



Australian Government

Department of Immigration  
and Multicultural Affairs

## How to apply for grant of Australian citizenship

Form  
**1027i**

Thank you for your interest in Australian citizenship.

The Australian Government welcomes applications from eligible permanent residents who wish to make their commitment to Australia by becoming Australian citizens.

### Your application kit

Your kit contains the following:

#### This form 1027i

Read this information form thoroughly before you apply. It tells you who is eligible and how to apply.

#### Form 124 *Application for grant of Australian citizenship*

A separate form must be completed by each applicant except children under the age of 16 who are being included on their parent's application.

#### Return envelope

The return envelope can be used for mailing your application if you are unable to lodge your application personally (see details in Step 5 on page 3). You need to write the address of your nearest Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (the department) office on the envelope. If you are unsure of the location of your nearest departmental office, visit it on [www.immi.gov.au/info/](http://www.immi.gov.au/info/) or telephone the Citizenship Information Line on 131 880.

#### Electoral enrolment information

This form explains how to enrol to vote in Federal, State, Territory and local government elections once you become an Australian citizen.

### Electronic lodgement

You can apply online at [www.citizen.gov.au](http://www.citizen.gov.au) if you are a permanent resident, in Australia and over 18, if you:

- have travelled in and out of Australia since at least 1990;
- are not eligible to claim a concession or exemption to the full application charge; and
- are not claiming a discretion or exemption of the residence requirements for citizenship.

### Method of payment

Payment must accompany your application and is generally not refunded if the application is unsuccessful. To make a payment, please pay by credit card, debit card or by bank cheque or money order made payable to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. **Please do not pay by cash or personal cheque.** For clients outside Australia, before you make your payment, please contact your nearest Australian mission to find out what methods of payment can be accepted at that mission.

Details of the required fee are outlined in form 990i *Charges* and available from:

- the department's website,  
[www.immi.gov.au/allforms/990i.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/990i.htm)
- in Australia – the Citizenship Information Line,  
telephone 131 880;  
– your nearest office of the department; and
- outside Australia, your nearest Australian mission.

**There is no additional charge for the inclusion of children under the age of 16 years in your application.**

### Fee exemptions

There is no application fee for applicants who have completed 3 months of service with the Australian Defence Forces.

British and Maltese former unaccompanied child migrants who came to Australia between 22 September 1947 and 31 December 1967 under the Commonwealth Child Migration Scheme are not required to pay an application fee.

Evidence of arrival and sponsorship under the Commonwealth Child Migration Scheme will need to be lodged with your application and can be obtained from the Child Migrants Trust in Melbourne or Perth.

For further information refer to information form 1014i *Australian Citizenship — British and Maltese former child migrants (unaccompanied)* or telephone the Citizenship Information Line on 131 880.

### Important

You may already be an Australian citizen if:

- you were a British subject on 25 January 1949 and
  - you arrived in Australia before 26 January 1944;
  - your father became an Australian citizen on 26 January 1949; or
  - you are a woman who was married to an Australian citizen before 26 January 1949.

For further information see form 119 *Application for a certificate of evidence of Australian citizenship*.

If you were born outside Australia and you are the natural child of an Australian parent, you may be eligible for registration as an Australian citizen by descent.

For further information see form 118 *Application for registration of Australian citizenship by descent*.

Continued on the next page ▶

Home page [www.citizenship.gov.au](http://www.citizenship.gov.au)

Citizenship  
information line

Telephone 131 880 during business hours in Australia to speak to an operator (recorded information available outside these hours). If you are outside Australia, please contact your nearest Australian mission.

## Who is eligible

You may be eligible for grant of Australian citizenship if:

- you are a permanent resident of Australia; and
- you have been present in Australia as a permanent resident for a total of at least 2 years in the last 5 years, **including** a total of at least 12 months in the last 2 years; and
- you are able to speak and understand basic English; and
- you understand the nature of the application; and
- you understand the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship; and
- you are of good character; and
- you intend to reside in Australia or maintain a close and continuing association with Australia.

### Exceptions

The requirement for **basic ability in the English language** does not apply to a person aged 50 years or over, or to a person whose ability is affected by a physical or intellectual impairment. If you have an Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Australian Citizenship English Language Record issued by an authorised AMEP provider, you will be required to respond in simple English on aspects of your application.

The requirement to **understand the responsibilities and privileges** does not apply to a person aged 60 years or over, or to a person whose understanding is affected by a physical or intellectual impairment. Also, if you have an Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Australian Citizenship Responsibilities and Privileges Record issued by an authorised AMEP provider, your understanding of the responsibilities and privileges will not be tested at interview.

If you are a permanent resident but have not lived in Australia for the required length of time, the normal **residence requirements** may not apply in certain circumstances. If any of the following apply to you, you should read 'Exceptions to residence requirements' on page 6:

- service in the permanent Australian Defence Forces;
- full-time service in the Australian Reserve Forces;
- a former Australian citizen or a person born in Australia;
- the legally married spouse or widow or widower of an Australian citizen;
- residence outside Australia while engaged in activities beneficial to Australia;
- residence in Australia before the 5 year period prior to this application;
- temporary residence in Australia, where significant hardship or disadvantage will result if Australian citizenship is not granted.

## Overseas police clearances

The following applicants must provide overseas police certificates for each country in which they have lived since grant of a permanent visa:

- people who have resided overseas for 12 months or more since they were granted a permanent residence visa;
- people seeking an exemption to the residence requirements on the basis that they have been engaged overseas in activities beneficial to the interests of Australia.

This requirement does not apply to periods spent overseas before the age of 16 years.

Information about how to obtain police certificates is contained in the form 47P *Character requirements: penal clearance certificates*. Form 47P is available on the department's website [www.immi.gov.au/allforms/](http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/) or by calling the Citizenship Information Line on 131 880.

## New Zealand citizens

New Zealand citizens who have not applied for and been granted a permanent residence visa may be eligible to apply for the grant of Australian citizenship if they are present in Australia as the holder of a Special Category visa, **and:**

- they were in Australia on 26 February 2001; **or**
- they were not in Australia on 26 February 2001, but
  - they had been in Australia for a period of, or periods that total, not less than 1 year in the 2 years immediately before 26 February 2001; or
  - they have been issued with a Centrelink certificate stating they were residing in Australia on a particular date. (For further details please contact Centrelink.)

New Zealand citizens aged 16 or over, who meet these criteria must include with their application a statement from the New Zealand Ministry of Justice that they do not have a criminal record, or a copy of any criminal record they may have, in New Zealand. Those people who arrived in Australia before the age of 16 and have not resided in New Zealand since taking up residence in Australia, need not provide it.

Information on how to obtain the criminal record statement, or a copy of your criminal record, in New Zealand, is set out on the New Zealand Ministry of Justice web page at [www.courts.govt.nz/privacy/](http://www.courts.govt.nz/privacy/) or may be obtained from the Ministry by phoning 64 (4) 9188800, or faxing 64 (4) 9188974.

## Children

**Note:** A 'responsible parent' of a child is:

- a parent, unless he or she has no parental responsibility because of orders made by the Family Court of Australia; or
- any person having responsibility over the child because of an order made by the Family Court; or
- any person who has guardianship or custody of the child under a law in force in a State or Territory or a foreign country.

### Children over 16 years

Children aged 16 or 17 should apply for Australian citizenship in their own right, but require the consent of a responsible parent.

### Children under 16 years

Children under 16 years may become Australian citizens by having their name included on an application for Australian citizenship made by a responsible parent (at no additional charge).

The children become Australian citizens at the same time as their responsible parent. Each child included on an application form will receive their own certificate of Australian citizenship.

Children under 16 years who are included on their parent's application are welcome to attend the citizenship ceremony with their parents, but they are not required to do so.

## Adopted children

### Where an adoption occurs in Australia

Since 22 November 1984, where an adoption order is made under Australian law after the child arrives in Australia as a permanent resident, and at least one adoptive parent is an Australian citizen, the child will acquire Australian citizenship automatically on the date of adoption. An application for Australian citizenship is not required, but such a person may apply for a Certificate of Evidence of Australian Citizenship (see form 119 *Application for a certificate of evidence of Australian citizenship*).

### Where a full adoption occurs overseas

Where a full adoption occurs and is completed overseas, an application may be made for the grant of Australian citizenship. To be eligible for the grant of citizenship at least one adoptive parent must be an Australian citizen and the adopted child must hold an adoption visa or any other permanent visa.

## How to apply

### STEP 1

#### Complete your application form.

Make sure you:

- answer all the questions you are required to answer;
- give correct details – you may not be able to change them later;
- initial any alterations you make to the information you provide on the form; and
- sign and date the form.

### STEP 2

Have the **Proof of identity** declaration completed by an eligible person (see details on page 9 of form 124 *Application for grant of Australian citizenship*).

### STEP 3

Make sure you have all the required **personal documents** (see the document checklist on page 4).

Remember they must be original documents, not photocopies.

### STEP 4

#### Application charge

Each application form must be accompanied by an application charge. For details on current application charges, telephone the Citizenship Information Line on 131 880.

Make sure you check your eligibility before you apply, because your application charge will not be refunded if you are not eligible.

You can pay by credit card, debit card, bank cheque or money order. (See page 1, Method of payment).

Your cheque or money order should be made out to 'Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs'.

If your application is refused, your application charge is not refundable.

## Charge concession

Holders of a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) or Health Care Card (HCC) receiving the following payments are eligible for a charge concession:

#### Centrelink

- Age (PCC, Code AGE or AGE BLIND);
- Wife (PCC, Code WFA, WFD or WFW);
- Disability Support (PCC, Code DSP or DSP BLIND);
- Carer Payment (PCC, Code CAR);
- Mature Age Allowance (PCC, Code MAA or NMA);
- Special Benefit (HCC, Code SL)<sup>1</sup>;
- Older Benefit recipients (over 60 years of age and in receipt of Widow Allowance, Parenting Payment, Newstart Allowance, Sickness Allowance, Partner Allowance or Special Benefit, for more than 9 months) (PCC, Codes WDA, PPP, NSA, SAL, PTA or SPL);
- Partner Allowance (HCC, Code PA)<sup>2</sup>.

Your Centrelink card with the relevant payment code is generally sufficient evidence that you qualify for a charge concession. However, recipients of Special Benefit or Partner Allowance must also provide a letter from Centrelink confirming that they meet the requirements below.

- <sup>1</sup> Must have been receiving Special Benefit for at least 46 of the previous 52 weeks.
- <sup>2</sup> Must be the partner of a recipient of Age, Wife, or Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Mature Age Allowance, or long term Special Benefit.

#### Department of Veterans' Affairs

- Age Service;
- Invalidity Service;
- Income Support Supplement;
- Partner Service Pension.

A letter from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, confirming that you are the recipient of one of the above payments, is required in order to receive a concession.

#### Second Applications

If you previously applied for grant of Australian citizenship and were unsuccessful solely on the basis of not meeting the residence requirements, you do not have to again pay the amount previously paid if you reapply within 3 months of becoming residentially qualified.

### STEP 5

#### Lodging your application

You may lodge your application by mail, electronically or personally.

#### Lodging by mail

Place the following into your return envelope, your:

- completed application form; and
- application charge (do not send cash);

and mail it to your nearest office of the department.

The department will contact you about the compulsory interview. You must bring to the interview your photograph and other personal details as detailed elsewhere in this form.

Continued on the next page ►

## Lodging electronically

To lodge an application electronically you must access the department's website [www.citizenship.gov.au](http://www.citizenship.gov.au) and complete the electronic application form.

The department will contact you about the compulsory interview. You must bring to the interview your photograph, other personal details and the completed form 1195 as detailed elsewhere in this form.

## Lodging personally

If you live outside a capital city, please lodge your application by mail.

If you live in a capital city, you should call the Citizenship Information line on 131 880 **before you lodge your application** to arrange an appointment for your compulsory interview.

When lodging your application, you must bring with you, your:

- completed application form;
- personal documents;
- photograph (see details);
- application charge.

If you are unsure of the location of your nearest departmental office, call the Citizenship Information Line on 131 880.

## What happens next

### The interview

All applicants must attend an **interview** (except children under 16 years of age).

At the interview:

- your application form and documents will be examined;
- you will be asked about the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship unless you have an Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Responsibilities and Privileges Record issued by an authorised AMEP provider (see page 5);
- your ability in the English language will be assessed unless you have an Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) English Language Record issued by an authorised AMEP provider, and can respond in simple English on aspects of your application;
- you will be asked to make a choice about which pledge of commitment (see page 5) you wish to make at your citizenship ceremony;
- the interviewer will explain what happens after the interview; and
- you can ask any questions.

### The citizenship ceremony

Citizenship ceremonies are usually held periodically in town halls or other civic buildings by representatives of the local government authority.

Successful applicants are usually provided with details of their citizenship ceremony within 3 months after their application is approved. They are usually given about 3 weeks notice of the ceremony.

Every person aged 16 years and over must attend a citizenship ceremony and make the Australian citizenship pledge to become a citizen.

Ceremonies are simple and dignified, and conducted in a friendly atmosphere.

At the ceremony:

- you will be asked to make the Australian citizenship pledge in English;
- you will receive your Certificate of Australian Citizenship and a memento card displaying the words of the pledge; and
- you will receive a personalised electoral enrolment form produced from the information you provide in your citizenship application. You will be asked to check the details on the form, sign the form and have it witnessed, and pass it on to a representative of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) attending the ceremony, or return it to the AEC in the reply paid envelope.

You become an Australian citizen on the date you attend your citizenship ceremony and make the pledge of commitment to Australia. Your certificate will be your legal proof of Australian citizenship.

You need to make the pledge of commitment within 12 months of notification that your application has been approved. If you are having difficulties in attending a citizenship ceremony you should contact the department as soon as possible and advise them of your situation.

## Personal documents checklist

Bring the following documents to your citizenship interview. If you cannot supply the documents requested, please discuss your circumstances at your interview.

**You must bring ORIGINAL documents as supplied by the issuing authority.** If documents are not in English they must be translated. Documents will be handed back to you after being checked.

For yourself:

- your full birth certificate with the names of your parents on it;
- your passport or travel document with which you arrived in Australia;
- a photograph as detailed on page 9 of form 124 *Application for grant of Australian citizenship*;
- all other passports or travel documents you hold;
- evidence of your Australian permanent residence;
- if applicable, evidence of all changes of name (such as marriage certificates, deed polls or other official documents);
- a record issued by an authorised Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) provider if you have one. These are issued by your AMEP teaching centre. If you are not sure whether you are entitled to one of these, check with your AMEP teaching centre;
- if you are a British subject who arrived in Australia before 1 January 1975 and you do not have evidence of your entry to Australia, evidence that you were resident before that date (such as employment, taxation or school records);
- if you served in the permanent defence forces of Australia for at least 3 months, your discharge papers or a letter from your employer in the Australian Defence Forces;
- if you completed full-time service as a member of the Australian Reserve Force for a period of, or periods amounting in the aggregate to, at least 6 months, your discharge papers or a letter from your employer in the reserve forces;
- if you are a New Zealand citizen, you may need to provide a certificate issued by Centrelink stating that you were residing in Australia on a particular date (see 'New Zealand citizens', page 2);

- if you are a New Zealand citizen who does not hold a permanent residence visa, a criminal record statement from the New Zealand Ministry of Justice (see 'New Zealand citizens', page 2); and
- an overseas police certificate, or certificates, if applicable (see 'Overseas Police Clearances', page 2).

#### **For children:**

- child's passport which shows evidence of permanent residence;
- child's full birth certificate, showing details of parents;
- the relevant court order if you have been granted custody and/or guardianship of the child; and
- if the child was adopted overseas, or in Australia but did not acquire Australian citizenship as a result of that adoption, the original adoption order, recognition or verification of the overseas adoption order or confirmation that the adoption has taken place under Australian law must be provided.

#### **If you are applying on the basis of being the spouse of an Australian citizen:**

- evidence of your spouse's Australian citizenship (full Australian birth certificate or citizenship certificate);
- your marriage certificate; and
- a statement fully explaining your reasons for seeking an exemption to the residence requirements.

#### **If you are applying on the basis of being the widow or widower of an Australian citizen:**

- your marriage certificate;
- evidence of your spouse's Australian citizenship (full Australian birth certificate or citizenship certificate); and
- your spouse's death certificate.

You may be asked to provide other documents to support your application.

*Remember also to include your application charge when you lodge your application form.*

## **Responsibilities and privileges**

### **Responsibilities**

As an Australian citizen, you will be required to:

- obey the laws and fulfil your duties as an Australian citizen;
- enrol on the Electoral Register and vote at Federal, State, Territory and local government elections and referendums;
- serve on a jury, if called on; and
- defend Australia, should the need arise;

subject to the same rights and exemptions as Australian-born citizens.

### **Privileges**

As an Australian citizen, you will benefit from entitlement, under Australian law, to the same rights as all Australian citizens:

- the right as a voter to help elect Australia's governments;
- the right to apply for appointment to any public office or to nominate for election as a member of parliament (subject to section 44(i) of the Constitution);
- the right to apply for an Australian passport and to leave and re-enter Australia without applying for a resident return visa;
- the right to seek assistance from Australian diplomatic representatives while overseas;
- eligibility to apply to enlist in the defence forces and for government jobs for which Australian citizenship is required; and

- the right to register a child born to you overseas, after you acquire Australian citizenship, as an Australian citizen by descent (before the child turns 25 years of age).

## **Citizenship pledge**

At the citizenship ceremony you must make the following pledge of commitment as a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia:

*From this time forward, under God\*,  
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,  
whose democratic beliefs I share,  
whose rights and liberties I respect, and  
whose laws I will uphold and obey.*

\* A person may choose whether or not to use the words 'under God':

- Pledge 1 (Oath) including the words 'under God'; or
- Pledge 2 (Affirmation) excluding the words 'under God'.

You will be asked at your interview whether or not you will use the words 'under God' when making your pledge.

## **Dual citizenship**

In many cases, acquiring Australian citizenship does not mean that you automatically cease to be the citizen of your existing country of citizenship. This depends on the laws of that country.

Before you apply for Australian citizenship, you may wish to seek advice from that country's consular or diplomatic representative in Australia on whether you retain your citizenship of that country and whether you have any obligations if you return there.

If you have the citizenship of another country, that citizenship takes precedence over your Australian citizenship while you are in that country. It may not be possible for the Australian Government to protect you should you return there and you encounter any difficulties.

## **Australian passport**

Once you become an Australian citizen, you have the right to apply for an Australian passport.

Australians travelling overseas are required to present satisfactory evidence of their citizenship when re-entering Australia. An Australian passport is the preferred and most conclusive proof of Australian citizenship. People seeking entry as an Australian citizen without an Australian passport may face difficulties and delays in getting an airline to carry them; and on entering Australia.

## **About the information you give**

The department is authorised to collect information provided on form 124 *Application for grant of Australian citizenship* under sections 31 and 36 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*.

The information provided will be used for:

- assessing applications for Australian citizenship;
- other purposes relating to the administration of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*, for example, when applying for evidence of Australian citizenship; and
- producing a personalised electoral enrolment form to be issued with the Certificate of Australian Citizenship to assist new citizens to meet their obligation to enrol to vote.

Continued on the next page ►

The information provided might be disclosed to agencies who are authorised to receive information in relation to Australian citizenship. The information is provided to local government authorities to administer ceremonies for conferring Australian citizenship; to the Australian Electoral Commission to administer the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*; to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the purpose of administering the *Passport Act 1938*; and to Federal, State and Territory police which help assess character requirements for citizenship.

The information provided might also be disclosed to Federal, State and Territory Members of Parliament for the purposes of formally welcoming new citizens into the Australian community.

The collection, access, storage, use and disclosure by the department of the information you provide in this form is governed by the *Privacy Act 1988* and, in particular, by the 11 Information Privacy Principles. The information form 993i *Safeguarding your personal information*, available from departmental offices, gives details of agencies to which personal information might be disclosed.

### Exceptions to residence requirements

In most cases, to be granted Australian citizenship, you must have been present in Australia as a permanent resident for a total of 2 years in the five years immediately before making your application. This time must include a total of 12 months in the 2 years immediately before making the application.

The following are EXCEPTIONS to the normal residence requirements.

#### Service in the permanent Australian Defence Forces

If you have served in the permanent defence forces of Australia for at least 3 months, or if you were discharged from defence service prior to the 3 months service as medically unfit as a result of that defence service, there are no residence requirements.

#### Service in the Australian Reserve Forces

If you have completed full-time service as a member of the Australian Reserve Force for a period of, or periods amounting in the aggregate to, at least 6 months, or if you were discharged from the Australian Reserve Forces prior to the 6 months as medically unfit as a result of that defence service, there are no residence requirements.

#### Former Australian citizens or persons born in Australia

If you were formerly an Australian citizen or born in Australia, you need only meet the requirement to have been a permanent resident in Australia for 12 months in the 2 years immediately prior to making the application.

However, former Australian citizens may not reacquire Australian citizenship by grant unless more than 12 months have passed from the date upon which they ceased to be an Australian citizen.

### Spouse, widow or widower of an Australian citizen

If you are the legally married spouse, widow or widower of an Australian citizen, the usual residence requirements may be waived. (This does not apply to de facto relationships.)

It is policy that this waiver usually only applies if you have been a permanent resident in Australia continuously for the 12 months immediately prior to your application, and you can show that you would suffer **significant hardship or disadvantage\*** if you were not granted citizenship.

### Residence outside Australia while engaged in activities beneficial to Australia

If there were period(s) of time, in the 5 year period prior to making your application, when you were a permanent resident and not present in Australia, but were engaged in activities beneficial to the interests of Australia, they may be treated as if you had been present in Australia as a permanent resident.

If you believe this applies to you, you should attach a statement to your application form that explains why you were absent from Australia; what your connections with Australia are (family, financial, business etc.); the exact times you were outside Australia and which times you consider to have been beneficial to Australia; and exactly what you were doing and why it was beneficial to Australia. You also need to supply a letter from an employer or other prominent person who can testify as to the value to Australia of the activities overseas.

### Residence before the 5 year period prior to the application

If you have been present in Australia as a permanent resident for any period(s) prior to the 5 year period before you lodge your application, you may be able to count that earlier residence towards meeting the 2 years out of 5 years residence requirement. It cannot count toward meeting the 12 months in 2 years requirement. It is policy that this concession usually only applies if you would suffer **significant hardship or disadvantage\*** if Australian citizenship was not granted.

### Temporary residence in Australia

Periods of legal temporary residence in Australia in the 5 year period prior to making your application for citizenship may be counted as permanent residence. For this residence to be counted, you will need to show that you would suffer **significant hardship or disadvantage\*** if you were not granted Australian citizenship. It is policy that this concession usually only applies if you have been a permanent resident of Australia continuously for the 12 months immediately before making your application, and prior to that had the relevant periods of temporary, legal residence in Australia.

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#### \* Significant hardship or disadvantage

It is policy that significant hardship or disadvantage is usually shown if:

- you have been refused employment solely on the grounds that the employment is restricted only to Australian citizens, and other employment is not available; or
- you would be excluded from travelling internationally because you cannot obtain a passport or travel document; or
- you would not be able to represent, or be selected to represent, Australia in a national representative team solely on the basis that you were not an Australian citizen.

*(If you believe that you meet this policy or there are special circumstances that warrant consideration outside this policy, you may attach a statement to your application or discuss it during your citizenship interview.)*