



# Locally Engaged Employees (LEE) – Afghanistan

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Do I have to be certified under the Afghan LEE Program to apply for a humanitarian visa?**

No. If you are not certified under the Afghan LEE Program, you may still apply for a humanitarian visa.

Any person who believes they meet the requirements for a humanitarian visa and wishes to seek Australia's assistance can make an application.

Each application is considered on its individual merit using current and comprehensive information on circumstances in the relevant country.

If you are located outside Afghanistan, you may be eligible to apply for the:

- Refugee pathway
- Special Humanitarian Program
- Community Support Program.

Further information on how to apply is available on the Department of Home Affairs' website.  
<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder/refugee-and-humanitarian>

### **Will my visa application be prioritised?**

Within the Humanitarian Program's places for Afghan nationals, priority is given to those outside Afghanistan who are:

- Certified former LEE and their immediate family members (spouse, children under 18)
- Immediate family members (spouses and children under 18) of holders of Refugee and Humanitarian (Class XB) visa holders
- Refugees who have been referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to Australia for resettlement
- Women and girls, ethnic minorities, LGBTIQI+ and other identified minority groups

There are far more applications from Afghan nationals than places available in the Humanitarian Program. Only applicants who meet the highest priorities of the Australian Government and are outside their home country are likely to proceed.

If you are a certified former LEE residing in Afghanistan you can still lodge a visa application. Your application will be subject to priority processing, however will not be finalised until you are outside Afghanistan.

## **What do I do if I have already lodged a humanitarian visa application before I was certified?**

If you have already lodged a humanitarian visa application before being certified under the Afghan LEE program, please contact [afghanlee.amman@dfat.gov.au](mailto:afghanlee.amman@dfat.gov.au) to advise that you have now been certified.

Please include the details of your visa application and your certification letter.

## **What is the process for lodging a visa application?**

To make an application for permanent entry to Australia as a Refugee and Humanitarian entrant, you need to complete the following forms and provide supporting documents:

- Form 842: *Application for an Offshore Humanitarian visa* (only one form required)  
<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/form-listing/forms/842.pdf>
- Form 80: *Personal Particulars for Character Assessment* (one form for you and every dependant aged 16 years and over included in your application)  
<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/form-listing/forms/80.pdf>
- *Character Statutory Declaration* (one form for you and every dependant aged 16 years and over included in your application)  
<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/form-listing/forms/character-statutory-declaration.pdf>

## **What supporting documents do I need to include in my application?**

It is important to lodge a complete visa application including all relevant forms (see above) and the following supporting documents:

- Your certification letter from your employing Australian agency
- Two (2) recent passport photographs of each person included in the application
- Evidence of the identity of each person included in the application (certified copies of birth certificates, marriage certificates, passports, national identity cards etc.), if available
- Certified copy of divorce and death certificates (where applicable to any person included in this application)
- Certified copy of child custody papers (where parents of a child or children in this application are separated or divorced)
- Certified copy of adoption papers (where a child in this application has been adopted)
- Certified copy of military discharge documents (for you and every person included in this application who has served in the Afghan (or other) defence forces and been discharged)
- Certified copies of any visas/residence permits held by any person included in this application
- A written statement (in English), clearly explaining the reasons why you fear living in or returning to Afghanistan.

The Department of Home Affairs will consider your application against the relevant visa criteria. This may involve an interview with a Home Affairs officer and you and any family members included on your application will need to complete health, character and security assessments.

## **Where do I lodge my visa application?**

Once you have been certified, completed visa application forms can be sent by email or mail.

### **To send via email:**

[afghanlee.amman@dfat.gov.au](mailto:afghanlee.amman@dfat.gov.au)

Note: there is a size limit of 10MB per email. You may need to send several emails with the required information. Please include your name in the email's subject line.

### **To send by mail:**

Australian Embassy  
Department of Home Affairs  
P.O. Box 35201  
Amman 11180  
Jordan

### **To send by courier:**

Australian Embassy  
Department of Home Affairs  
41 Kayed Al Armouti Street  
South Abdoun  
Amman  
Jordan

### **Does it cost anything to lodge my application?**

There is no charge or fee for application forms or for lodging an application.

### **Will I be interviewed?**

Interviews may be required during processing. An officer will check your application for completeness after lodgement. You will be advised if further information is required and if a Home Affairs officer needs to discuss your application with you.

It is important you inform the Department of Home Affairs of any changes to your contact details, including your address, telephone number and email address. If your contact details change, you are encouraged to advise the Department by completing 'change of contact details' form 929 and emailing it to: [929@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:929@homeaffairs.gov.au)

### **Will my whole family be able to go to Australia with me?**

You can include the following family members in your visa application:

- Your spouse (one only)
- Your children who are not married or engaged and are dependent on you or your spouse
- Relatives who are not married or engaged, normally live in your household and are dependent on you or your spouse and not dependent on any other adult.

Your family unit **does not include** other family members (including brothers, sisters or parents). Further information about the family members you can include is outlined in the visa application form. The form also outlines the information and documents you will need to provide for you and any family members.

### **Will my visa application be processed if I am in Afghanistan?**

Only Humanitarian visa applications for certified Afghan LEE and immediate family members (spouses and children) of Refugee and Humanitarian visa holders living outside Afghanistan will be able to be finalised.

Applications for people residing in Afghanistan can be lodged and the Department will hold the application until the applicants are outside Afghanistan.

The Australian Government urges all people remaining in Afghanistan to prioritise their safety. People remaining in Afghanistan must carefully consider the risks should they attempt to leave by any route.

If you lodge your visa application and then travel outside Afghanistan you should contact the Amman processing team to provide your new address at: [afghanlee.amman@dfat.gov.au](mailto:afghanlee.amman@dfat.gov.au)

### **Am I still eligible for a Refugee and Humanitarian visa if I have resettled elsewhere?**

You will not be eligible for an Australian permanent or temporary humanitarian visa if you live in a Geneva Convention signatory country that has provided you with resettlement.

### **Can I apply for a visa if I formerly held a subclass 449 Humanitarian Stay (Temporary) visa and did not travel to Australia?**

Yes, if you are a certified Afghan LEE and formerly held a subclass 449 Humanitarian Stay (Temporary) visa you can apply for a visa under Australia's Humanitarian Program. Humanitarian visa applications lodged by LEE are prioritised.

### **Why won't the Government prioritise family of LEE when we were advised that family would be prioritised in 2021?**

The immediate family (spouse, children under 18) of Afghan LEE are prioritised. Priorities published by the previous Government, including that family of LEE would receive priority processing, were developed in the context of the fall of Kabul in 2021 where there were minimal visa backlogs. The situation now is very different, with a large number of Afghans awaiting a visa outcome, the vast majority of whom have close family in Australia. Prioritising family members for LEE would take the place of close family members being united with other Afghan families.

### **Can my extended family and friends apply for a visa?**

There are many visa pathways that may be available to your extended family and friends. Individuals and families outside Afghanistan who are seeking humanitarian assistance may be able to apply via the:

- Refugee pathway - priority is provided to applicants referred for resettlement by UNHCR. Prospective applicants may wish to seek the assistance of the UNHCR.
- Special Humanitarian Program pathway – the applicant must have an Australian citizen or permanent resident proposer. Priority is provided to immediate and close family proposers.
- Community Support Program (CSP) pathway – the applicant needs to demonstrate employment skills or an employment offer, have adequate English and be aged between 18 and 50 to be considered under the CSP.

Your extended family and friends may also be able to access other visa pathways, including the skilled, family, student and visitor visa programs, depending on their individual circumstances.

The Department of Home Affairs encourages Afghan nationals to explore what visa options are suitable for them on the Department's website.

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder>

### **Where will I live in Australia?**

Successful applicants and their family members will be resettled in a number of different locations in Australia. It is possible you will be settled in a regional location rather than a capital city such as Melbourne or Sydney.

### **What if I have family in Australia?**

It is very important that you provide details of any family members who already live in Australia. Where possible, the Department of Home Affairs will use this information in an effort to locate you close to your family. Details about family members in Australia can be included in your visa application form (at Question 18 and 19).

### **Will I be living with other Afghans in Australia?**

If you are granted a permanent visa to enter and remain in Australia, you will have access to a range of services that will be provided to you and your immediate family by the Australian Government through the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP). As part of these services, it is likely that you will be put in contact with local community members, who may include Afghan refugees.

### **What if I have friends or family who are also applying for a visa to Australia?**

It is important that you tell us in your application about any friends or family members who are applying for a visa separately. Should you be granted a visa, this information will be taken into consideration in deciding your settlement location.

### **How long will it take for my visa application to be processed?**

It is difficult to say exactly how long it will take for your visa application to be processed. Health, character and national security checks can take some time. Processing times also vary according to individual and family circumstances.

Once you have lodged your visa application the Department of Home Affairs will process your application as quickly as possible. It is very important you provide the Department with all relevant information so all assessments can be completed as quickly as possible. Processing delays may occur if you fail to provide all the requested information.

### **What if my circumstances change after I have submitted my application?**

If your circumstances change in any way after you have lodged your visa application, you must notify the Department of Home Affairs. For examples of the types of changes of circumstances you need to report, please refer to the information provided with your application. If your circumstances change, you should advise the Department by completing form 1022 'Notification of changes in circumstances' located here: [Notification of changes in circumstances form](#) and email it to the office that is processing your visa application. **Failing to notify the Department of changes to your circumstances could lead to an adverse decision on your current and/or later visa application.**

### **What if my application is refused?**

There is no provision to review or reconsider a decision to refuse your visa application. You may choose to apply for other visas providing you meet the requirements specific to that visa. For more information about migration to Australia visit <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/>.

## **Why do I have to do a health assessment?**

Most visa applicants must meet minimum health standards before they can be granted a visa.

Australia's health requirement:

- Protects the Australian community from public health and safety risks;
- Helps control expenditure on health and welfare services; and
- Ensures that Australian citizens and permanent residents can access health and community services that are in short supply

You may be required to have health examinations to ensure you meet the health requirement before you travel to Australia. If this is not possible, your health examinations will be arranged upon your arrival in Australia. A Medical Officer of the Commonwealth (MOC) will assess the results of your examinations.

## **Do I have to pay for the health assessment?**

The medical assessment, chest x-ray and treatment (if necessary) are free to you and your approved family members. They are paid for by the Australian Government.

## **What if someone included in my application has a medical condition?**

If a person is found to have a serious or contagious disease (e.g. Tuberculosis), that person will only be able to travel to Australia after they have received treatment and been declared fit to travel by a medical professional. If this is the case, you will be provided with further information to assist you in your travel plan to Australia.

Disclosing medical conditions during health examinations assists staff in planning safe settlement for individuals and families in Australia. If your health needs to be monitored or you require important medical treatment during travel, a medical escort may be organised to ensure you get to Australia safely.

## **Will the Australian government pay for my travel to Australia?**

The Australian Government pays for all costs associated with your resettlement to Australia including airfares and all medical checks.

## **What help will I receive after I arrive in Australia?**

If you are granted a permanent refugee visa to enter Australia, you will have access to a range of services provided by the Australian Government through the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) which will help you and your family to settle in Australia.

Based on your individual needs, you may receive support from the HSP for up to 18 months, during which time you will be assisted to:

- find long term accommodation, and be provided with a package of basic household goods to establish their new home;
- access mainstream and specialist support services, for example family and domestic violence services;
- learn English through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP);
- access employment services, education and training;
- complete school enrolment for children;
- connect to local community groups and activities; and

- orientate to Australia, including our values and laws.

All of these services are delivered by service providers contracted to the Department of Home Affairs. Volunteer groups also work with service providers to support entrants and assist them to settle into the local community.

### **Will I be guaranteed a job with the Australian Government if I come to Australia?**

No. You are not guaranteed a job with the Australian Government if you come to Australia. However, you will have immediate access to income support benefits and will be able to seek work with the assistance of Job Network service providers or through your own contacts.

### **Will I be able to find work in Australia?**

It may be difficult to get your first job in Australia after you arrive. How quickly you can find a job in Australia depends on economic factors, your qualifications and skills, your English language skills, and the type of work you are seeking. You may face particular challenges and have to work outside your usual occupation. Your settlement case manager will be able to provide you with more information.

### **Will my skills and qualifications be recognised in Australia?**

The Department of Home Affairs website provides you with information on how to get an assessment of your occupational qualifications, skills or experience.

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/skills-assessment>

### **Will I be able to be an interpreter in Australia?**

Even if you have been employed as an interpreter in Afghanistan this does not guarantee you will be able to be employed as an interpreter in Australia. You will need to have your qualifications, skills or experience assessed. To work as an interpreter in Australia formal accreditation is usually required.

### **What would my living conditions be like in Australia?**

It is a big decision to resettle and it is important to be realistic about what to expect when planning for your new life in Australia. In the beginning you may find the experience frustrating and more difficult than you had anticipated. The information people have told you or what you may have seen in books and magazines may not be an accurate image of what life is actually like for most Australians. For example, housing, goods and services are very expensive. You may need to live in a small house or flat during your first years in Australia.

The reality is that Australians generally work hard and many need to borrow money to be able to afford to buy a house, a car or take a holiday.

### **When will I become an Australian citizen?**

If you are granted a visa you are not automatically entitled to Australian citizenship. Further information about Australia citizenship is at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/citizenship/become-a-citizen>.

### **Will there be help provided to me and my family to learn English?**

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is a free service to help eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants with low English levels to improve their English language skills and settle into Australia.

You can access unlimited hours of English classes until you reach vocational English.

When you are in an AMEP class, free childcare is available for your children who are under school age.

### **Am I eligible for the AMEP?**

AMEP is available to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants who hold a permanent visa or an eligible temporary visa. The principal visa holder and their dependant may be eligible for AMEP.

For a list of AMEP Eligible Temporary Visas and for more information on the AMEP go to: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/about-the-program>

### **Is there AMEP information in other languages?**

Information about the AMEP is translated into many languages to help you understand the program better, go to: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/information-in-languages>

### **When can I register for the AMEP?**

If you hold an eligible visa and arrived in Australia after 1 October 2020, are 18 years and over, you must register within six months (noting you may apply for an extension).

### **Do I have to pay to learn English?**

The AMEP is free for eligible clients.

### **What is AMEPOnline?**

AMEPOnline is a free, easy to access public eLearning resource to support and complement AMEP delivery. AMEPOnline topics are about settling into Australian life. There are five levels of contemporary English language, accessible in Australia and from overseas, and via a mobile phone, desktop or tablet.

Access AMEPOnline via <https://ameponline.homeaffairs.gov.au/>

### **Will my children be able to attend school?**

Yes. The education system in Australia is open to all people. It offers an opportunity for all age groups and levels of ability. You can study at any level of education if you have the entry requirements. Help is available for all people who are new to Australia.

School is compulsory for all children aged between five and 15 years. These ages may vary slightly in some states. The government provides public schools. Faith-based organisations and other groups provide private schooling. Public schooling is free and users pay fees for private schooling.

Newly arrived students aged 18 years and under and from non-English speaking backgrounds are assisted to develop their English language skills through the English as a Second Language - New Arrival program which is generally conducted at the local school. Depending on the course of study some university courses are covered by the Higher Education Loan Program scheme. This means the student must contribute a payment towards their university studies, but this payment can be deferred until the student is earning a certain income after graduation.