



COVID-19 Pandemic - Australian Government Endorsed Event (AGEE) stream of the Temporary Activity (subclass 408) visa

Current as at 22 April 2020

To respond to COVID-19, the government has introduced flexible and temporary visa arrangements that support Australia's public health measures.

The Temporary Activity (subclass 408) Australian Government Endorsed Event (AGEE) stream visa (COVID-19 Pandemic event visa) is being utilised to manage the extraordinary circumstances that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic event. The measure is temporary in nature, will be subject to ongoing review and will be wound back appropriately in line with the end of the pandemic.

Who is eligible to apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic Event visa?

The COVID-19 Pandemic event visa is available to people who are:

- in Australia
- are unable to depart Australia due to COVID-19
- have 28 days or less remaining on their current visa or where their last temporary visa has expired less than 28 days ago
- are not eligible for any other visa based on their intended activities or
- have evidence from their employer that they have ongoing work in a critical sector and that an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident cannot fill the position.

Working in critical sectors

Working holiday makers working in critical sectors such as agriculture, food processing, health care, aged care, disability care and childcare who are not eligible for any other visa and are unable to return to their home country can apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa.

Seasonal Worker Programme visa holders with visas due to expire within 28 days are also able to apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa.

Other temporary visa holders whose visas are about to expire, have no other visa options, are unable to return to their home country and who are working in critical sectors may apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa. Evidence of this work will need to be submitted with the application.

Visa of last resort

Other temporary visa holders may apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa only where there is no other visa option and it is not possible to leave Australia due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will allow you to remain lawfully in Australia until it is safe and practical for you to return to your home country.

Frequently Asked Questions

When can I apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

You should only apply for this visa if you are unable to depart Australia, your temporary visa expires in less than 28 days (or did not expire more than 28 days ago) and you have no other visa options available to you.

Can I apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa if I am not working in a critical sector?

If you are not working in a critical sector, you can only apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa if you have no other visa options available to you.

How do I know if my visa has been granted with work rights?

People who are working in critical sectors will be given permission to work on their COVID-19 Pandemic event visa. All other people holding this visa will not have permission to work.

Permission to work is managed through mandatory condition 8107. Workers in critical sectors who indicate their work activities in their visa application will be given permission to engage in those work activities when the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa is granted.

People applying for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa as a last resort to remain lawfully in Australia until their departure will not be granted permission to work.

Under condition 8107 a person who is granted a subclass 408 visa for the purpose of remaining lawfully in Australia until they are able to return home and who then work, would be engaging in an activity that is inconsistent with the purpose of the visa grant. Consequently, action could be taken to cancel that visa.

How long will my COVID-19 Pandemic event visa be valid for?

If you are employed in a critical sector such as agriculture, food processing, health care, aged care, disability care, and childcare you may be granted a visa that allows you to stay for up to 12 months.

If you have been in Australia under the Seasonal Worker Program or Pacific Labour Scheme and are continuing your work in agriculture or another critical sector you may be granted a visa allowing you to stay for up to 12 months.

If you are not working in a critical sector, you may be granted a visa that allows you to stay for up to six months to ensure you remain lawful while you are unable to travel home from Australia.

Can I work on a COVID-19 AGEE Pandemic event visa?

Permission to work will be limited to people working in a critical sector such as agriculture, food processing, health care, aged care, disability care, and childcare during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These sectors may be updated from time to time in response to needs identified during the COVID-19 period. While holding a COVID-19 Pandemic event visa, you are only permitted to work in critical sectors.

How do I know if I'm working in a critical sector?

The Government continues to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and update which sectors in the Australian economy are critical. Sectors may move from being critical to non-critical and vice versa. You should check to see if your work or your occupation is in a critical sector before making an application.

The Department may use the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) to determine if an occupation is in a critical sector.

Do I need a letter of endorsement to apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

If you are applying for the visa to work or continue working in a critical sector (such as agriculture, food processing, health care, aged care, disability care or childcare) you must provide evidence of your ongoing employment, which:

- confirms the dates of your employment
- confirms which critical sector (such as agriculture, food processing, health care, aged care, disability care or childcare) you are working in and
- provides evidence that an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident cannot fill the position.

Evidence could include payslips, a contract and/or a letter from your employer.

Doctors and Nurses with an offer of employment in the health care sector must provide evidence of their medical qualifications, and a letter of offer of employment from a hospital or clinic.

If you are a temporary visa holder with no other visa options and you are unable to depart Australia, you must attach a statement that tells us why you cannot apply for another type of visa, why you are not able to depart Australia before your current visa expires, and what actions you are taking to try to arrange your departure as soon as travel restrictions are lifted and/or flight availability resumes.

Can I apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa if I have a no further stay condition attached to my visa?

If you hold a subclass 403 visa in the Seasonal Worker Programme stream, during the COVID-19 period, the condition 8503 (No Further Stay) attached to your visa will be automatically waived to allow you to apply for the COVID-19 AGEE stream of the subclass 408. You will not need to apply for a waiver of condition 8503.

If you hold any other temporary visa with condition 8503, 8534 or 8535 and cannot depart Australia as planned, you cannot apply for most other visas in Australia unless the condition is waived. You can [request to waive this condition](#) if your visa will expire in less than 28 days. If your request is approved, you should make a new visa application before your current visa expires.

How do I apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

Apply online via the Department of Home Affairs online lodgment portal ImmiAccount.

You will need to complete the 'Temporary Activity Visa (408)' online form and to select "Australian government endorsed events" from the Activity Type dropdown menu on page 2 of the application form.

You can select the 'COVID-19 Pandemic event' in the Event details section of the application form.

The COVID-19 Pandemic event visa application is VAC Free. You will be required to select 'YES' to the Visa application charge concession question on page 2 and then select 'NIL VAC'.

How much does the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa cost?

There is no Visa Application Charge for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa and no subsequent temporary application charge.

To not be charged for this visa you will be required to select 'YES' to the Visa application charge concession question on page 2 and then select 'NIL VAC'.

You might have to pay other costs for health checks, police certificates and biometrics.

How long will it take to process my COVID-19 Pandemic event visa application?

The Department is prioritising the processing of applications for people working in critical sectors. Other applications may take longer to finalise.

You should submit as much evidence to support your application as possible.

When you lodge a valid application for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa, you will be granted a bridging visa which generally carries the same conditions as your previous visa, including any work rights. If your current visa expires, the bridging visa will maintain your lawful status in Australia until your COVID-19 Pandemic event visa application is finalised.

You can check Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) at any time to confirm your visa status and conditions.

I am overseas. Can I be granted a COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

The COVID-19 Pandemic event visa can only be granted to people in Australia.

Will I have to do a medical examination to get the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

You and any family members who apply for the visa with you must meet our health requirement. This means you may need to undergo a health check.

What else do I have to do to be granted a COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

You must maintain adequate health insurance during your stay in Australia.

This means you may need to arrange health insurance for your stay in Australia if you haven't already got it.

You are personally liable for all your healthcare costs while you are in Australia. Medical insurance helps limit your financial liability.

You must have adequate health cover for the whole of your stay to be granted this visa. Your cover should cover you for medically necessary treatment, including transport.

See what we consider [adequate health insurance for visa holders](#).

See more about [health insurance for overseas visitors](#).

I am applying for the visa as a last resort and the application form is asking for my employer details, however I am not employed. What can I do?

From 22 April 2020, an improved ImmiAccount application form will be available for those applicants who are applying as a visa of last resort for the COVID-19 AGEE stream of the subclass 408 visa. The question regarding employer details will remain for those who are applying on the basis of their work in a critical sector. Working Holiday Makers working in the Agricultural sector, for example, will need to have prearranged employment if they need to apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa.

I am on a bridging visa. Can I apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa?

Temporary visa holders, including bridging visa holders can apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa if they meet all of the eligibility criteria. Bridging visa holders who have a s.48 bar and/or who have not held a substantive temporary visa in the 28 days prior to application will not be able to apply.

How long will my visa be valid for?

The validity period on the visa will vary depending on the individual circumstances following these general principles:

- Applicants who have been on the Seasonal Worker Program or Working Holiday Maker program and are working in critical sectors will be granted a visa for up to 12 months.
- Applicants working in critical sectors will be granted a visa for up to 12 months.
- All other applicants will be granted a visa for up to six months with the validity period dependant on the individual circumstances such as when they may be able to return home.

What are the critical sectors?

The Government is making announcements about critical sectors. Currently the critical sectors are agriculture, food processing, health care, aged care, disability care and childcare. These sectors will be subject to ongoing review with new sectors being added if required, or removed if the Australian labour market is fulfilling the need.