

Mobility: Immigration alert

December 2021



Australia

Flexing the border while reinvigorating skilled migration

Executive summary

After nearly two years of tight restrictions, Australia's international borders were to begin to reopen from 1 December 2021 to welcome greater numbers of skilled migrants. In response to concerns over the Omicron variant of COVID-19 this is delayed until 15 December 2021 and additional targeted restrictions have been imposed.

Supporting economic recovery through skilled migration

EY welcomes the recent gradual resumption of skilled visa processing for applicants in and outside Australia.

Opening the border to skilled workers

From 15 December 2021, *eligible* temporary visa holders fully vaccinated with a [Therapeutic Goods Association recognised vaccine](#), will no longer need to apply for a travel exemption. [Eligible temporary visas](#) include:

- ▶ Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) and subclass 457 visas
- ▶ Subclass 400 Temporary Work visas
- ▶ Various other non-sponsored skilled temporary visas
- ▶ Working holiday, Student, Provisional Family and Humanitarian temporary visas.

Migration Program Planning 2022-23 Consultation

EY has been invited to various forums to contribute our views on reforms to skilled migration. We expect the permanent migration program will be expanded to 200,000 per year, skilled migrants to comprise two thirds of the program and family one third, and that employer sponsored migration will continue to receive priority.

More pathways to permanent residence

New pathways will be created soon for:

- ▶ Short-term stream TSS visa holders in Australia
- ▶ Subclass 457 visa holders in Australia who no longer meet the age requirements
- ▶ Some Hong Kong SAR passport holders in Australia

Occupation lists

EY has long advocated for the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) to be updated and that a new approach to ANZSCO is necessary. We are pleased that some changes have been made to ANZSCO capturing emerging occupations such as cyber security and revising other content. The occupation lists are likely to be amended shortly in response.

International borders remain dynamic

International travel safe zones

Arrangements are in place with New Zealand and Singapore. Arrangements with Japan and Korea are now paused to 15 December 2021. Travellers should check [current details](#).

Restrictions on travel from southern Africa

Travellers who have been in South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Seychelles, Mozambique, or Malawi in the last 14 days are now subject to restrictions:

- ▶ temporary visa holders are not permitted to enter even if they have a travel exemption
- ▶ Australian citizens and permanent residents must enter 14-day hotel quarantine including those fully vaccinated

Flights to Australia from those countries are also suspended. These measures may be short-term. [Current information](#) is available from the Department of Home Affairs.

State and Territory border and quarantine requirements

All travellers should check current [state or territory border and quarantine arrangements](#) including for interstate travel after arriving in Australia.

Arrangements announced for international arrivals according to vaccination status and presence in Omicron exposed African nations in the 14-days before their arrival to the State or Territory			
Destination	Date of Effect	Status	Requirement
Sydney	Time of writing	Fully vaccinated	PCR testing and self-isolate for 72 hours
		Omicron exposed or not fully vaccinated	14-day hotel quarantine
Melbourne	Time of writing	Fully vaccinated	PCR testing and self-isolate for 72 hours
		Omicron exposed or not fully vaccinated	14-day hotel quarantine
Measures for Omicron exposed travellers to be announced			
Brisbane	Time of writing	All arrivals	14-day hotel quarantine
	80% vaccination or from 17 Dec 2021	Fully vaccinated Australian citizen or PR	Likely 14-day home quarantine
		Non-Australian citizen or PR or not fully vaccinated	Likely 14-day hotel quarantine
	90% vaccination likely Jan 2022	Fully vaccinated	No
Not fully vaccinated		Likely 14-day quarantine	
Perth	Time of writing	All arrivals	14-day hotel quarantine
	90% vaccination likely by Feb 2022	Fully vaccinated	No
		Not fully vaccinated	14-day hotel quarantine
Adelaide	Time of writing	Fully vaccinated	14-day quarantine likely at home
		Not fully vaccinated	Entry only permitted if individual exemption, quarantine required
Darwin	Time of writing	Fully vaccinated	7-day home quarantine and remain in approved zone until day 14
		Not fully vaccinated or government facilitated	14-day hotel quarantine
	From 20 Dec 2021	Fully vaccinated	No

Next steps

EY will continue to keep you informed about adjustments to international border restrictions and developments in skilled migration. Contact your EY advisor to discuss any of the issues raised in this alert.

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