Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Consumer guide – registered migration agents

It is unlawful for anyone to give immigration assistance in Australia if they are not a registered migration agent, Australian legal practitioner or exempt person. Any person who gives unlawful immigration assistance in Australia should be reported using the Border Watch Online Report on the Department of Home Affairs (the Department) website. It is important to know that any person who helps with your immigration matter cannot guarantee you a visa.

Registered Migration Agents

Registered migration agents must meet professional standards, follow a Code of Conduct and maintain up-to-date knowledge of migration law and procedure.

All registered migration agents have a unique Migration Agents Registration Number (MARN). You can check if a person is registered on the OMARA website www.mara.gov.au

The **Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA)** is part of the Department and is the regulatory body for registered migration agents in Australia. The OMARA:

- assesses and decides applications for registration as a migration agent in Australia
- monitors the conduct of registered migration agents, investigates complaints, and takes disciplinary action if necessary.

The OMARA cannot help you with a visa or sponsorship application or order a registered migration agent to refund fees to you.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for registered migration agents requires registered migration agents to:

- be honest about your chances of getting a visa
- provide correct advice and keep you informed of the progress of your application and any changes that may affect it
- act within the law, your interests and protect your privacy
- tell you if they have an interest that conflicts with your interests and take appropriate action
- give you a written statement before starting work on the services to be provided, estimated fees and other costs
- keep funds in a separate bank account if you pay in advance
- give you an invoice listing the actual services completed and the amount payable
- keep proper records on the processing of your application.

The full Code of Conduct is available on the OMARA website.

Concerns about registered migration agents

If you have a problem with your registered migration agent, try to resolve it with them first. If you cannot resolve the matter with your agent, you can contact the OMARA if you need help. You can lodge a complaint about your registered migration agent by completing the complaint form on the OMARA website.

Making a complaint will not affect your current visa application, or change the outcome of a previous visa refusal or cancellation decision.

Australian Legal Practitioners and Exempt Persons

Certain people, such as Australian legal practitioners and exempt persons, do not have to be registered as a migration agent to provide immigration assistance in Australia.

Australian legal practitioners must act in accordance with the professional conduct rules of their relevant legal authority. If you would like to lodge a complaint about a legal practitioner read the 'Consumer guide – legal practitioners', available on the Department's website.

Exempt persons include close family members and sponsors. A full list of exempt persons can be found on *Form 956 – Appointment of a registered migration agent, legal practitioner or exempt person*. Exempt persons cannot charge a fee for providing immigration assistance.

Ending an appointment

If you want to end an appointment complete *Form 956*.

Translating and Interpreting Service

Speak to an interpreter through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)
www.tisnational.gov.au ☎ 131 450