



## Settling in

The quickest way to settle into Australia is to learn English and find work or training. However, moving to a new country can be stressful and you may be worried about housing, getting a job or your English skills.

Australia provides a variety of government services to support you during this initial settlement period. These services are provided through the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) managed by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The support you will receive will depend on your family or individual needs.

In the beginning, you will have a caseworker or your proposer to help you start on your road to independence. They will meet you at the airport and take you to your accommodation.

Although everyone's journey will be different, there are some things that must be done in the first few weeks of arrival in Australia.

Use this checklist as a guide to see what you need to do and when you need to do it. Your caseworker may help you with each of these steps.

### In week 1

- Arrive at the airport in Australia – your caseworker or proposer will meet you
- Arrive at your accommodation
- Open a bank account – become familiar with depositing/withdrawing money
- Register with Centrelink – so you can receive support payments
- Register with Medicare – so you can receive medical care
- Get your Tax File Number (TFN) – so you can look for employment.

### In the first fortnight

- Enrol your children in school
- Familiarise yourself with your new neighbourhood. Locate the nearest shopping centre, supermarket, hospital, library and public transport links
- Find a local doctor for your family's medical care.

### In the first six months

- Undertake a health assessment
- Register with AMEP (Adult Migrant English Program) to learn English
- If your first house was temporary you will need to find long term accommodation
- Begin looking for a job or training.

All people living in Australia are able to travel and move freely between states and territories. Moving from your initial settlement location early may mean you lose access to some support services under the HSP. Talk to your caseworker or proposer and seek their advice prior to making a decision to move.

Australia is a large country geographically, but people across the country easily stay in touch via high quality communication and transport links. Australians often travel long distances to visit friends and family, usually on weekends or during holiday periods. You do not need to change where you live in order to see friends and family; instead you could consider visiting using public transport such as buses or trains.

## **Important names and contacts:**

### **Caseworker**

If you hold a subclass 200, 201, 203 or 204 visa a caseworker will be assigned to help you to settle in. Caseworkers are employees of organisations that provide services under the HSP. Your caseworker will meet you at the airport and be your support person as you settle into Australia. They cannot be with you all the time so it is important to take control of your own settlement journey. Ask questions. There are lots of people working in different government agencies who are responsible for helping the Australian public – and that means you.

If you hold a subclass 202 visa, then your proposer has agreed to support and assist you to settle in Australia. A proposer is usually a family member, friend or community organisation. Although you have a proposer who is responsible for helping you settle, a HSP caseworker will phone your proposer and make a time to meet with you to determine if any further support is needed.

### **HSP orientation**

HSP orientation will build upon the information from AUSCO. The Program may offer classroom sessions, excursions and activities to help you put this information into practice in your new community and city.

HSP orientation is a great way to have your questions answered as well as learn from other people in the same situation as you and gain practical knowledge in areas such as housing, budgeting, etc. For example, you may learn about shopping and budgeting by someone showing you the cheapest shops in your local area. You may be able to meet with police and lawyers to help you learn more about Australian Law.

HSP orientation will provide you with practical skills and knowledge to assist with your new life in Australia. For more information, go to [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au) and search for 'Humanitarian Settlement Program'.

### **TIS National interpreting services**

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 13 1450. For more information, go to [www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Non-English-speakers](http://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Non-English-speakers)



## Centrelink

You may be eligible to receive payments from Centrelink once every two weeks. If you are eligible, Centrelink will deposit the money into your bank account. The amount of money you get may be different from the amount someone else gets. Centrelink will work out how much money to give you based on your personal situation. For more information, go to [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink)

## Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

You may be eligible to learn English with the AMEP. AMEP offers up to 510 hours of free English language tuition. To find the location of your local AMEP Service Provider, go to [www.education.gov.au/amep](http://www.education.gov.au/amep) or phone the Skilling Australia information line on 13 3873 from anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call.

## Tax File Number (TFN)

To receive Centrelink benefits or to work, you will need a TFN. This is a unique number issued to you by the Australian Taxation Office. It helps you apply for income assistance or other benefits. Staff at Centrelink can assist with obtaining a TFN. For more information, go to [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

## Medicare

Medicare provides assistance with the cost of some medical care. Your proposer or caseworker will show you the nearest Medicare service centre, hospital, doctor's office and other health services. For more information, go to [www.humanservices.gov.au/medicare](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/medicare)

## Immunisation

You will also need to undergo a full health check and although not compulsory, it is highly recommended that your children receive immunisations. Some states and territories request a record of a child's immunisation status to be presented when the child attends day care or starts school. For more information, go to [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)



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