

Sponsorship and Assurance of Support

If a relative agrees to sponsor an application, they are undertaking to provide adequate accommodation and financial assistance if required by the visa holder during the first 2 years stay in Australia. They also agree to provide information and advice to help the visa holder and family settle in Australia such as information in relation to housing, living costs etc.

For certain Family visa categories, an Assurance of Support may also be required.

An Assurance of Support is a commitment to provide adequate support to the applicant and family so that the applicant will not have to rely on any government forms of support.

The Assuror signs an agreement which is a legal commitment to repay to the Australian Government any recoverable Centrelink payments made to the people covered by the Assurance of Support while the Assurance of Support is in force. If you die, your estate will be liable for these repayments.

Recoverable social security payments are:

- Newstart Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Parenting Payment (Partnered)
- Youth Allowance
- Austudy Payment
- Widows Allowance
- Mature Age Allowance
- Partner Allowance
- Crisis Payment

To be an assurer, you must be at least 18 years of age, be usually resident in Australia and be an Australian Citizen, Australian permanent resident or a New Zealand Citizen who is a “protected special category visa holder”. An assurer must have a taxable income above the threshold amount for the last two financial years (usually around AU\$40,000.00) and be able to provide evidence of this.

The Assurance of Support does not necessarily have to be supplied by the sponsor and can be provided by any Australian citizen or permanent resident who meets the above requirements.

A bond is required to be deposited into a designated bank account with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. This bond is held for a set period of time from the date the person arrives in Australia and will be released at the end of the period, less any claims made for benefits or allowances from the government, but including any interest earned.

The bond amount and bond period differ between visa categories. The Parent visa categories and the Remaining Relative visa category have mandatory Assurance of Support requirements.

Certain Partner visa applicants may be requested to lodge a Discretionary Assurance of Support, which means that a commitment to repay the Government is made, but no bond is required.