



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

The Health Requirement

The health requirement is prescribed in the Migration Regulation and applies equally to all applicants from all countries, although the types of health examinations required will vary according to the circumstances of each applicant.

The Health requirement is designed to:

- minimise public health and safety risks to the Australian community
- contain public expenditure on health and community services, including Australian social security benefits, allowances and pensions
- maintain access of Australian residents to health and other community services.

Health Checks Required

• Permanent visa applicants

All applicants for permanent visas (except protective visas which have a different regulation) are assessed against the health requirement. Even if the applicant's partner and dependants are not included in the visa application, they must still be assessed against the health requirement.

Applicants for a permanent visa will be asked to undergo a medical examination, an X-ray if 11 years of age or older and a HIV test if 15 years of age or older, as well as any additional tests requested by the Medical Officer of the Commonwealth (MOC).

• Temporary visa applicants

Applicants for temporary visas may be required to undergo a medical examination, chest X-ray and/or other tests depending on how long they propose to stay in Australia, their intended activities in Australia, their country's risk level for tuberculosis (TB) and other factors.

The department provides applicants with details of the health checks required.

The Medical Process

Applicants will be required to attend a panel physician approved by the Department as indicated on the website. They may be graded A (no significant finding) or B (significant health finding). Clients attending panel in "gazetted" countries for local clearance, if graded A, can be automatically cleared unless additional comments are made. All other medicals are sent to a Medical Officer of the Commonwealth for review.

The MOC will provide an opinion to the visa delegate. This may be Meets, Meets with Conditions, Does not Meet or defer the case for additional information.

The Decision Process

For those applicants who require a medical and/or X-ray examination and a significant medical condition is identified, a MOC will provide the department with an opinion on whether the health requirement has been met.

Current as at July 2013.

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Under the Migration Regulations, officers deciding visa applications must accept the opinion of the MOC. Only TB is mentioned in migration legislation as precluding the grant of a visa however the applicant is given the opportunity to undergo treatment in most cases. Other health conditions are assessed on the potential cost and impact on the Australian community resulting from the possible use of health and community services.

Some of the visa subclasses within the family and humanitarian migration schemes, as well as a limited number of onshore permanent skilled visas, have a waiver component. The waiver cannot be exercised where the visa applicant is assessed by a MOC as representing a risk to public health or safety in Australia.

If the applicant does not meet the health requirement and the waiver is unavailable or not exercised, then under the Migration Regulations the application must be refused.

Specific Diseases or Tests

- **Tuberculosis (TB)**

TB is a serious disease which has been declared an epidemic and a global emergency. Evidence of active or previous TB will not, in itself, adversely impact on the outcome of the visa application.

Where X-rays show possible evidence of TB, the applicant will be asked to undergo more specific tests to establish whether or not active TB is present.

If active TB is found, Australian migration law does not allow a visa to be granted until the person has undergone treatment and been declared free of active TB. If the X-ray shows evidence of previous but now inactive TB the applicant may be asked to sign an undertaking at the time of visa grant.

By signing the undertaking, the applicant agrees to contact the Health Undertaking Service on arrival in Australia. The applicant also agrees to report for follow-up monitoring to a state or territory health authority, as directed by the Health Undertaking Service.

- **Hepatitis**

Although health authorities consider the risk of hepatitis transmission from newly arrived migrants to be low, screening for hepatitis is mandatory where the applicant is any of the following:

- pregnant
- a child for adoption
- an unaccompanied refugee minor child
- a temporary visa applicant intending to work as, or to study to be, a doctor, nurse, dentist or paramedic in Australia.

Examining doctors or MOCs may also ask an applicant to undergo tests for hepatitis where they consider it necessary. The main factor to be taken into account is the cost of the condition to the Australian community for health care and community services.

- **HIV**

Permanent visa applicants aged 15 years or older must take a HIV test. Permanent applicants less than 15 years old must also take this test if being adopted or there is a history of blood transfusions or other clinical indications. Temporary visa applicants who intend to

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work as, or study to become, a doctor, nurse, dentist or paramedic in Australia are required to take a HIV test.

If the applicant is found to be HIV positive, a decision on whether the applicant meets the health requirement will be made on the same grounds as with any other pre-existing medical condition. The main factor to be taken into account is the cost of the condition to the Australian community for health care and community services.

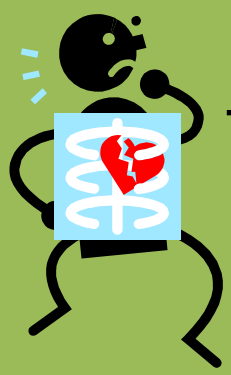
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Client ←

Defer



Assessment required

YES



Panel Doctor

B

NO

A

MOC

Visa Processing Officer

Local Clearance?

NO



Can form opinion?

YES

No additional information

NO

YES

Meets Undertaking Does Not Meet

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