



Health Undertakings Fact Sheet

Applicants for permanent and some temporary visas must undergo health checks overseas as part of the visa application process. Applicants for a permanent visa must have a medical examination, a chest x-ray if 11 years of age or older, and an HIV test if 15 years of age or older.

The health requirement forms part of a broader strategy within the visa processing framework intended to manage key risks and maintain the integrity of the visa system. Specifically the health requirement is designed to:

- Minimise public health risks to the Australian community;
- Contain public expenditure on health and community services; and
- Maintain access of Australian residents to health and other community services.

An individual will not be granted a visa if they are assessed as having active tuberculosis (TB) during the visa application process, as this disease is considered a threat to public health and is specifically listed in the Migration Regulations. Persons with active disease must therefore undergo TB treatment before visa grant can occur.

A visa can be granted where the applicant has been successfully treated for TB, has inactive TB, or a past history of the disease. In such cases, the applicant's medical file is assessed by a Medical Officer of the Commonwealth (MOC) and the applicant may be found to meet the health requirement subject to signing a written undertaking to agree to follow-up of their condition onshore. Such an applicant will not meet the health requirement without signing this undertaking (Form 815).

DIAC requires a person who has signed a health undertaking to report to a designated health authority in their State or Territory of residence for follow-up health assessment after arrival in Australia. This is a precautionary measure to check that their condition (generally TB) does not require further treatment.

The Health Undertaking Service

The Health Undertaking Service (HUS) plays an important role in maintaining the integrity of the health undertaking process for offshore visa applicants following their arrival onshore through registration of undertaking and facilitating, monitoring and reporting on compliance.

HUS manages health undertakings for **offshore** clients. These are clients who undergo a health examination for their visa application with an overseas panel doctor and sign a health undertaking prior to their visa grant. A Medical Officer of the Commonwealth (MOC) determines if a health undertaking is required. The offshore DIAC visa processing officer liaises with the client in relation to signing the health undertaking (form 815).

Onshore clients who apply for a subsequent visa that requires a health examination do this through Medibank Health Solutions (MHS). DIAC contracts services for the provision of health examinations for clients who are onshore to MHS. Following 24 March 2012, onshore clients who require a health undertaking will be referred directly to relevant clinics by MHS. Prior to that date, some onshore clients will also need to register with HUS as outlined below.

People arriving on a health undertaking should have a copy of their 815 Form provided by DIAC. The process is:

- The person, or someone on their behalf, must telephone the HUS on **1800 811 334** (free call) within 4 weeks of arrival, and quote their **HAP ID**, located at top right of their 815 Form. For pre-24 March 2012 clients, they should quote the HATS Access Number.
- Other details required are the **entrant's name; date of arrival; whether staying permanently; address; phone number, e-mail contact**. If voicemail is reached, full details including HAP ID can be left on the message machine, and the HUS will return the call.
- For refugee and special humanitarian entrants, the Settlement Service Provider will assist with registration, which may be done by email. Full details including HAP ID and contact address and telephone number of the entrant must be provided.
- The client will receive a letter confirming the contact, and stating that they must notify any change of address.
- For people on a TB-related Undertaking, HUS will send the person's medical documents to the relevant TB Services, for distribution to the appropriate clinic.
- The client will receive a Chest Clinic appointment by mail. The time until an appointment may vary as appointment dates will depend on clinic waiting lists.
- Those with a health undertaking for another condition (e.g. hepatitis B) will receive information by mail. They should take these documents to a local doctor of their choice.

This system is an important public health program, aimed at protecting the health of migrants and refugees, and the rest of the community.

Whenever a person on a health undertaking changes their address, they must notify the HUS on 1800 811 334 or the clinic at which they have an appointment.

Contact information

<State and territory authorities to insert list of chest clinics and/or local contact details as appropriate>