



# Fact sheet



## State Migration Plans

On 8 February 2010 the Australian Government announced a series of reforms to the skilled migration program. One of the reforms announced was the development of State Migration Plans (Plans).

Plans specify which occupations state and territory governments can nominate applicants under and specify the number of visas that will be granted as part of this program.

The Plans provide state and territory governments with flexibility within the migration program to address specific skill shortages and local labour market needs as each agreement is tailored to the individual requirements of each jurisdiction.

While state and territory governments have had the capacity to nominate applicants for the purposes of the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program for a number of years, the introduction of Plans improves the targeting of this part of the program.

Plans are agreements, in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), between individual states and territories and the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, which allow jurisdictions to nominate applicants under a broad range of occupations to fill skills shortages within their local labour markets.

Under Plans, state and territories are able to nominate only those applicants whose nominated occupation is included on their respective Plan. States and territories will however have some limited capacity to nominate applicants where their occupation is not specified on their Plan. These provisions allow states further flexibility in providing nominations which may be valuable in meeting shortages in very specialised occupations. The availability of this facility is entirely at the discretion of the state and territory government, and states and territories are not obliged to offer any nominations outside the occupations specified in their Plan.

State and territories provide information on the eligible occupations included in their Plans on their respective web-sites.

**See:** [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/state-plans.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/state-plans.htm)

## Application processing

### New visa applications

State Migration Plans will apply to those applicants who obtain nomination from a state or territory government and apply for one of the following visas:

- Skilled Sponsored subclass 176
- Skilled Sponsored subclass 886
- Skilled Sponsored – Regional subclass 475
- Skilled Sponsored – Regional subclass 487.

To lodge a new visa application, applicants are required to obtain nomination from a state or territory government prior to lodging their visa application. Evidence that the state or territory government has agreed to nominate the applicant should be submitted with the visa application.

For all applications lodged after 1 July 2010, there is no capacity for applicants to switch between an application lodged for a Skilled Independent subclasses 175 and Skilled Sponsored subclass 176, or between a Skilled Independent subclass 885 and Skilled Sponsored subclass 886. Similarly, there is no capacity for an application for either a Skilled Sponsored subclass 176 visa or a Skilled Sponsored subclass 886 lodged on the basis of family sponsorship to be changed to an application made on the basis of nomination by a state or territory government.

Applicants for Skilled Sponsored – Regional 475 or 487 visas made on the basis of family sponsorship are unable to change their application to a state or territory nominated application and this has not changed.

### Existing Visa applications

Existing visa applications with an occupation listed on the nominating state or territory's Plan will be processed under the third highest level of priority processing.

For more information about priority processing you can visit the department's website.

**See:** [www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/24apriority\\_skilled.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/24apriority_skilled.htm)