



## Using a migration agent in Australia

### What is a migration agent?

A migration agent is a person who can:

- advise on immigration matters
- help you to prepare and lodge an application
- deal with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (the department) on your behalf, usually for a fee.

### Do I need to use a migration agent?

No, you do not need to use a migration agent to prepare and lodge an application with the department.

However, if you do not feel confident lodging an application or if your case is complex, you may wish to use a registered migration agent.

### Choosing a registered migration agent

Migration agents operating in Australia must be registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA).

To find a registered migration agent, search the Register of Migration Agents on the Office of the MARA website at [www.mara.gov.au](http://www.mara.gov.au)

### What is the cost?

There are no set fees for their services. Information on average fee ranges is available at [www.mara.gov.au](http://www.mara.gov.au)

### Why use a registered migration agent?

Registered migration agents are required to:

- have a sound knowledge of migration law and practice
- act professionally and in a timely manner
- abide by the migration agent's Code of Conduct
- have appropriate insurance
- pass character tests (including criminal history checks).

If you have a problem with a registered agent, you can make a complaint to the Office of the MARA.

The procedure on how to make a complaint is available at [www.mara.gov.au](http://www.mara.gov.au)

### Why shouldn't I use an unregistered person?

Unregistered people may:

- be unaware of current legislation and procedures
- provide incorrect advice
- make false claims about your chances of success.

Unregistered people are breaking the law and penalties of up to 10 years jail can apply.

To report an unregistered person telephone 1800 009 623 (free of charge). Information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

### What if I can't afford a registered migration agent?

Some community organisations may be able to help you. You can find an organisation close to you by entering your address or postcode in the 'Settlement Services Locator' at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

### Can anyone else help me?

The following people may also help you if they do not charge a fee:

- your spouse, parent, brother, sister, child or adopted child
- sponsors and nominators
- parliamentarians and their staff
- officials whose duties include providing immigration assistance (for example, Legal Aid providers)
- members of diplomatic missions, consular posts or international organisations.

### Further information

#### About visa options

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
[www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

Phone: 131 881

#### About registered migration agents

Office of the MARA [www.mara.gov.au](http://www.mara.gov.au)

Phone: 1300 22 62 72 or 02 9078 3552