Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Appointment of a migration agent or exempt agent or other authorised recipient

Form

956

Who should use this form?

You should use this form to advise the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (the department) that you have:

- appointed a migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient;
- changed your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient;
- ended the appointment of your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient.

Important – Please read this information carefully before you complete your application. Once you have completed your application we strongly advise that you keep a copy for your records.

Authorised recipient information

An authorised recipient is someone you appoint to receive written communications about your application with the department. The department will communicate with the most recently appointed authorised recipient, as you may only appoint one authorised recipient at any time for a particular application.

The department is required under the *Migration Act 1958* (the Act) to send your authorised recipient any written communication relating to your application that would otherwise have been sent to you. Under most circumstances, you will not receive a separate copy of this communication. The department will only send your authorised recipient information which you are entitled to receive.

If you change your authorised recipient or end their appointment you must promptly advise the department in writing. You may use this form for that purpose.

Migration agent information

A migration agent is someone who can:

- advise you on the visa that may best suit you;
- tell you the documents you need to submit with your application;
- help you fill in the application and submit it;
- communicate with the department on your behalf.

Immigration assistance

A person gives immigration assistance to you if he or she uses, or claims to use, his or her knowledge or experience in migration procedure to assist you with your visa application, request for ministerial intervention, cancellation review application, sponsorship or nomination.

Immigration assistance does not include simply filling in an application form for you, translating or interpreting for you or passing on information about your application, without comment or explanation.

In Australia, a person may only lawfully give immigration assistance if he or she is a registered migration agent or is exempt from being registered. An exception exists in that anyone may assist you with a request for ministerial intervention, but only registered migration agents may charge a fee for doing so.

If an unregistered person in Australia, who is not exempt from registration, gives you immigration assistance they are committing a criminal offence and may be prosecuted.

Serious penalties, including imprisonment, apply if an unregistered person asks for, or receives, a fee or reward for giving immigration assistance or making an immigration representation (ie. communicating with the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship or the department on your behalf).

Migration agents in Australia

Appointing a migration agent means that the department will assume that your migration agent will be your authorised recipient, unless you indicate otherwise. Your migration agent will be sent all written communications about the application for which the migration agent has been appointed.

Note: If your migration agent ceases to be registered, they must no longer provide you with immigration assistance, however the department will continue to send them written communications (as your authorised recipient) unless you notify us otherwise in writing. To check if your migration agent is currently registered, refer to the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) website www.mara.com.au

Your migration agent will be the person with whom the department will discuss your application and from whom it will seek further information when required. In some situations, departmental staff will need to speak with you directly, for example, in an interview. Your migration agent will be notified if you need to be interviewed.

If you change your migration agent or end their appointment, you must promptly advise the department in writing. You may use this form for that purpose.

It is important to remember that you are still responsible for the accuracy of information and supporting documentation that you provide to your migration agent as part of your application to the department.

Migration agents outside Australia

Migration agents who operate outside Australia do not have to be registered. The department may give some overseas agents an identification (ID) number. This number does not mean that they are registered.

Note: Some registered migration agents operate overseas. A list of registered migration agents is available from the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) website www.themara.com.au

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Exempt agents

The following people do not have to be registered in order to provide immigration assistance but they must not charge a fee for their service:

- a close family member (spouse, child, adopted child, parent, brother or sister);
- a sponsor or nominator for a visa application;
- a member of parliament or their staff;
- an official whose duties include providing immigration assistance (eg. a Legal Aid provider);
- a member of a diplomatic mission, consular post or international organisation.

Using a migration agent

You are not required to use a migration agent. However, if you choose to use an agent, the department recommends that you use a registered migration agent.

All migration agents operating in Australia are required to be registered and are bound by the Migration Agents Code of Conduct, which requires agents to act professionally in their clients' lawful best interests.

A list of registered migration agents is available from the MARA website www.themara.com.au

You can contact the MARA at:

E-mail: themara@themara.com.au

PO Box Q1551
QVB NSW 1230
AUSTRALIA

Telephone: 61 2 9299 5446

Fax: 61 2 9299 8448

The MARA investigates complaints against registered migration agents and may take disciplinary action against them. If you have a concern about a registered migration agent, you should contact the MARA. The Code of Conduct and complaint form are available from the MARA website.

Dependant applicants

If you are a dependant applicant (eg. a member of a family unit) 16 years or older you must fill out a separate form 956 if you want to appoint a different migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient to the principal or main applicant. If you do not, the department will assume that the migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient appointed by the main applicant is being appointed for all persons on the application.

About the information you give

The department is authorised under the Act to collect information provided on this form. The information provided will be used by the department to communicate with you, your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient, and to monitor agents for integrity purposes.

It may also be disclosed to agencies that are authorised to receive information relating to adoption, border control, business skills, citizenship, education, health assessment, health insurance, health services, law enforcement, payment of pensions and benefits, taxation, review of decisions, and regulation of migration agents and other professionals.

The information form 993i *Safeguarding your personal information*, available from the department's website or from an office of the department, gives details of agencies to which your personal information might be disclosed.

Two stage processing

If you are applying for a 2 stage visa (eg. visa subclasses 309/100, 310/110, 820/801 or 826/814) you will need to indicate on this form if your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient will be appointed for both the first and second stage of your visa application.

Consent to communicate electronically

The department may use a range of methods to communicate with you. However, electronic means such as fax or e-mail will only be used if you indicate your agreement to receiving communication in this way.

To process your application the department may need to communicate with you about sensitive information, for example, health, police checks, financial viability and personal relationships. Electronic communications, unless adequately encrypted, are not secure and may be viewed by others or interfered with. If you agree to the department communicating with you by electronic means, the details you provide will only be used by the department for the purpose for which you have provided them, unless there is a legal obligation or necessity to use them for another purpose, or you have consented to use for another purpose. They will not be added to any mailing list.

The Australian Government accepts no responsibility for the security or integrity of any information sent to the department over the internet or by other electronic means.

If you authorise another person to receive documents on your behalf and he or she wishes to be contacted electronically, his or her signature is required on the form to indicate consent to this form of communication.

Information for migration agents

Notification of giving immigration assistance

If you are a registered agent, under section 312A of the Act, you have a duty to notify the department when lodging an application on behalf of a client or within 28 days of commencing to act on behalf of a visa applicant. This form, completed by your client and signed by you, will be accepted as notification.

Immigration Advice and Assistance Scheme (IAAAS)

If you are a registered migration agent who is assisting the applicant under this scheme, please indicate this on the form at Question 11.

Home page	**www.immi.gov.au**
General enquiry line	Telephone **131 881** during business hours in Australia to speak to an operator (recorded information available outside these hours). If you are outside Australia, please contact your nearest Australian mission.

Please keep these information pages for your reference

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Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Appointment of a migration agent or exempt agent or other authorised recipient

Form **956**

Part A – Applicant details

Personal details of the main visa applicant, sponsor or nominator, and all other applicants included on this application, who are appointing the same migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient.

1 Main applicant/Sponsor or nominator

Family name

Given names

Organisation *(if applicable)*

Date of birth DAY / MONTH / YEAR

Current residential address

POSTCODE

Postal address

POSTCODE

Telephone number or daytime contact

Office hours (COUNTRY CODE) (AREA CODE) NUMBER

Mobile phone

E-mail address

2 Dependant applicants

Note: Any applicant 16 years or older who has a different migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient needs to use a separate form 956. Only include here the details for dependants using the same migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient.

Applicant 2

Family name

Given names

Applicant 3

Family name

Given names

Applicant 4

Family name

Given names

Applicant 5

Family name

Given names

If you have more than 5 applicants, attach a separate sheet.

Part B – About your application

3 Are you submitting this form with an application:

you have already lodged? ☐ ▶ Go to Part C

you are about to lodge? ☐ ▶ Go to Part D

Part C – Details of lodged application

4 What application have you lodged?
Provide category *(eg. student, visitor, temporary business, permanent residence)*

At which office was that application made?

5 Provide **one** of the following:

Client number

File number

Application receipt number

Transaction reference number

Part D – Appointment details

6 Are you submitting this form because you want to:

appoint a migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient? ☐

change your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient? ☐

end the appointment of your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient? ☐ ▶ Go to Part E
Note: All documents will be sent directly to you.

7 If appointing or changing your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient, are you applying for a 2 stage visa?
(eg. visa subclasses 309/100, 310/110, 820/801, or 826/814)

No ☐ ▶ Go to Part E

Yes ☐

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8 Is your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient appointed for the:
*(tick **one** box only)*

first stage? ☐
second stage? ☐
both the first and second stage? ☐

Note: You need to advise the department if these details change.

Part E – Migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient details

9 Provide details of the migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient

Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Other ☐

Family name

Given names

Postal address

POSTCODE

Telephone number or daytime contact

	COUNTRY CODE	AREA CODE	NUMBER
Office hours	( )	( )	
Mobile phone			

10 If appointing, changing or ending the appointment of a migration agent or exempt agent provide (if applicable) their:

Business or company or organisation name

Migration Agent Registration Number (MARN)
(if this person is an Australian registered migration agent)

7 DIGITS: : : : : :

OR

Offshore Agent ID Number
(if allocated by the department)

7 DIGITS: : : : : :

▶▶ If appointing or changing your authorised recipient, go to Part G

▶▶ If ending the appointment of your migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient, go to Part K

11 Is your migration agent providing service under the Immigration Advice and Assistance Scheme (IAAAS)?

No ☐
Yes ☐

12 If your agent does not have a Migration Agent Registration Number (MARN) or offshore agent ID number, is he or she:

Exempt from registration by being:
*(tick **one** box only)*

a close family member (spouse, child, adopted child, parent, brother or sister) ☐

a sponsor or nominator for this visa application ☐

a member of parliament or their staff ☐

an official whose duties include providing immigration assistance (eg. a Legal Aid provider) ☐

a member of a diplomatic mission, consular post or international organisation ☐

an offshore agent ☐

OR

Other *(eg. friend, education agent, travel agent, community volunteer or social worker etc.)* ☐ ▶ Please specify

13 Did you pay the person/agent and/or give a gift for this assistance?

No ☐
Yes ☐

Part F – Authorisation for migration agent or exempt agent to act on your behalf

14 My migration agent or exempt agent is authorised to act on my behalf and receive written communication for my application (as permitted by law) in relation to:
*(tick **one** box only)*

all matters (for this application) ☐

OR

for a specific matter only (for this application) ☐ ▶ Give details

Note: A separate form 956 must be completed for each application lodged with the department.

15 If your application includes monitoring activity by the department (eg. sponsorship for a 457 or a Business Skills application), do you authorise your migration agent or exempt agent to act on your behalf in relation to this activity?

No ☐
Yes ☐

▶▶ If appointing an Australian registered migration agent, ie. your migration agent has a Migration Agent Registration Number (MARN), go to Part H

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Part G – Health and character

16 Do you want your exempt agent or authorised recipient to receive health and/or character information about you, your spouse or your dependants, that may arise, or be revealed, in the course of this application? (*eg. requests for medical investigation, other health information about you, or the results of criminal history checks)*

No ☐ ▶ **These documents will be sent directly to you**

Yes ☐

Part H – Migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient consent for appointment and electronic communication

Note: Do NOT complete Part H if you are ending the appointment of your migration agent or authorised recipient, go to Part K

17 As the migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient named on this form, do you agree to the department communicating with you by fax, e-mail or other electronic means?

No ☐

Yes ☐ ▶ Give details

	COUNTRY CODE	AREA CODE	NUMBER
Fax number	( )	( )	
E-mail address			

I understand and accept that I am appointed by the applicant, nominator or sponsor and dependants to receive all written communications and, if the appointed migration agent or exempt agent, act as his/her agent (as permitted by law).

Signature of migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient

	DAY	MONTH	YEAR
Date	/	/	

Part I – Registered migration agent's client reference number

18 If you are appointed as the registered migration agent for this application, you may choose to provide your client reference number for correspondence with the department.

Client reference number (optional) ☐

Part J – Other contact details

19 If the migration agent you have appointed is not available or ceases to practise, do you want to authorise the department to discuss your case with another migration agent from the same business, company or organisation?

No ☐ ▶ Go to Question 20

Yes ☐ ▶ Give details of other migration agent

Migration Agent Registration Number (MARN) or Offshore Agent ID number | : | 7 DIGITS : : : : :

Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Other ☐

Family name ☐

Given names ☐

Telephone number or daytime contact

	COUNTRY CODE	AREA CODE	NUMBER
Office hours	( )	( )	
Mobile phone			

20 If your migration agent ceases to be registered, do you want the department to send written communications to you instead of to your appointed agent?

No ☐ ▶ The department will continue to send written communications to your appointed agent (as an authorised recipient) until you notify otherwise in writing

Yes ☐ ▶ Ensure you promptly notify the department of any changes to your postal address

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Part K – Signature(s)

21 *Signature(s) of main applicant, sponsor or nominator and all other applicants 16 years or older, included on this application, who are being represented by the same migration agent or exempt agent or authorised recipient.*

Signature of main applicant

Date DAY / MONTH / YEAR

Dependant applicants

Signature of applicant 2

Date DAY / MONTH / YEAR

Signature of applicant 3

Date DAY / MONTH / YEAR

Signature of applicant 4

Date DAY / MONTH / YEAR

Signature of applicant 5

Date DAY / MONTH / YEAR

We strongly advise that you keep a copy of your application and all attachments for your records.

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