



Important information on lodging Maritime Crew Visa applications November 2024

You need a valid visa before travelling to Australia

All travellers need to hold a valid visa to enter Australia. Seafarers are able to apply for, and be granted, a Maritime Crew (Subclass 988) visa (MCV) if they intend to work on an eligible ship in Australia. Those seafarers not eligible for an MCV will need another valid Australian visa.

Please be aware that lodging an application is not a guarantee that a visa will be granted.

Your visa application must be lodged AND granted before travelling to Australia. Applications for MCVs cannot be lodged while you are in Australia. A complete application should be lodged at least four weeks before you depart for Australia to allow time for processing, and for you and the shipping company to make alternative arrangements if your application is delayed or refused.

If you arrive in Australia without a valid visa, you will be prevented from entering and the shipping company, ship's master and agent may be fined.

You don't need to lodge multiple MCV or Transit visa applications

You, or your employer, can check to see if you already hold a current MCV by using the Department of Home Affairs' [MCV Online Status Enquiry web form](#). This web form will show if you already hold an MCV, when it will expire and if you currently have an MCV application before us.

In most cases, you do not need to apply for a new MCV if you will be outside Australia when your current MCV expires. If you are a crewmember on a cruise ship, you should ensure that your MCV will remain valid until the end of your contract.

To check the status of your MCV go to <https://online.immi.gov.au/evo/mcv>

Do not lodge multiple applications for MCV or Transit visas. This only delays processing. If you need update your details or answers, you can do this through the same ImmiAccount used to lodge the application.

Joining your ship in Australia

The MCV only allows arrival by sea. If you want to fly to Australia to join your eligible ship, you will need to hold another valid visa such as a Transit (Ship's Crew) visa:

- Do not lodge your Transit (Ship's Crew) visa application BEFORE you lodge your MCV application.
- Apply along with your MCV application or after you have lodged/been granted an MCV.
- Transit (Ship's Crew) visa applications should not be lodged more than 3 months from the date you intend to fly, as this visa is only valid for travel for 3 months from date of grant.
- MCV holders who arrive in Australia on a Transit (Ship's Crew) visa have 5 days to sign on to their ship.

Tips to achieve a smoother lodgement process

Attach a copy of your passport bio-data page and other identity documents

We need to confirm your identity. Make sure that you attach the following to your application:

- A colour copy of your current passport that shows the:
 - photo
 - personal details (name, date and place of birth, nationality etc)
 - the date the passport was issued and when it will expire
- a copy of your Seaman's book if you have one, the validity page as well as the sign on and sign off event pages
- a colour copy of your Seafarer's card if you have one
- a colour copy of your National Identity Card (both sides) if you have one, and
- if relevant, documents that prove a change of name including a marriage or divorce certificate, or change of name documents from a relevant authority.

Include your employment contract and a statement from the shipping agent

We need to confirm that you are employed to work as a seafarer while in Australia. Attach a copy of your current employment contract.

Employment may need to be verified to ensure genuine employment claims made, therefore a response within the timeframe provided would be required to progress applications.

We may need more information

We may request additional information from you to support your application. You need to provide the requested information as soon as possible and within the time requested. We cannot grant you a visa until you have done so and your application may be refused if you do not meet the deadline provided.

Check your declarations

You are required to make a number of declarations before you can lodge the application. Make sure that you read them carefully and answer them correctly. False declarations, even where unintended, will delay the processing of the application and may lead to your application being refused.

Make sure the declarations you make about your health, any criminal convictions, your visa history for Australia and other countries (including where previous applications have been refused) are completely accurate.

Updating your application

You can update your application or correct any information that you have provided through the ImmiAccount used to lodge your application. Do not lodge a new application just to update/amend details.

Application status updates

We give priority to the processing of visas so that your application is decided as soon as possible. As such, the Department does not respond to queries about the progress of Maritime Crew Visa applications made within 6 weeks of their lodgement.

Technical issues

If you have a technical problem with your ImmiAccount or online application you should use the ImmiAccount Technical Support Form in the first instance to request a resolve to your issue.

For your more information go to:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/departmental-forms/online-forms/immiaccount-technical-support-form>

More information

For more information on MCVs

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/maritime-crew-988#Overview>

For other visa options:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder>

If you don't want to click on the links, enter "MCV Australia", "MCV enquiry", "visa finder Australia" or 'online support ImmiAccount' into your preferred search engine and select immi.homeaffairs.gov.au webpages to find official Department of Home Affairs information.