



Visa Evidence Charge and travelling without a visa

Frequently asked questions for visa holders

What is the Visa Evidence Charge (VEC)?

The Australian Government does not require visa holders to have a visa label in their passport. From 24 November 2012, if you still need or request a label you will need to pay a fee for it. This cost for a visa label is called the VEC.

Do I need a visa label?

You do not need a visa label when you travel to Australia.

The Australian Government does not require a person holding a valid Australian visa to have a label in their passport to travel to, enter or remain in Australia.

Governments of other countries may require you to have a visa label to transit through or to depart their country. In this case, you can request a visa label. It is your responsibility to confirm other countries' transit or exit requirements before travel to Australia. The Australian Government cannot advise on other countries' requirements.

How will I know I have been issued a visa if I don't have a visa label?

People who receive an Australian visa are issued with a visa grant notice that will explain the conditions of the visa including period of validity and entry requirements. It is advised that you carry this visa grant notice for your own reference.

How will visas be checked at the airport without a visa label?

When you check-in to fly to Australia, airline staff will electronically confirm that you have a valid visa to travel to Australia before you board the plane.

How do I check my visa status and entitlements?

In Australia, VEVO (Visa Entitlement Verification Online) is a secure and free internet service available all day, everyday. It allows you to check your visa details online and provides more information about your visa conditions and entitlements than a label. You will be able to confirm your visa type, visa grant and expiry dates, period of stay, visa grant number, entries allowed and any conditions that apply to your visa.

Using VEVO is a secure and effective method to confirm the current status of your visa. For more information, visit www.immi.gov.au/vevo.

Can organisations access VEVO to check my status and entitlements?

With your permission, employers, labour hire companies, roads and traffic authorities, education institutions, banks and other organisations can check your visa status and entitlements online. Other government agencies, such as Medicare and Centrelink, can also check your visa status. These organisations do not need to see a visa label, they can check your visa status and entitlements online.

Does an Australian employer need to see a visa label?

No. With your permission, Australian employers can access VEVO to check your visa status, including if you have the right to work in Australia.

To view your visa status, Australian employers need to register to use VEVO. Information for employers can be found on the department's website at www.immi.gov.au/vevo.

Why is there a charge for visa labels?

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship continues to be a leader in providing services to its clients online. As a result, more and more of the department's services no longer involve the physical exchange of paper forms, letters or visa labels.

Visa labels in particular, have not been required in Australia for some time. Labels are no longer routinely printed and physically placed in passports. Instead, online checking provides more timely and secure information as to the entitlements of a visa holder. The charge for a visa label has been introduced to recover the costs of this discretionary service.

If my application for a visa was lodged and a visa was granted before 24 November 2012, but I request to have a label after 24 November 2012, will there be a charge?

Yes. The charge for a visa label will be payable for every request for a visa label issued after 24 November 2012, regardless of when the application was lodged or visa granted.

When is the visa label charge applicable?

If you still need a visa label, you can only request and pay for it if you have a current Australian visa. Regardless of when your visa application was lodged, or your visa granted, anyone who requests a visa label will be charged.

How much will a label cost?

The cost of a visa label is AUD70.

Do I need to pay for a label for each member of my family?

Yes. There is a charge for each visa label requested.

If I lose my passport, would I need to pay to get a new label in my replacement passport?

Yes. You will need to pay for each label you request for a current Australian visa only.

Are there exemptions?

Yes. There will be exemptions to the VEC for humanitarian, diplomatic and government sponsored visa applicants. The attachment specifies the visa categories that are exempt from the VEC.

Can I pay for a visa label when I lodge my application?

No. You can only request and pay for a visa label if you have a current Australian visa.

Can somebody else pay on my behalf?

Yes. However, if you are not the visa holder, parent or guardian, you will need to provide written authorisation to request a visa label.

What other countries charge for a visa label?

You will need to look this up or call the relevant consulates. The Australian Government cannot advise on other countries' requirements.

VEC exemptions

The first issue of a label for the below subclasses are exempt from paying the charge. **Note:** A visa holder on this list will only be exempt from the charge the first time a visa label is requested. All further requests will incur a charge for subsequent visa labels.

- Bridging (General) (subclass 050) visa
- Bridging Protection Visa Applicant (subclass 051) visa
- Bridging F (subclass 060) visa
- Bridging (Removal Pending) (subclass 070) visa
- Refugee (subclass 200) visa
- In-country Special Humanitarian (subclass 201) visa
- Global Special Humanitarian (subclass 202) visa
- Emergency Rescue (subclass 203) visa
- Woman at Risk (subclass 204) visa
- Emergency (Permanent Visa Applicant) (subclass 302) visa
- Emergency (Temporary Visa Applicant) (subclass 303) visa
- Government Agreement (subclass 406) visa
- Foreign Government Agency (subclass 415) visa
- Special Program (subclass 416) visa - where the visa holder is participating in the seasonal worker program
- Kosovar Safe Haven (Temporary) (subclass 448) visa
- Humanitarian Stay (Temporary) (subclass 449) visa
- Postgraduate Research Sector (subclass 574) visa
- Border (subclass 773) visa
- Temporary (Humanitarian Concern) (subclass 786) visa
- Territorial Asylum (subclass 800) visa
- Resolution of Status (subclass 851) visa
- Witness Protection Trafficking Permanent (subclass 852) visa
- Protection (subclass 866) visa
- Criminal Justice Entry visa
- Criminal Justice Stay visa
- Student visas granted under:
 - Australian government funded scholarship
 - AusAID sponsorship
 - Approved Scheme students
 - Department of Defence approved scheme sponsorship

The following groups of people may receive visa evidence without having to pay the VEC.

- Temporary Work (International Relations) (subclass 403) visa
- Diplomatic (Temporary) (subclass 995) visa
- Visa holder acting as a representative of a foreign government or a person to whom privileges and immunities are, or are expected to be, accorded under the *International Organisations (Privileges and Immunities) Act 1963* or the *Overseas Missions (Privileges and Immunities) Act 1995*