



Settlement Services for Humanitarian Entrants

- [Introduction](#)
- [What checks do humanitarian entrants undergo before arriving in Australia?](#)
- [What support do humanitarian entrants receive when they arrive in Australia?](#)
- [Do humanitarian entrants receive help with English?](#)
- [Do humanitarian entrants receive help with finding a job?](#)
- [What income support are humanitarian entrants able to receive?](#)
- [Do humanitarian entrants receive more than other Australians?](#)
- [Where do humanitarian entrants settle?](#)
- [Are entrants accommodated in public housing?](#)
- [How do humanitarian entrants contribute to Australia?](#)
- [What help do asylum seekers granted Australia's protection receive?](#)
- [Is there support available for Temporary Protection visa holders?](#)

Introduction

As a member of the international community, Australia shares responsibility for protecting refugees worldwide.

Australia's [Refugee and Humanitarian Programme](#), administered by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), is designed to ensure that Australia can respond effectively to global humanitarian situations and that support services are available to meet the specific needs of these entrants.

The offshore component of the Refugee and Humanitarian Programme (['Humanitarian Programme'](#)) helps people who are subject to persecution or substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of their human rights in their home countries and have fled their home country.

People who are resettled in Australia under the Humanitarian Programme are referred to as 'humanitarian entrants'.

What checks do humanitarian entrants undergo before arriving in Australia?

All humanitarian entrants resettled in Australia undertake strict health, character and national security checks before being granted a visa. This is consistent with the requirements to be met by all applicants for an Australian permanent visa.

What support do humanitarian entrants receive when they arrive in Australia?

The Australian Government provides a range of settlement services aimed at assisting humanitarian entrants and eligible migrants within their initial period of settlement. These services assist clients to become self-reliant and participate equally in Australian society and minimise longer-term reliance on support services.

Service providers deliver the initial settlement support for humanitarian entrants on behalf of the Australian Government. Support is provided on a needs basis, which means that not all clients will require all available services.

The Australian Cultural Orientation Programme

Humanitarian entrants over the age of five are eligible to attend an [Australian Cultural Orientation \(AUSCO\)](#) course before their departure for Australia. AUSCO gives practical advice about the journey to Australia, including quarantine laws and information about what to expect on arrival.

Humanitarian Settlement Services Programme

[The Humanitarian Settlement Services \(HSS\) Programme](#) provides early practical support to humanitarian entrants on arrival, and throughout their initial settlement period, generally for the first six to 12 months.

HSS providers work with clients to assess and identify needs and deliver a tailored package of services to meet those needs. Services may include: meeting clients when they arrive, help finding suitable accommodation, initial orientation and a package of basic household goods. HSS providers also assist clients to register with Centrelink, Medicare, health services, banking and schools.

The HSS Programme has an [Onshore Orientation Programme](#) to assist clients understand Australian society, laws, values, and rights and responsibilities. All HSS recipients aged 15 years and over are eligible for orientation support and the Programme is based on their individual needs and capabilities.

Complex Case Support Programme

[The Complex Case Support \(CCS\) Programme](#) provides specialised and intensive case management services to eligible humanitarian entrants with exceptional needs which are beyond the scope of other settlement services. The Programme is available for up to five years after arriving in Australia and includes access to a variety of services including: mental and physical health, disability services, family violence intervention and support to manage accommodation, financial and legal issues.

Settlement Grants

Humanitarian entrants may also be referred to community organisations funded under [Settlement grants](#). Settlement grants provide support for humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants in their first five years of life in Australia, with a focus on fostering social and economic participation, personal well-being, independence and community connectedness.

Activities funded under Settlement grants aim to help people become self-reliant and participate to their full capacity in the Australian community. The services funded under Settlement grants include: casework/coordination; youth settlement services; community coordination and development; and support for ethno-specific communities.

Do humanitarian entrants receive help with English?

We live in a multicultural society. The Australian Government and agencies have an obligation to provide [equitable access to services](#) regardless of the cultural and linguistic background of clients.

The [Adult Migrant English Program \(AMEP\)](#) (administered by the Department of Education and Training) is designed to help eligible visa holders, including humanitarian entrants, learn foundation English language skills to assist with their successful settlement in Australia.

English language skills are essential for newly-arrived migrants to secure employment, access further education and training and better connect with the Australian community.

All AMEP clients have access to up to 510 hours of English language courses in their first five years of settlement in Australia. Participation in the program is voluntary.

Eligible humanitarian entrants may also access the AMEP sub-programme called the Special Preparatory Programme (SPP). The SPP provides up to 400 additional hours of tailored English classes to eligible humanitarian entrants in recognition of their greater learning and support needs arising from difficult pre-migration experiences, such as torture or trauma, and/or limited prior schooling.

In addition, the Australian Government funds the [Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#) to provide free interpreting services to non-English speaking Australian citizens and permanent residents communicating with approved groups and individuals, including doctors in private practice and pharmacies. The Australian Government also funds the [Victorian Translating and Interpreting Service \(VITS\)](#) to provide free translation of essential personal documents. Applications for free document translation are lodged at [AMEP](#) service providers.

Do humanitarian entrants receive help with finding a job?

Yes, humanitarian entrants are eligible for the full range of Australian Government employment services assistance, and also income support, from the date of their arrival in Australia. They have an initial 13 week exemption from activity test requirements. During this period they are not required to engage in employment services, but the opportunity is available for them to volunteer.

HSS and Settlement grants caseworkers can provide clients with information about Government employment services, including [jobactive](#) and [Disability Employment Services](#); the [job seeker assessment processes](#); and accompany clients to Centrelink, where job-ready clients may be referred to a [Job Capacity Assessment](#). After this, the client may be referred to Australian Government employment service providers, who will assist them to find employment.

What income support are humanitarian entrants able to receive?

When humanitarian entrants arrive in Australia through the Humanitarian Programme, they arrive as permanent residents and can immediately access income support payments under the same eligibility criteria as any other Australian permanent resident.

This is in recognition of the difficult circumstances they have faced, and the fact that they come to Australia with limited money, possessions and social networks to assist them to meet basic living expenses.

Do humanitarian entrants receive more than other Australians?

Humanitarian entrants do not receive higher benefits than other social security recipients. They have the same entitlements as all other Australian permanent residents.

Where do humanitarian entrants settle?

Humanitarian entrants are often located close to family members or their [proposers](#) ('links') living in Australia.

If they do not have links in Australia, people are generally settled in [regional locations](#) that provide the best access to reasonable housing, education and employment prospects.

Other important factors in regional towns include sufficient infrastructure and the availability of settlement, mainstream and community services to support new arrivals.

Are humanitarian entrants accommodated in public housing?

Humanitarian entrants must meet the same requirements as other Australians to be eligible for public housing. They are not given preferential treatment and must remain on waiting lists, as do other Australians in need of public housing. Most find accommodation in the private rental market, where they apply for properties on the same basis as other Australians.

How do humanitarian entrants contribute to Australia?

Humanitarian entrants arriving in Australia naturally face challenges in adjusting to the Australian way of life. Despite these challenges, most humanitarian entrants settle successfully and make a positive contribution to the Australian community.

Research undertaken in 2011 by Professor Graeme Hugo from the University of Adelaide, ([Economic, Civic and Social Contributions of First and Second Generation Humanitarian Entrants](#)) shows that humanitarian entrants make an important contribution to Australia in many areas including social engagement, workforce participation, business ownership and volunteering within the community.

The research has also found that most humanitarian entrants' families, especially those in the second generation, are able to adjust effectively over time and eventually match, and in many cases exceed, Australian-born levels of economic and social contribution.

What help do asylum seekers granted Australia's protection receive?

The Humanitarian Programme also has an [Onshore component](#) which provides options for people who are in Australia and wish to apply for protection (or asylum).

From 30 August 2013, two groups of asylum seekers who are granted Protection visas are [no longer eligible](#) for services under the HSS Programme. These groups are:

- Illegal Maritime Arrivals who have been granted a Protection visa while living in the community on a Bridging visa E or in community detention
- people who were not Illegal Maritime Arrivals, but have similarly been granted protection while living in the community, including in community detention ('community grants').

This change does not apply to unaccompanied humanitarian minors and most people granted a Protection visa while living in an immigration detention centre or facility.

People affected by the change are still eligible for:

- services funded by Settlement grants
- English classes under the AMEP
- free Translating and Interpreting Services
- CCS, if assessed by the Department of Social Services as having multiple, complex needs affecting their settlement
- torture and trauma counselling.

As permanent residents of Australia, people affected by the change will continue to have access to the full range of mainstream services, such as Medicare, Centrelink and employment services.

Is there support available for Temporary Protection visa holders?

The Australian Government also provides a number of services to [Temporary Humanitarian Stay \(449\)](#), [Temporary Humanitarian Concern \(786\)](#), [Temporary Protection \(785\) \(TPV\)](#) or [Safe Haven Enterprise \(790\) \(SHEV\) visa holders](#). This includes:

- some social security payments such as Special Benefit, Rent Assistance and family assistance payments (Department of Human Services)
- employment — including help finding a job and Disability Employment Services
- health services, including Medicare
- mental health and emotional wellbeing services (including counselling for torture and trauma)
- education for children of school age
- CCS and free Translating and Interpreting Services (Department of Social Services).

More information

- [Settlement Services](#)
- [Refugee and Humanitarian Programme](#)
- [Adult Migrant English Program \(AMEP\)](#)
- [jobactive](#)