



Australian Government
Department of Immigration
and Border Protection



Australian
**CUSTOMS AND
BORDER PROTECTION**

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD): The Government's visa and border arrangements - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General FAQs

Q. Which countries are currently listed as Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)-affected countries?

As at 18 December 2014, the following countries are listed as affected by an EVD-outbreak:

- Liberia
- Sierra Leone
- Guinea

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was previously listed as being affected by EVD but is now considered EVD-free.

Q. How are countries determined to be listed as EVD-affected countries?

The list of EVD-affected countries is determined by the World Health Organization (WHO). The list of EVD-affected countries for the purpose of visa processes and border screening will be updated as appropriate based on Department of Health's advice.

Information for citizens of listed EVD-affected countries

Q. I am a citizen of, and live in, one of the listed EVD-affected countries. I have been granted a permanent visa but I have not yet travelled to Australia. The department has requested that I do not travel to Australia at this time. What can I do?

You will be contacted by us and asked to provide details about your recent travel, your current country of residence and your intended travel itinerary. It is, therefore, important that you ensure we have your current contact details.

If you are living in, or intend to travel to an EVD-affected country within 21 days before your planned arrival in Australia, we will request that you undergo an active monitoring arrangement for 21 days prior to your arrival in Australia. We will, therefore, request that you amend your travel booking to allow for this. The active monitoring arrangements can vary depending on your circumstances.

If you have not been in, and will not travel through, an EVD-affected country before your intended arrival in Australia, you will be requested to provide documentation of this to us.

If you do not provide proof of your recent travel or residency to us, your visa may be cancelled. You will be advised if this occurs and be given an opportunity to seek revocation of the decision to cancel.

If we are unable to contact you on the details you have given your visa may also be cancelled.

Note: Separate arrangements apply to permanent residents who have already spent time in Australia on their permanent visa. Further FAQ's are available for Australian citizens and permanent residents.

Q. I am a citizen of and live in one of the EVD-affected countries. I have made an application for a permanent visa* and this application has not yet been decided. What will I need to do for my application to be finalised?

If you live in an EVD-affected country your visa application will be given the lowest priority for processing.

However your application may cease to be treated as the lowest priority if you can demonstrate to your case officer that you have not been in your home country or another EVD-affected country in the past 21 days and do not intend to travel to an affected country prior to your intended travel to Australia.

*Note that these arrangements do not apply to applications for Resident Return visas. If you have applied for a Resident Return visa, your application will be processed as per usual.

Q. I am a citizen of, and live in, one of the EVD-affected countries. I have made an application for a temporary visa and this application has not yet been decided. What will happen with my application?

If you applied for a temporary visa, your application may be refused. However you will be provided with a chance to comment on the refusal prior to a decision being made. If you have not been in an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days, this would be your opportunity to provide us with details about your recent travel and residence and your intended travel itinerary prior to a decision being made to refuse your application.

Q. I am a citizen of one of the EVD-affected countries. I have not been in my home country for more than 21 days. Will my visa application be processed?

If you applied for a temporary visa, your application may be refused unless you provide us with detailed information that you have not been living in an EVD-affected country and do not intend to travel to an EVD-affected country prior to your intended arrival in Australia.

If you provide this information in the requested timeframes, your application will be processed as normal, and your visa will be granted so long as you meet all the visa requirements.

If you applied for a permanent visa, your application will be processed as the lowest priority unless you provide us with detailed information that you have not been living in an EVD-affected country and do not intend to travel to an EVD-affected country prior to your intended arrival in Australia.

Once appropriate evidence documentation is provided, your application will no longer be processed as the lowest priority.

Note for temporary and permanent visa applicants: If you have only recently departed an EVD-affected country, we may request that you visit a panel physician after 21 days of being in a country which is not EVD-affected. This is to confirm that you have not been exposed to EVD by returning to an affected country and are EVD-free.

Q. I am a citizen of one of the EVD-affected countries. I have been notified that my temporary visa has been cancelled. I have been living outside of this country (and have not been in another EVD-affected country) for more than 21 days. What are my rights for reconsideration of the decision or review?

When we advised you of the decision to cancel your visa, you would have also received advice on how to request that the cancellation be revoked. If you wish to seek revocation of the decision to cancel your visa, you will need to provide information and supporting documentation that you have not

been living in an EVD-affected country and do not intend to travel to an EVD-affected country prior to your intended arrival in Australia.

When appropriate evidence is provided, the decision-maker will determine whether or not the decision to cancel your visa will be revoked.

Q. I am living in one of the EVD-affected countries, but there are no EVD-related concerns in my province/city/village. Do these visa arrangements still apply to me?

Yes. If you are living in (or have visited) an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days, these arrangements apply to you, regardless of which part of the EVD-affected country you spent time in.

Information for citizens of non-EVD listed countries

Q. I live in an EVD-affected country but I am not a citizen. I have made an application for a permanent visa and this application has not yet been decided. What will I need to do for my application to be finalised?

If you are living in an EVD-affected country your visa application will be given the lowest priority for processing, even though you are not a citizen of that country.

Your application may cease to be treated as the lowest priority if you can demonstrate that you have not been living in an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days and do not intend to travel to an affected country prior to your proposed travel to Australia.

Q I live in an EVD-affected country but I am not a citizen. I have made an application for a temporary visa and this application has not yet been decided. What will happen with my application?

If you applied for a temporary visa, your application may be refused. However you will be provided with a chance to comment on the refusal prior to a decision being made. If you have not been in an EVD-affected county in the past 21 days, this would be your opportunity to provide us with details about your recent travel and residence and your intended travel itinerary prior to a decision being made to refuse your application.

Q. I am not a citizen of an EVD-affected country but have recently visited or spent time in an EVD-affected country. I have made an application for a temporary visa and this application has not yet been decided. What will happen with my application?

Your application may be refused unless you provide us with specific and detailed information that you have not been living in an EVD-affected country for at least 21 days and do not intend to travel to an EVD-affected country prior to your intended arrival in Australia.

As you have recently spent time in an EVD-affected country, we may request that you visit a panel physician after 21 days of being in a country which is not EVD-affected. This is to confirm that you have not been exposed to EVD by returning to an EVD-affected country and are EVD-free.

If all requirements are satisfied, your application will be processed as normal, and your visa will be granted.

Q. I am not a citizen of an EVD-affected country. I have been granted a permanent visa and live in one of the EVD-affected countries. However, the department has requested that I do not travel to Australia at this time. What can I do?

You will be contacted by us and asked to provide details about your recent travel and residence and your intended travel itinerary. It is, therefore, important that you ensure we have your current contact details. If you are living in, or intend to travel to an EVD-affected country within 21 days before your planned arrival in Australia, we will request that you undergo an active monitoring arrangement for 21

days prior to your arrival in Australia. We may request that you amend your travel booking to allow for this. The active monitoring arrangements will vary depending on your circumstances.

If you have not been in, and will not travel to, an EVD-affected country before your intended arrival in Australia, you will be requested to provide documentation of this to us.

If you do not provide proof of your recent travel or residency to us your visa may be cancelled. You will be advised if this occurs and be given an opportunity to seek revocation of the decision to cancel.

If we are unable to contact you on the details you have given your visa may also be cancelled.

Q. I live in a country where there has been a current or previously reported case of EVD. This is not one of the countries listed as an EVD-affected country. What does this mean for me?

Unless you intend to travel through one of the **listed** EVD-affected countries within 21 days prior to your intended arrival in Australia, you will be able to travel to Australia.

If at any time during your journey you begin to feel unwell, you should alert the flight attendant or cruise attendant.

If you begin to feel unwell after arrival in Australia, you should seek urgent medical advice or call the Ebola Hotline for travellers on 1800 186 815 and alert them to your recent travel to an EVD-affected country. You will be provided with information on arrival in Australia on the signs and symptoms of EVD and what to do if you become unwell.

Travellers who are unwell on arrival in Australia will be referred by Australian border officials to be assessed and managed by public health authorities.

Note: The list of EVD-affected countries might change. The list of EVD-affected countries is determined by the World Health Organization (WHO). The list of EVD-affected countries for the purpose of visa processes and border screening will be updated as appropriate based on advice from the Department of Health.

Q. I live in a country that is not affected by EVD, but my country shares a border with or is in the same region as a country affected by EVD.

Your visa application will be processed as normal unless you have been in an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days, or intend to travel through an EVD-affected country.

You might be asked additional questions by your case officer to determine if any additional arrangements should apply to your application.

Q. I am a New Zealander or other third country national eligible for Transit without visa or an Electronic Transit Authority. I have spent time in one of the EVD-affected countries. Am I still able to transit through Australia?

If you meet exit screening requirements in place at the EVD-affected country airport from which you initially depart you will be able to travel.

You will be provided with a Travel History Card on the aircraft or cruise ship before arriving in Australia and will need to declare if you have been in an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days.

You will then be asked to undertake a brief assessment aimed at identifying if you have been at risk of EVD and your temperature will be measured. You may also be referred to a human quarantine officer for further assessment.

If at any time during your journey, you begin to feel unwell, you should alert the flight attendant or cruise attendant.

If you begin to feel unwell after arrival in Australia, you should seek urgent medical advice or call the Ebola Hotline for travellers on 1800 186 815 and alert them to your recent travel to an EVD-affected

country. You will be provided with information by border officials on the signs and symptoms of EVD and what to do if you become unwell within 21 days after leaving an EVD affected country.

Travellers who are unwell will be appropriately referred, assessed and managed by public health authorities.

Visa holders or applicants currently in Australia

Q. I am a temporary visa holder in Australia and intend to travel to an EVD-affected country for a short break, such as to visit family during the holidays. Can I return to Australia afterwards?

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has issued advice for people considering travelling to EVD-affected countries. As at 18 December 2014, the advice is that people in Australia should reconsider their need to travel to these countries due to the current EVD outbreak. Further advice is available on the Smartraveller website at: <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

If you are on a temporary visa, such as a multi-entry visitor visa or student visa, and you return to an EVD-affected country, your visa may be cancelled. If this occurs you will be provided with an opportunity to request that the cancellation be revoked. You will need to provide evidence that in the 21 days prior to your intended re-entry to Australia you will not be in an EVD-affected country.

Q. I am a national of an EVD-affected country and I am in Australia on a temporary visa and would like to extend my stay in Australia due to the EVD outbreak in my country. Can I extend my stay?

It is important you contact us to discuss your circumstances.

It is not possible to 'extend' an Australian visa. Where your visa allows you to do so, you could lodge a new visa application in Australia. However, you would need to meet all the eligibility requirements for the grant of whichever visa you apply for, including, should you apply for another temporary visa, that you genuinely intend to remain only temporarily in Australia.

If your Australian visa has a condition 8503 'No further stay' attached, you would need to seek a waiver of this condition in order to lodge an application for most visas in Australia. There is no automatic waiver of this condition for applicants from EVD-affected countries. Each case will be considered on a case by case basis. For further information on waiving condition 8503, see:

www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/52bWaiving_Condition8503.htm

Q. I am in Australia and have applied for a visa that can only be granted while I am outside of Australia. My case officer has advised me to depart Australia so that my visa can be granted. Can I travel to an EVD-affected country (for example, because I have family/business there)?

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has issued advice for people considering travelling to EVD-affected countries. As at 18 December 2014, the advice is that people in Australia should reconsider their need to travel to these countries due to the current EVD outbreak. Further advice is available on the Smartraveller website at: <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

If you are on a temporary visa, such as a multi-entry visitor visa or student visa, and you return to an EVD-affected country, your visa may be cancelled. If this occurs you will be provided with an opportunity to request that the cancellation be revoked.

If you travel to an EVD-affected country, this will jeopardise the processing of your new visa application. If you have applied for a temporary visa, it may be refused. If you have applied for a permanent visa, your application will be assigned lowest priority until you provide evidence that you have not been in an EVD-affected country in the last 21 days.

Q. I am in Australia and am applying for a Bridging visa B so that I can travel to another country while my substantive visa is being processed. Can I travel to an EVD-affected country

If you are in Australia on a temporary visa and want to travel to an EVD-affected country on a Bridging visa B:

- The temporary visa that you hold may be cancelled.
- The visa that you have applied for will either be refused (if a temporary visa), or assigned the lowest priority (if a provisional or permanent visa).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has issued advice for people considering travelling to EVD-affected countries. As at 18 December 2014, the advice is that people in Australia should reconsider their need to travel to these countries due to the current EVD outbreak. Further advice is available on the Smartraveller website at: <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

Information for Australian citizens and permanent residents

Q. I am an Australian citizen and living in or have recently travelled to, one of the EVD-affected countries. Am I able to return to Australia?

Yes. Australian citizens returning to Australia will not be prevented from boarding flights or re-entering the country.

You will be provided with a Travel History Card on the aircraft or cruise ship before arriving in Australia, and will need to declare if you have been in an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days.

If you have been in an EVD-affected country in the past 21 days, you will be asked to undertake a brief assessment aimed at identifying if you have been at risk of EVD and your temperature will be measured. You may also be referred to a human quarantine officer for further assessment.

If at any time during your journey you begin to feel unwell, you should alert the flight attendant or cruise attendant.

If you begin to feel unwell after arrival in Australia you should seek urgent medical advice or call the Ebola Hotline for travellers on 1800 186 815 and alert them to your recent travel to an EVD-affected country.

Q. I am an Australian permanent resident and have previously been to Australia as a permanent visa holder. I currently live in one of the EVD-affected countries. Will I need to undergo a 21 day active monitoring arrangement before travel to Australia?

If you hold a Resident Return Visa (RRV), Australian Declaratory Visa (ADV), Authority to Return, or another permanent visa (such as a permanent Partner visa or permanent Skilled visa) you may return to Australia.

For further information, see the response provided to the question above.

Employers in Australia

Q. I am an employer with staff members who are citizens of, resident in or recently spent time in an EVD-affected country; Can they still travel to Australia?

Employers with staff members who are citizens of, resident in or recently spent time in an EVD-affected country (for example, a fly-in/fly-out worker) who hold or have made applications for visas will be treated identically to all other foreign nationals as per the information provided in other sections of this FAQ. Returning Australian citizens and permanent residents who have previously been in Australia can return to Australia.

Other questions

Q. I have a doctor's certificate stating I am clear of fever, can I travel?

A doctor's certificate in itself does not alter these arrangements. Where an EVD-related health assessment and certificate is requested, this will need to be completed by a panel physician (panel doctor) from the Australian panel physician network. Whether or not you can travel to Australia will depend on your visa arrangements and whether you have been, or will spend time, in an EVD-affected country. Please refer to the advice above for your particular circumstances.

Q. I have a compelling or compassionate reason for wanting to travel urgently to Australia. Can this be taken into account?

An assessment on whether an application will be processed as lowest priority (for permanent visas) or refused (for temporary visas) will be made on the basis of the EVD-related risk - in particular, whether an applicant has spent time in an EVD-affected country in the last 21 days.

Q. I have not been in an EVD-affected country in the last 21 days. However, I was previously infected with EVD as a result of one of the recent outbreaks and have recovered. What should I do?

You should declare that you have had a recent EVD infection in your visa application form. You might require a medical exam by a panel physician prior to any visa application being finalised.

Q. What constitutes evidence that I have not been in an EVD-affected country in the last 21 days?

We will usually require travel itineraries that demonstrate that you have not been in an EVD affected area in the past 21 days. Evidence could also include travel information in your passport.

Humanitarian Applicants

What arrangements are in place for humanitarian applicants?

The Government has temporarily suspended processing of all Humanitarian visa applications from EVD-affected countries until further notice. This means that like non-Humanitarian permanent visas, all Humanitarian visa applications from EVD-affected countries will be processed with the lowest priority.

There is a small number of Humanitarian visa holders from EVD-affected countries who were granted their visas prior to processing being suspended. These Humanitarian visa holders are undergoing active monitoring arrangements for 21 days prior to travelling to Australia.

My family/relatives are in an EVD-affected country and were granted Humanitarian visas prior to processing being suspended. What should they do now?

The Australian Embassy or the International Organization for Migration will be in contact with your family/relatives to discuss appropriate active monitoring arrangements. Travel to Australia should not be arranged until your family has undergone active monitoring.

If my family undergoes active monitoring outside of Australia for 21 days, will they also be subject to quarantine/active monitoring/isolation for a further period after they arrive in Australia?

Your family will be provided with a Travel History Card on the aircraft or cruise ship before arriving in Australia, and will need to declare if they have been in an EVD affected country in the past 21 days.

If they have been in an EVD affected country over the past 21 days, they will be asked to undertake a brief assessment aimed at identifying if they have been at risk of EVD and their temperature will be measured. They may also be referred to a human quarantine officer for further assessment.

Further monitoring arrangements will be determined based on their risk of exposure to EVD, assessed by state and territory health authorities.

If at any time during their journey they begin to feel unwell, they should alert the flight attendant or cruise attendant.

If they begin to feel unwell after arrival in Australia they should seek urgent medical advice or call the Ebola Hotline for travellers on 1800 186 815 and alert them to their recent travel to an EVD-affected country.