

Fact Sheet

Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) Visa – Subclass 494

The Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional visa enables employers to nominate foreign workers for a permanent residence visa to Australia. The visa is valid for 5 years from the date the visa is granted, and provides a pathway to permanent residence after 3 years.

Step 1. Skills Assessment

Applicants applying for the 494 regional visa must have their skills formally assessed by a skills assessment authority. This involves an assessment of the applicant's qualifications, work experience and in the case of trades people, an interview or practical examination to assess technical skills.

Step 2. Regional Certifying Body application

The next step is to apply for assessment by a Regional Certifying Body ('RCB'). The relevant RCB will depend on the location of the nominated position. To obtain approval from the RCB, the employer generally needs to demonstrate:

- There is a genuine need for the position;
- The position cannot be filled locally; and
- The employment conditions are equivalent to those provided to an Australian worker.

Step 3. Employer Nomination

To nominate employees for a 494 visa, an employer needs to be an approved sponsor or have lodged an application to become a standard business sponsor. The employer must show that the position is genuinely needed to be filled by a non-Australian worker. The position must be skilled, be an occupation listed on the relevant skilled occupation list, be offered on a full-time basis and be remunerated at market rates. The position must be located in a designated regional area, which includes all of Australia except for Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

Step 4. Visa Application

To apply for the visa, applicants must have at least 3 years' employment experience in their nominated occupation and have a relevant skills assessment. The required English level is IELTS Band 5 or equivalent. Applicants must be under 45 years of age (unless an age exemption applies).

Processing Times

The current processing time outlined by the Department of Home Affairs is between 78 days to 5 months for Employer Sponsored stream and processing times for the Labour Agreement stream are not currently available.

What happens when the 494 visa is granted?

This is a provisional visa which allows you to remain in Australia for a period of 5 years. After living in a regional area for at least 3 years and earning a taxable income above the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (currently \$53,900) applicants can apply for the subclass 191 permanent residence visa.

You must only work in your nominated occupation and your nominated employer in regional Australia. The 494 visa may be subject to cancellation if you do not remain employed in the regional area.

Our Services

We offer end-to-end case management to help you obtain your visa effortlessly and efficiently. We work on a fixed fee basis, our services include initial eligibility assessment, strategic planning, review and advice in relation to supporting evidence, preparation of the application submission, and liaison with the Department of Home Affairs until time of decision.

Need more information?

Find further information about The Migration Agency and our services on our website www.themigrationagency.com.au or contact us by phone on (02) 8896 6056. Please contact your migration specialist before relying on this information for a visa application.