



Frequently asked questions

Second stage partner visa processing

What visa do I currently hold?

Your visa subclass is written on the top right-hand side of your visa label and in the letter you received when you were granted your temporary partner visa. The visa you hold is determined by where you were when you lodged your application (in or outside Australia) and whether you applied on the basis of a spouse or interdependent relationship.

The following table outlines the permanent visa you will be assessed for based on the visa you currently hold:

Your current visa is:		You are applying for:	
Spouse (Temporary) (lodged in Australia)	Subclass 820	Spouse (Residence)	Subclass 801
Interdependency (Temporary) (lodged in Australia)	Subclass 826	Interdependency (Residence)	Subclass 814
Spouse (Provisional) (lodged outside Australia)	Subclass 309	Spouse (Migrant)	Subclass 100
Interdependency (Provisional) (lodged outside Australia)	Subclass 310	Interdependency (Migrant)	Subclass 110
<i>Referred to as temporary partner visas</i>		<i>Referred to as permanent partner visas</i>	

Where will the second stage of my partner visa application be processed?

When you applied for your temporary partner visa, you also made an application for your permanent partner visa. If you initially lodged your application at an immigration office overseas on or after 1 October 2006, it will be transferred to Australia and processed by the Canberra Second Stage Partner Processing Centre (CSSPPC). If you initially lodged your application in Australia on or after 1 October 2006, it will be processed by the Melbourne Second Stage Partner Processing Centre (MSSPPC).

Where should I send my documents?

Where you should send your documents depends on where your visa application was lodged and whether your date of eligibility is before, on or after 1 October 2008. (Your date of eligibility is generally determined as two years from the date you lodged your combined application.)

Place of application lodgement	Application lodgement date	Processing office
Immigration office in Australia	Before 1 October 2006	Nearest state or territory office
Immigration office in Australia	On or after 1 October 2006	MSSPPC
Immigration office overseas	Before 1 October 2006	Nearest state, territory or overseas office
Immigration office overseas	On or after 1 October 2006	CSSPPC*

* If the CSSPPC determines that you are residing outside Australia at the time of assessment for your permanent partner visa application, your application will be sent to your nearest Australian immigration office overseas for processing.

If your date of eligibility is before 1 October 2008, you should have received a letter from the department outlining what information you needed to provide. If you have not yet received your letter, you should phone the general enquiries line on 13 18 81.

If your date of eligibility is on or after 1 October 2008 and you have received a letter requesting further documentation, depending on where your application was initially lodged (see previous), you should send requested documents to the CSSPPC or the MSSPPC.

All documents for the CSSPPC should be sent to:

Canberra Second Stage Partner Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Citizenship
GPO Box 717
Canberra City ACT 2601.

All documents for the MSSPPC should be sent to:

Second Stage Spouse Team
Department of Immigration and Citizenship
GPO Box 241
Melbourne VIC 3001.

What are the steps in assessing eligibility for a permanent partner visa?

There are four main areas in the assessment process:

1. Assessing if you are still living in a genuine and continuing relationship (married spouse, de facto spouse or interdependent partner) with your partner (usually your sponsor) .
2. Assessing eligibility of any children who are also included in the permanent partner application and that relevant custody criteria are met.
3. Character checks.
4. Health checks.

How long will it take to process the second stage of my partner visa application?

Our service standards for processing permanent partner visas are **six to eight months**. These service standards are indicative only. We aim to process at least 75 per cent of cases in this time. Individual cases may be decided in longer or shorter periods, depending on a range of factors. You can help us to process your application more quickly by providing all documentation on time and fully completed.

What information about my relationship do I need to provide?

We recognise that all relationships are different. The letter you receive from the department requesting further documents will outline what information you need to provide about your relationship.

Should I provide originals or copies of documents?

Police certificates, medical reports and statutory declarations must be originals. Personal documents (such as marriage certificates, birth certificates, passports, wills) must be **certified as true copies** by a person before whom a statutory declaration can be made, such as a Justice of the Peace. You can provide photocopies of all other information.

Should I provide translation of documents not in English?

Documents not in English must be accompanied by an original English translation completed by a translator accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). Accredited translators can be found in the Yellow Pages telephone book or www.naati.com.au.

How do I include my child(ren) in the application (subclass 445 visa holder)?

Any child who was not included in your application before you were granted your temporary partner visa must be the holder of a Dependent Child (subclass 445) visa to be added to your permanent partner visa application. Once the subclass 445 visa has been granted, Form 1002 (*Application by a subclass 445 dependent child for a permanent partner visa*) must be submitted to the office where your application is being processed. Separate applications need to be lodged for each child.

See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1002.pdf

Note: Form 1002 must be lodged before a decision is made on the parent's permanent partner visa application. Failure to do so may result in the child becoming unlawful if they are in Australia. A child cannot be added to the parent's permanent partner visa application after it has been decided.

What if my relationship with the sponsor has ended?

If your relationship is no longer continuing, you must notify the office processing your application (or your nearest immigration office) immediately in writing. Your case officer will then contact you and advise you of the next steps.

How do I appoint a migration agent or authorised recipient?

If you have previously used a migration agent and do not wish to continue to do so, please advise the department in writing. If you wish to appoint a migration agent or authorised person to act on your behalf and receive communication from the department, you will need to authorise the department in writing. You can appoint a migration agent by completing Form 956 (*Appointment of a migration agent or exempt agent or other authorised recipient*), which is available on our website.

See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/956.pdf

Will I need new health or overseas police checks?

You would have provided health and overseas police checks to be granted your temporary partner visa. These checks are usually valid for only 12 months from the date of issue. In some circumstances, the department will require you to undergo new checks. See below for more details.

Do I need a National Police Check?

If you will have lived in Australia for more than 12 months by the time your application is ready for second stage partner visa assessment, you may still be asked to provide a National Police Check certificate. This information also applies to any dependants aged over 17 years included in your application. Any dependant aged over 17 years who has lived in Australia for a total period of more than 12 months in the last 10 years must also undertake a National Police Check.

Have you lived in Australia for a total of more than 12 months in the last 10 years?

<input type="checkbox"/>	No →	You do not need to undertake a National Police Check
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes →	You must undertake a National Police Check. You should complete the form and follow the instructions provided on the AFP website. See: www.afp.gov.au/business/national_police_checks

Please note: National Police Check forms must be sent directly to the AFP and not to the department. If the request is complete (including the fee), the AFP will send a National Police Check certificate back to you. You should then forward this to the department with the rest of your documentation.

Do I need an overseas police check?

You may need a new overseas police check certificate if you have returned to a country for an accumulated period of more than two months since you obtained an initial clearance.

Have you returned to a country for an accumulated period of more than two months since you obtained an initial clearance?

<input type="checkbox"/>	No →	You do not need a new overseas police check
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes →	Please complete travel details on the <i>Checklist for 2nd stage partner visa processing</i> that the department sends you when eligible for assessment of your permanent partner visa. You must provide details of where, when and how long you were in each country. Your case officer will then advise you if an overseas police check is required

Do I need a new health check?

Have you developed any significant medical condition, or visited a high risk country for more than 12 months or a very high risk country for more than three months cumulatively, since you were granted temporary partner visa?

<input type="checkbox"/>	No →	You do not need a new health check
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes →	Please complete travel details on the <i>Checklist for 2nd stage partner visa processing</i> that the department will send you when you are eligible for assessment of your permanent partner visa. You must provide details of where, when and how long you were in each country. If applicable, please also provide a brief statement advising of any significant medical condition you have developed. Your case officer will then advise you if a new health check is required

More information, including definitions of risk countries, is available on the department's website on Forms 1071i (*Health requirement for permanent entry to Australia*) and 1163i (*Health requirement for temporary entry to Australia*).

See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1071i.pdf

See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1163i.pdf

What if I am the holder of a New Zealand passport?

If applicants travel and re-enter Australia with a New Zealand passport after the grant of the temporary partner visa, it is possible that they will be granted a Special Category (subclass 444) visa on the re-entry. This is because an application for a Special Category visa is deemed to be made on presentation of a passenger card and a New Zealand passport to an immigration officer at an Australian airport.

Please note: The grant of a Special Category visa on re-entry to Australia will cease the temporary partner visa and, as a consequence, you will not be eligible for the grant of the permanent partner visa after the two year period. To prevent this from happening, it is important that on arrival you advise the immigration officer at the airport that you hold a temporary partner visa. Applicants should also advise the officer that they do not require a Special Category visa. This should be done on each re-entry to Australia while holding a temporary partner visa.