



Australian Government

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

STAYING SAFE ON YOUR PATH TO AUSTRALIA.

The risk of falling for a visa scam is extremely high. Visa scammers are everywhere. They will take your money, steal your personal information and leave you without a valid visa application. The information here is to help you understand how visa scams work and highlight the common tactics scammers use to trick you.



Are there any shortcuts to getting a visa to Australia?

No. You have to go through the official visa pathways, no matter what anyone says.

Do not only rely on social media posts, WhatsApp messages or word-of-mouth in your community for visa advice. Following the wrong advice can risk your chances of getting an Australian visa.

Don't trust any information you read or receive without checking it through official Australian government sources, which have the latest visa information. These are:

- The [Australian Department of Home Affairs](#).
- The [Australian High Commission in Pakistan](#).
- Registered Australian migration agents listed on the Office of Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA) [website](#).



What happens if I ignore the conditions of my visa in Australia?

If you don't follow the rules of your visa (by overstaying, working on a Visitor visa, or breaking other visa conditions) you risk serious consequences, including:

- Detention and removal from Australia.
- Paying back the cost of your removal (which can be thousands of dollars).
- Being refused a future visa to Australia for both you and your family.
- Impacting future visa applications to other countries.



What if I lie or provide false documents in my visa application?

Providing false information or documents in a visa application is a serious offence. It can lead to:

- Large fines.
- Visa cancellation, detention and removal from Australia.
- A ban from Australia for up to 10 years.
- Being refused future visas to Australia and other countries.



What should I do if someone offers to help me "switch visas" or "stay longer in Australia"?

Walk away.

These are common scam tactics.

- Only use legitimate migration agents.
- Always know what kind of visa you're applying for, even if someone else is applying for you.
- Do not pay anyone without checking their credentials.
- Never lie in a visa application, it could affect future visa applications to Australia and other countries for you and your family.
- If someone tries to scam you, report it to the local police.
- You can also make an anonymous report to [Australia's Border Watch Online Report](#).





Is it true I can apply for a Protection visa to stay longer and work?

Protection visas are for people who are seeking asylum in Australia because they face a real risk of significant harm or persecution in their home country. Protection visas are not a way to stay and work in Australia. Fake Protection visa claims are now processed fast and quickly refused. If you are refused a Protection visa:

- You and your family may find it harder to visit Australia in the future.
- Your refusal will stay on your immigration record for life.
- It can impact future visa applications to other countries.
- You may face large fines and jail time if your application included false or misleading information and documents.



Where can I find a registered migration agent?

Registered Australian migration agents are listed on the Office of Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA) [website](#). These agents are subject to knowledge, character and professional requirements, and they must comply with a Code of Conduct when providing visa advice. You can also seek visa advice from an [Australian legal practitioner](#).

**Don't risk your money or your future.
YOUR VISA. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

How can I tell if I'm being scammed?

Look for these warning signs. Scammers:

- contact you via social media or messaging apps like WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger
- promise a **guaranteed** Australian visa
- ask for large upfront payments
- charge more than the visa price listed on the [Australian Department of Home Affairs website](#)
- pressure you to act quickly
- tell you not to discuss it with other people
- ask you to hand over your passport or other identity documents
- tell you to lie in your application
- don't explain what visa you're applying for
- refuse to share your visa application with you in the Australian Department of Home Affairs portal (known as [ImmiAccount](#))
- say you can work in Australia on a Visitor visa (this is illegal)
- promise you can switch visas after arriving
- advise you to take an indirect or unusual route to Australia, such as flying to a third country or taking a boat to avoid checkpoints
- claim to be registered in Australia but they don't have a Migration Agent Registration Number (MARN) and aren't listed on the [OMARA website](#).

Their goal is to take your money while putting your visa and your future at serious risk.

If it seems too good to be true, it's a scam!



Find out more

pakistan.embassy.gov.au/ISLM/Visa_Scams.html