



## Client service charter





## Secretary's foreword

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) manages the permanent and temporary entry of people to Australia, and the settlement of migrants and refugees. We promote the value of citizenship and cultural diversity.



Our work is underpinned by our guiding principle of **people** our business. We are committed to having well trained and supported staff, and to developing and maintaining an open and accountable culture that is fair and reasonable in dealing with our clients.

We know how much you value excellent client service and our goal is to give you that level of service. Therefore, it is important that we know what to expect from each other.

Our newly developed client service strategy will enhance the ways we deliver our services. With a focus on client service excellence, efficiency and integrity, we are making significant improvements in the way we serve you.

Your feedback is highly valued because we use it as an indicator of our performance against our service standards. Your feedback can be a compliment, complaint, statement or a word on how you felt as you engaged with us through any of our service delivery channels.

Andrew Metcalfe  
Secretary



## Our service charter

### This charter:

- outlines our service standards and defines what you can expect from us
- states what you need to know so you can help us help you
- explains how you can give us feedback on any aspect of our service.

## Our service standards

Our service standards describe the level of service excellence we aim to deliver.

When we serve you, we will:

- identify ourselves
- treat you with courtesy and respect
- be fair, open and reasonable
- give you clear, accurate and timely information or help you to find it
- collect, store, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with relevant Australian law.

These will be measured through regular client surveys and by monitoring the feedback you provide. We will regularly publish the results on our website and in our annual report.

At many of our office locations overseas, we manage lodgement and enquiry services in partnership with organisations that specialise in delivering such services. If you are overseas and need to access our services through a Service Delivery Partner, the service standards outlined in this charter will also apply.

## Processing applications

Information on the time required by the department to process different applications is available on our website at [www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/client-services-charter/standards](http://www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/client-services-charter/standards).

## Telephone Service Centres

We will answer 85 per cent of calls to our national contact numbers

131 881

131 880 and

133 177 within two minutes.

## Contact in person

We will see you within 10 minutes of your arrival if you have an appointment.

We will see you within 20 minutes of your arrival if you do not have an appointment.

You will be attended to within 30 minutes of joining the passport-processing queue at an Australian airport.

## Written communication

We will acknowledge emails and provide a likely timeframe for our response within one working day of receipt of your email.

Within seven working days of receiving your application, we will:

- acknowledge receipt of the application
- advise you with reasons if your application is invalid (for example, incorrect application form or fee).

Within seven working days of receiving advice from a Court or Tribunal, we will acknowledge receipt of the decision or information and advise you if there are any further requirements.



## Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National

We will answer 90 per cent of telephone calls to a TIS operator within 30 seconds.

A telephone interpreter in a major community language will be provided within three minutes.

We will respond to 85 per cent of requests for an appointment within three working days.

We will process 90 per cent of fee-free translations within 20 working days of request.

## Freedom of Information

We will acknowledge freedom of information requests within 14 calendar days from date of receipt and provide a decision within 30 calendar days from date of receipt.

### To help us help you, we ask that you:

- treat our staff with courtesy and respect
- ensure your application is accompanied by all information and documents required at the time of lodgement
- provide us with all information we request within the specified timeframe
- provide the reference number of your application if you are contacting us regarding an application you have already lodged
- give us details of changes in your circumstances as soon as the changes occur
- tell us if you have special requirements, such as needing interpreter assistance
- not offer us gifts, money or other favours.

## Feedback—compliments, complaints, suggestions

We value your compliments, complaints and suggestions. These could be:

- about a positive experience you have had
- a comment or suggestion on how we can improve our services to you
- a complaint if you are not satisfied with the service you have received, or feel you have not been treated fairly and reasonably by us or by someone delivering services on our behalf.

You can give us this feedback by:

- completing an online feedback form at [www.immi.gov.au/contacts/forms/services](http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/forms/services)
- calling the Global Feedback Unit on 133 177
- writing to: The Manager, Global Feedback Unit, GPO Box 241, Melbourne VIC 3001 Australia
- telling any departmental staff member. They will send your feedback to our Global Feedback Unit for processing
- contacting your nearest Australian Embassy, Consulate or High Commission.

## Complaints handling

We will acknowledge complaints made by telephone or email within one working day and respond within 10 working days.

We will acknowledge complaints received by mail or facsimile within five working days and respond within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied with our resolution of your complaint, you may contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman ([www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)), Office of the Privacy Commissioner ([www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au)) or the Australian Human Rights Commission ([www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)).



## Other important information

### Staying and working legally in Australia

If your visa expires while you are still in Australia, you become an 'unlawful non-citizen'.

If you become aware that you are an 'unlawful non-citizen' you should contact the compliance section of your nearest departmental office. Locations of offices are available on the department's website [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au).

You can check your immigration status including your work rights through Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) [www.immi.gov.au/e\\_visa/vevo.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/e_visa/vevo.htm)

### Decision review processes

If you are not satisfied with an immigration decision that affects you, you may have the right to seek a review of the decision. More information is available on the following websites:

- Department of Immigration and Citizenship [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)
- Migration and Refugee Review Tribunal [www.mrt-rrt.gov.au](http://www.mrt-rrt.gov.au)
- Administrative Appeals Tribunal [www.aat.gov.au](http://www.aat.gov.au)

### Migration agents

You do not need to use a migration agent to lodge a visa application. However, if you wish to, you can find contact details of migration agents (in Australia and overseas) at [www.mara.com.au](http://www.mara.com.au) or telephone 1300 226 272.

### Translations

Translated versions of this Charter are available at [www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/client-services-charter/charter-translations.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/client-services-charter/charter-translations.htm)

## Online tools and information

The links below provide information on products, services and application forms/booklets. They also provide access to online applications for many types of visas, Australian citizenship and other services. Here you will also find web based tools called 'Wizards', which assist clients to find relevant information on visa options or how to apply for citizenship:

- Immigration—[www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)
- Visa Wizard—[www.immi.gov.au/visawizard](http://www.immi.gov.au/visawizard)
- Citizenship—[www.citizenship.gov.au](http://www.citizenship.gov.au)
- Citizenship Wizard—[www.citizenship.gov.au/citizenshipwizard](http://www.citizenship.gov.au/citizenshipwizard)
- VEVO (facility to check work or visa entitlements) [www.immi.gov.au/e\\_visa/vevo.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/e_visa/vevo.htm)
- Making online applications, including checking progress online [www.immi.gov.au/e\\_visa](http://www.immi.gov.au/e_visa)
- Residence calculator (for checking Citizenship eligibility) <https://www.ecom.immi.gov.au/citz/startIntervalCalc.do>
- Translated resources (information and forms in multiple languages) [www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/translated](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/translated)

## Contact us

### In person

Information on the location and operating hours of our offices is available:

- in Australia—[www.immi.gov.au/contacts](http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts) or by telephone 131 881
- overseas—[www.immi.gov.au/contacts/overseas](http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/overseas) or by contacting your nearest Australian Embassy, Consulate or High Commission.



## Telephone numbers

- 131 881  
Immigration appointments and enquiries
- 131 880  
Citizenship appointments and enquiries
- 131 450  
Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) National
- 133 177  
Global Feedback Unit
- 1800 040 070 (toll free in Australia)  
Employers' Immigration Hotline
- 1800 009 623 (toll free in Australia)  
Immigration Dob-in Line
- 133 677  
National Relay Service (NRS) for callers who have a hearing, speech or communication impairment and for Text Telephone (TTY) or modem callers
- 1300 555 727  
National Relay Service (NRS) for callers using Speech to Speech Relay (SSR).

Note: Calls from most fixed phone lines from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to 1800 numbers from most fixed lines are free.

Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

Calls to telephone numbers beginning with 13, 1300 and 1800 may not be available from VOIP services, please contact your service provider for more information. Alternatively, try using a fixed line phone.

