



Australian Government
**Department of Immigration
and Border Protection**

Character and police certificate requirements

Character requirements

Everyone who wants to enter Australia must be of good character and will be assessed against the character requirements. As part of your visa application, you might be required to provide a police clearance certificate or other evidence to satisfy the character requirements.

The character requirements are set out under [Section 501 of the Migration Act 1958](#).

How character is assessed

You will not pass the character test if:

- you have a substantial criminal record, meaning you have been sentenced to 12 months or more in prison, or multiple sentences that add up to more than 12 months in prison. A suspended sentence is considered a prison sentence.
- you have been convicted of escaping from immigration detention, or convicted for an offence that you committed:
 - while you were in immigration detention
 - during an escape from immigration detention
 - after an escape, but before you were taken into immigration detention again.
- you are or have been a member of a group or organisation, or had or have an association with a person, group or organisation that the Minister for Immigration reasonably suspects of involvement in criminal conduct
- the Minister for Immigration reasonably suspects that you have been involved in people smuggling, people trafficking, genocide, a war crime, a crime against humanity, a crime involving torture or slavery, or a crime that is of serious international concern, whether or not you have been convicted of such an offence
- your past and present criminal or general conduct shows that you are not of good character

- there is a risk that while you are in Australia you would:
 - engage in criminal conduct
 - harass, molest, intimidate or stalk another person
 - vilify a segment of the Australian community
 - incite discord in the Australian community or in a part of it
 - be a danger to the Australian community or a part of it.
- you have been convicted of, or found guilty or had a charge proven for one or more sexually based offences involving a child,
- you are subject to an adverse security assessment by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
- you are subject to an Interpol notice, from which it is reasonable to infer that you are a direct or indirect risk to the Australian community, or a segment of the Australian community.

If you are applying for temporary or permanent migration

For the Australian Government to determine whether you are of good character, you might be asked to provide police certificates for each country you have lived in for 12 months or more, over the last 10 years (calculated immediately before the time the visa application is lodged), since turning 16 years of age.

You must declare all recorded offences to us. If you do not declare an offence and we become aware of this it might have a negative impact on your application.

Do not finalise any travel arrangements until after the grant of your visa. This is because visa processing times can vary depending on the visa type and your personal circumstances.

Statutory declarations

As part of the character assessment, you might be asked to complete a [Character Statutory Declaration \(34KB PDF file\)](#).

In some instances you might also be required to provide personal details to allow additional character checks to be undertaken. Your case officer might ask you to complete the following form:

- [Form 80—Personal particulars for character assessment \(611KB PDF file\)](#).

If you are applying for a visa outside Australia, you do not have to provide this information with your application. You will be advised when it is required.

If you are applying in Australia, you should provide this information with your application.

If you are applying for Australian citizenship

If you are applying for Australian citizenship you will be assessed under good character requirements.

Information about [Good character and offences](#) for Australian citizenship is available on the application forms and the citizenship website.

You might be required to provide a number of documents to prove you are of good character.

Police certificates

Police certificates are also known as a penal clearance certificate in some countries. If you need information regarding penal clearance/police certificates for a citizenship application refer to the information on the [Good character and offences](#) page on the citizenship website.

When is a police certificate required?

If you are over the age of 16 and have lived in any of the countries listed on this page for a total of one year or more in the last 10 years, you might be asked to get a police certificate from that country.

The certificate must cover the period of time from the issue date back to the age you ceased to be a minor, or must cover the whole time you were in a country.

For immigration purposes a police certificate is deemed to be valid for 12 months from the issue date.

How do I obtain a police certificate?

For instructions on obtaining a certificate from an overseas government or law enforcement authority, refer to the [relevant country](#) information.

If you are required to provide an Australian police clearance certificate because you have spent more than 12 months in Australia within the last 10 years, you must complete the Australian Federal Police (AFP) National Police Check application form which is available from the AFP website:

- [AFP National Police Checks](#)

You should use Code 33 at Question 1 on the form and include details of any, and all, names you have been known by.

If an AFP certificate is provided based on incorrect information, we might request another certificate. State and Territory issued police certificates are not accepted.

Note: Fingerprints are not required for AFP National Police Checks.

For information on how to apply for a police clearance certificate from another country, select one of the relevant links following:

Africa

- [Algeria](#), [Angola](#)
- [Benin](#), [Botswana](#), [Burkina Faso](#), [Burundi](#)
- [Cameroon](#), [Cape Verde](#), [Comoros](#)
- [Congo \(Republic of\)](#), [Congo \(Democratic Republic of\)](#)
- [Djibouti](#)
- [Equatorial Guinea](#), [Eritrea](#), [Ethiopia](#)
- [Gabon](#), [Gambia](#), [Ghana](#), [Guinea](#), [Guinea-Bissau](#)
- [Ivory Coast](#)
- [Kenya](#)
- [Lesotho](#), [Liberia](#)
- [Madagascar](#), [Malawi](#), [Mali](#), [Mauritius](#)
- [Morocco](#), [Mozambique](#)
- [Namibia](#), [Niger](#), [Nigeria](#)
- [Reunion](#), [Rwanda](#)
- [Senegal](#), [Seychelles](#), [Sierra Leone](#), [South Africa](#), [Swaziland](#)
- [Tanzania](#), [Togo](#), [Tunisia](#)
- [Uganda](#)
- [Zambia](#), [Zimbabwe](#).

Asia-Pacific

- [Australia](#)
- [Bangladesh](#), [Brunei Darussalam](#), [Burma \(Myanmar\)](#)
- [Cambodia](#), [China \(People's Republic of\)](#), [Cook Islands](#)
- [East Timor \(Timor Leste\)](#)
- [Fiji](#), [French Polynesia](#)
- [Guam](#)
- [Hong Kong](#)
- [India](#), [Indonesia](#)
- [Japan](#)
- [Kiribati](#), [Korea \(Republic of\)](#)
- [Laos](#)
- [Macau](#), [Malaysia](#), [Maldives](#), [Marshall Islands \(Republic of\)](#), [Micronesia](#), [Mongolia](#)
- [Nauru](#), [Nepal](#), [New Caledonia](#), [New Zealand](#)
- [Pakistan](#), [Papua New Guinea](#), [Philippines](#), [Palau](#)
- [Samoa \(US\)](#), [Samoa \(Western\)](#), [Singapore](#), [Solomon Islands](#), [Sri Lanka](#)
- [Taiwan](#), [Thailand](#), [Tonga](#), [Tuvalu](#)
- [Vanuatu](#), [Vietnam](#)
- [Wallis and Futuna](#).

Central America, South America and the Caribbean

- [Anguilla](#), [Antigua and Barbuda](#), [Argentina](#)
- [Bahamas](#), [Barbados](#), [Belize](#), [Bermuda](#), [Bolivia](#), [Brazil](#)
- [Cayman Islands](#), [Chile](#), [Colombia](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Cuba](#), [Curacao](#)
- [Dominica](#), [Dominican Republic](#)
- [Ecuador](#), [El Salvador](#)

- [French Guiana](#)
- [Grenada](#), [Guadeloupe](#), [Guatemala](#), [Guyana](#)
- [Haiti](#), [Honduras](#), [Jamaica](#)
- [Martinique](#), [Montserrat](#)
- [Nicaragua](#)
- [Panama](#), [Paraguay](#), [Peru](#), [Puerto Rico](#)
- [Saint Kitts and Nevis](#), [Saint Lucia](#), [Saint Vincent and the Grenadines](#), [Suriname](#)
- [Trinidad and Tobago](#), [Turks and Caicos Islands](#)
- [Uruguay](#)
- [Venezuela](#), [Virgin Islands \(British\)](#)

Central Asia

- [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#)
- [Tajikistan](#), [Turkmenistan](#)
- [Uzbekistan](#)

Europe

- [Albania](#), [Andorra](#), [Armenia](#), [Austria](#), [Azerbaijan](#)
- [Belarus](#), [Belgium](#), [Bosnia-Herzegovina](#), [Bulgaria](#)
- [Croatia](#), [Cyprus \(Republic of\)](#), [Cyprus \(Turkish occupied areas\)](#)
- [Czech Republic](#)
- [Denmark \(including Faroe Islands and Greenland\)](#)
- [Estonia](#)
- [Finland](#), [France](#)
- [Georgia](#), [Germany](#), [Greece](#)
- [Hungary](#)
- [Iceland](#), [Ireland](#), [Italy](#)
- [Kosovo](#)
- [Latvia](#), [Liechtenstein](#), [Lithuania](#), [Luxembourg](#)
- [Macedonia \(Former Yugoslav Republic of\)](#), [Malta](#), [Moldova](#)
- [Monaco](#), [Montenegro \(Republic of\)](#)
- [Netherlands](#), [Norway](#)
- [Poland](#), [Portugal](#)
- [Romania](#), [Russian Federation](#)
- [San Marino](#), [Serbia \(Republic of\)](#), [Slovak Republic](#)
- [Slovenia](#), [Spain](#), [Sweden](#), [Switzerland](#)
- [Turkey](#)
- [Ukraine](#), [United Kingdom](#)
- [Vatican City](#)

Middle East

- [Bahrain](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [Iran](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Jordan](#)
- [Kuwait](#)
- [Lebanon](#)
- [Libya](#)

- [Oman](#)
- [Palestinian Authority—West Bank and Gaza Strip](#)
- [Qatar](#)
- [Saudi Arabia](#)
- [Syria](#)
- [United Arab Emirates](#)
- [Yemen](#)

North America

- [Canada](#)
- [Mexico](#)
- [United States of America](#)

What if a certificate is not available?

In some countries, police certificates are only available to citizens or to residents. Where this applies, it will be indicated in the country information. If a category, such as non-citizen or non-resident, is not listed in the [country information](#), it generally means a certificate cannot be obtained.

If a certificate cannot be obtained, or if a country is not listed on this page, please contact your nearest Australian Immigration [overseas office](#) for further information.

What if I have been working on a ship?

If you have spent a cumulative total of 12 months or more in the last 10 years working on a merchant ship, cruise ship, private yacht or oil rig, and the country whose flag the ship sails under or country of ownership of the rig is the same, then police certificates should be requested from the relevant authority, regardless of whether that was for a single employer or multiple employers.

You will also need to provide a letter or statement of good conduct from each ship's captain or company attesting to your character. The letter should include the vessel's name, the job you had while on the ship or rig and the start and finish dates of employment.

Military certificates

If you are a current member of a military force and have spent more than 12 months serving in a country other than your country of citizenship, you will need to provide a letter from the relevant military organisation attesting to your character. This is generally a letter from your commanding officer stating that you have not been convicted of any criminal offence during your time in the military.

Police certificates are still required for every country in which you have served for the periods set out above. This includes where you have been stationed at a military base in a foreign country.

Accuracy of information

Information on how to obtain a certificate from a particular country can be subject to change without notice.

We recommend you check the website of the relevant authority in the country from which you are seeking the police certificate—or the embassy or consulate website—for up-to-date information on procedures.

Privacy

All details concerning you that are provided to the Australian government by a foreign government or law enforcement authority will be treated as confidential. [Form 1442i Privacy Notice](#) has more information.

Further information

- [Fact Sheet 79—The Character Requirement](#)
- [Form 80—Personal particulars for character assessment \(611KB PDF file\)](#)