



20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) Melbourne, Australia

Visa health information fact sheet

This fact sheet provides a general overview of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's visa health requirements for a visitor visa application. The visitor visa may be appropriate for most people, including speakers, government officials, delegates, exhibitors, accompanying guests, group organisers or students, visiting Australia to participate in the AIDS 2014 conference in Melbourne. Further information about visitor visas is available on the department's website.

See: Visitor visa online applications [link to www.immi.gov.au/e_visitors.htm]

The health requirement

In order to be granted a temporary or a permanent visa, applicants must meet the specific visa requirements as well as the health requirement. The health requirement aims to:

- protect the Australian community from public health and safety risks
- contain public expenditure on health care and community services
- safeguard the access of Australian citizens and permanent residents to health care and community services in short supply.

Most temporary visa applicants who intend to stay in Australia for less than three months will not be required to complete any medical examinations for the grant of a visa unless they:

- have, or have previously had, Tuberculosis (TB)
- will be seeking medical treatment in a hospital or require pharmaceuticals while in Australia.

Health requirement for visitors and temporary visa applicants

The department takes a risk based approach to determining whether health examinations are required. This approach focuses on identifying active TB which is considered a public health risk.

When people apply for a temporary visa, they need to complete a number of questions that relate to their health status. Answers to these questions will determine whether health examinations will be required.

Temporary visa applicants are asked to list countries visited in the five years preceding their current visa application. If the incidence of TB is high in particular countries and the visa applicant stayed three months or longer in one of those countries, then they may be required to undergo a chest x-ray. More information about the TB risk framework for temporary visa applicants is available on the department's website.

See: Health requirement for temporary entry to Australia
[link to <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1163i.pdf>]

If temporary visa applicants intend to enter a hospital or a health care facility while in Australia, a chest x-ray may be required as part of the health screening to identify active TB.

Medical examinations may be required where a temporary visa applicant indicates that during their stay in Australia they expect to incur medical costs, require treatment, need a follow up for their medical conditions and/or they require assistance with mobility or care due to a medical condition.

Visa applicants must answer yes to these questions if, while in Australia they:

- are likely to require any care in hospital regardless of whether they will be covering the cost
- will require medications they are not bringing with them
- intend to undergo any medical procedure including exploratory, dental or cosmetic procedures, regardless of whether they intend to pay for the procedure.

Visa applicants should answer no to these questions if while in Australia they are intending to:

- receive alternative therapies, such as aromatherapy or massage and cover own costs
- continue physiotherapy arranged with a clinic in Australia and cover own costs
- continue drug treatment for HIV, Opioid Substitution Therapy or another condition and will be bringing sufficient medication for their stay
- consult with a specialist about their condition and cover own costs of these appointments.

For more information on bringing medications to Australia please visit the Department of Health's website.

See: Advice for travellers bringing medications into Australia

[link to <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/general-guidance-for-travellers-bringing-medicines-to-and-from-australia>]

Temporary visa applicants who intend to work as, or study to be, a doctor, dentist, nurse or paramedic while in Australia will need to complete medical examinations which include tests for blood borne viruses including HIV and Hepatitis B/C, as well as a chest x-ray.

How to complete health examinations

Where required, the department's visa processing staff will ask visa applicants to complete the appropriate health examination(s). It is essential that all questions are answered honestly when completing the health examination forms. Depending on the visa applicant's circumstances and health status, the following health examinations may be requested:

- a chest x-ray **See:** Radiological report on chest x-ray of an applicant for an Australian visa [link to www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/160.pdf]
- a medical examination **See:** Medical examination for an Australian visa [link to www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/26.pdf]

The medical examination may include an eye test, hearing test, urine test, mental acuity test, blood test and/or HIV test. The cost of any medical examinations will be the responsibility of the visa applicant.

Health examinations are undertaken by an approved panel physician or radiologist. The department will not accept health examinations completed by doctors who have not been approved by the department. Visit the department's website for a list of approved physicians.

See: Immigration panel physicians [link to <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/panel-doctors/>]

For further information about medical examination requirements, visit the department's website.

See: Health requirement for temporary entry to Australia

[link to <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1163i.pdf>]

The panel physician or radiologist will not advise visa applicants if they have met the visa health requirement at the time of health examination. The results of health examinations will be sent to the department where a decision is made whether the health requirement is met. Additional examinations, for example reports from a specialist, may be required before a decision can be made.

Privacy

The department respects your privacy and abides by the information privacy principles contained in the *Privacy Act 1988*. Information on privacy in the department is available on the website.

See: Safeguarding your personal information [link to www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/993i.pdf]

Frequently asked questions for AIDS 2014 conference participants

Q1. Will having Tuberculosis (TB) prevent a visa being granted or travel to Australia?

A visa cannot lawfully be granted to an applicant with active TB. This is because the Australian Government has determined that active TB is a public health risk. Generally, people with active TB must complete a course of treatment and be reassessed whether they meet the visa health requirement.

People arriving in Australia are also asked on the incoming passenger card if they have TB. If you've indicated that you do have TB, you will be referred to an immigration officer for interview to discuss your treatment and whether you are taking or carrying medication.

If your visa has been granted and you later discover you have active TB, you must inform the department. You will not be able to travel until you have completed TB treatment.

Q2. Will being HIV positive prevent a visa being granted or travel to Australia?

People who are HIV positive can visit Australia as temporary residents or stay permanently.

Visitor visa applicants who have indicated in their visa application that during their stay in Australia they intend to seek medical treatment, follow up of their HIV condition or need to supplement their medication will be requested to complete a medical examination. The results of this medical examination will be assessed by the department's Medical Officer of the Commonwealth to determine if the likely costs of their health care and community services during their stay in Australia will be significant.

Generally, visitors with HIV who intend to stay in Australia for less than three months are not likely to incur significant health care and community services costs during their stay and will usually be able to meet the health requirements for a visitor visa. More information about the significant health cost threshold is available at the department's website.

See: Significant costs and services in short supply

[Link to <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/health-requirements/significant-costs-services-short-supply.htm>]

Q3. Are medical examinations required for visitors who are HIV positive?

In most cases, visitors who are HIV positive and intend to stay in Australia for less than three months do not need to complete any medical examinations.