

# Getting help with your visa application

## FAST FACTS

### Getting help with your application to stay in Australia as a refugee – if you came by boat between 13 August 2012 and 31 December 2013

#### HOW WILL A MIGRATION AGENT HELP ME?

All migration agents should:

- Explain what kind of visas you can apply for (a Temporary Protection Visa or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa) and give you advice about the best option
- Explain how to apply for a visa in Australia
- Explain what information and documents you need to prepare for your visa application
- Communicate with you in plain English.
- Explain risks and issues with your application
- Be professional and honest with you at all times
- Answer any reasonable question you have when you call, email or go to an appointment

Some people need a lot of help with lodging and processing their visa application ('full service'), and some people may only need a little bit of help ('limited service'). This is explained more below.

#### WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

Migration agents must be registered with the Office of Migration Agents Registration Authority to give you advice.

See [www.mara.gov.au/](http://www.mara.gov.au/)

Only use a registered migration agent.

On the next page you will find a list of migration lawyers who are experienced in helping people with refugee applications. Most of these migration agents are also lawyers. Lawyers who currently work in this area migration law must also be registered as a migration agent.

#### HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

A migration agent can charge you to help you with your visa application. These are called 'legal fees' or 'professional fees.' You might have to pay other money (costs) including the money to apply for a visa (\$35), for an interpreter or translator if needed, or other out of pocket expenses.

A migration agent must give you a 'costs agreement.' This document is your legal contract with your migration agent and explains:

- the money that you must pay
- when you must pay it, and
- what you can expect from your agent.

The migration agents on the list below have agreed, depending on their workload and duties, to help with some Temporary Protection Visa or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa applications.

These migration agents have estimated their legal fees for helping you with your visa application. They may allow you to pay their legal fees over time (payment plan).

#### MAKING AN APPOINTMENT

To get help from one of these migration agents, you will first need to make an appointment to talk to them. When making the appointment you will need to:

- Say that you wish to apply for a Temporary Protection Visa or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa;
- Confirm the date you arrived by boat;
- Bring with you any identification documents you may have;
- Bring with you any letters or documents you have received from the Department of Immigration;
- Bring with you any other documents you may have that are relevant to your case.

This appointment will cost **\$110 (including tax)**

In the first appointment, the migration agent will:

- Ask you questions to find out about your case;
- Give you advice about your chances of getting a visa;
- Tell you whether or not they can help you; and
- Tell you what their legal fees are.

After the first appointment, you can choose whether or not you want to use this migration agent and whether you can afford to pay this money.

## ESTIMATED LEGAL COSTS

The estimated costs of getting help depend whether you need a lot of help with lodging and processing your visa application ('full service'), or a little bit of help with your visa application ('limited service'). You can choose what service you need from a migration agent.

### Full Service

If you want a migration agent to help you with the whole visa application (until the time the Department makes a decision about your application), the migration agent should:

- Meet with you and give you advice about the chances of getting a refugee visa.
- Ask the Department of Immigration to get a copy of your documents (this is called a Freedom of Information request).
- Fill in or check the Department's application forms for you, using the information you have provided.
- Contact the Department of Immigration or other organisations to discuss or ask questions about your application if appropriate to do so
- Make sure the Department of Immigration gets information when they have asked for it
- Help you to explain the reasons why you cannot return to your country.
- Give your visa application and documents to the Department of Immigration
- Go to your interview with the Department of Immigration with you.
- Tell you about the decision on your application and explain what you may need to do next.

The migration agents on this list have estimated that their legal fees for helping with all of the above services would normally **be up to \$3500 (including tax)**.

If your visa application is more complicated (for example if you have family members on your application, you have problems proving your identity, you have a character or medical problem or issues with your Bridging Visa) your migration agent may need to charge you more money because of the extra work they will need to do. Your migration agent will tell you how much it will cost if extra work is required.

### Limited Service

If you only want a little help, a migration agent can meet with you and give you advice about the chances of getting a Temporary Protection Visa or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa.

The migration agents on this list might help with a limited service, for example:

- Attending the interview with you; or
- Helping you to lodge the application in your own name; or
- Check any forms you have filled out or statements you have written, and suggest changes.

An estimate for legal fees for this limited service will be provided in the first appointment.

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	LOCATION
Abode Migration Lawyers	0422 158857 0401 693554	info@abodemigration.com.au	Melbourne CBD or Springvale
Carina Ford Immigration Lawyers	(03) 9391 0677	office@carinafordlawyers.com.au	Footscray
Clothier Anderson & Associates	(03) 9347 4022	info@clothieranderson.com.au	Carlton
Erskine Rodan & Associates	(03) 9329 8744	info@erskinerodan.com.au	North Melbourne
Fragomen	(03) 9613 9333	FVaress@Fragomen.com	Melbourne CBD
Hanna Jackson Lawyers	(03) 9077 6362	info@hjlawyers.com.au	Coburg
Kerdo Legal	(03) 9710 1170 0408 997013	admin@migration-lawyers.net.au	Preston and Dandenong
PB & B Immigration Lawyers	(03) 9381 0770 0401 054011 & 0411 612247	enquiries@pbblawyers.com.au	Brunswick
WLW Migration Lawyers	(03) 8630 3380	info@wllawyers.com	Melbourne CBD

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