.

Transforming the department will help us to improve our client services, improve the consistency of our decisions and deliver service more efficiently and effectively.

### **How do I make a compliment or a complaint?**

We value your compliments, complaints and suggestions. Compliments let us know when we are performing well and complaints and suggestions help us improve the information, products and services we provide. If you would like to provide a compliment, complaint or suggestion, you can:

- phone the Global Feedback Unit on 133 177 (toll-free within Australia) during business hours
- complete a feedback form online at <http://www.immi.gov.au>
- write to The Manager, Global Feedback Unit, GPO Box 241, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001, Australia, and/or
- complete the form attached to the *Compliments and Complaints* brochure (available from any Department of Immigration and Citizenship client service office).

### **Where can I get more information?**

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship website contains more information on visas and business services, including:

- Sponsored Family Visitor visa (subclass 679) website – <http://www.immi.gov.au/visitors/visiting-family/679/>
- Sponsored Family Visitor visas fact sheet – <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/54sponsored.htm>
- contact details for the Sponsored Family Visitor Processing Centres page: <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/australia/processing-centres/sfvpc/>

For information on how to pay visa application charges at a processing centre in Australia, please visit the departmental website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/990i/how-to-pay.htm>.

For further information regarding the department's transformation program: <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/department/perf-progress/transformation/>.

The website address for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship is <http://www.immi.gov.au>.