



## A guide for Pacific Engagement Visa applicants:

# How to get ready to work in Australia

This guide covers the essential information Pacific Engagement Visa (PEV) holders need before they start a new job in Australia.

It explains your legal rights as an employee and provides an overview of what to expect from Australian workplace culture to help you feel prepared and confident.

### Your rights as an employee in Australia

Visa holders and migrant workers have the same workplace rights and protections as all other employees in Australia, regardless of citizenship or visa status.

#### Your rights as a permanent resident

- You have the right to work for any employer, in any job, and in any location in Australia
- Your rights at work are protected under Australian law by the *Fair Work Act*
- Permanent and full-time or part-time fixed-term roles, which are a requirement for the PEV, provide entitlements such as paid sick and carer's leave, and annual leave.

#### Explaining your visa to employers

The PEV is a new program, meaning some employers may not be familiar with it. You may need to explain that your visa, when granted, provides you with permanent resident working rights.

The PEV Employment Support Service can help by explaining the program to employers on your behalf.

#### What to do if you have a problem at work

Australia's [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) (FWO) is a government agency that provides free advice, education and help to all employees so that they understand their workplace rights.

If you think an employer is not respecting your rights or is breaching legal working conditions, you can phone the FWO for free advice and support.

If you have questions about your pay and entitlements, you can:

- Call the FWO on 13 13 94 (you can get a free interpreter by calling the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50 first)
- Register for My account to ask a question via their online form
- Calculate your pay and leave entitlements using the Pay and Conditions Tool: [calculate.fairwork.gov.au](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au)

You can't get into trouble at work or have your visa cancelled for contacting the FWO.

For more information, visit the FWO's website at: [fairwork.gov.au/migrantworkers](https://fairwork.gov.au/migrantworkers).

You can also watch the FWO's videos in your language to help you understand basic workplace rights and entitlements: [fairwork.gov.au/language-help/language-storyboards](https://fairwork.gov.au/language-help/language-storyboards)

For more information about starting a new job, you can complete the FWO's online course at [fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/online-learning-centre/starting-a-new-job](https://fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/online-learning-centre/starting-a-new-job).



### Understanding Australian workplace culture

Australian workplaces can be quite different from those in the Pacific and Timor-Leste.

Understanding these differences can help you succeed in your new job and build positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors.

### Direct communication

- Australians tend to be more direct in workplace communication than Pacific cultures
- It is normal to ask questions, clarify instructions, and express concerns to your supervisors
- Speaking up is seen as being proactive and is not considered disrespectful to authority
- Casual language is common in the workplace, even with managers.

### Asking for help

- Australian employers expect you to ask questions if you do not understand something
- Saying “*I don’t know*” or “*I need help*” is acceptable and shows honesty
- Not asking questions when you are confused can be seen as problematic by your employer.

### Working with managers

- Managers are usually approachable and expect regular communication
- Supervisors are there to support you and provide direction
- Regular one-on-one meetings with your manager are a normal part of work
- Having social conversations with managers during breaks is common and acceptable.

### Punctuality

- Arriving on time or slightly early for work is expected in Australia
- It is common practice to call your supervisor if you are going to be late for work. Being late is not commonly accepted in Australia unless it is because of events outside your control, like public transport delays.



The PEV Employment Support Service holds regular webinars, during which Australian workplace culture is discussed in more detail.

Find out more about the PEV Employment Support Service at [www.pev.gov.au](http://www.pev.gov.au)

On our website, you can explore more resources, including employment fact sheets and resume templates. You can also sign up for Employment Information Sessions to learn more about finding a job in Australia.