



Employing working holiday makers—understanding the program

What is the purpose of the Working Holiday Maker program?

The purpose of the Working Holiday Maker program is to encourage cultural exchange and closer ties between arrangement countries by allowing young people to have an extended holiday supplemented by short-term employment. Work in Australia must be secondary to the main purpose of the visa holder's visit. The Working Holiday Maker program comprises the Working Holiday (subclass 417) and Work and Holiday (subclass 462) visas.

Can Working Holiday Makers fill long-term vacancies in the workplace?

No. Working Holiday Makers can only provide a source of short-term labour for employers. They are not able to fill longer-term vacancies.

What should I consider before employing a person who is a foreign national?

- Are there any Australian citizens or permanent residents who can do the work?
- If you are seeking a skilled worker for an extended period and there are no available Australian citizens or permanent residents to do the work, then employers should consider the Temporary Business Entry (Long Stay) Standard Business Sponsorship (subclass 457) visa program. Visit www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/sbs/ for more information.
- If you are seeking low skilled seasonal workers for horticulture work, you may wish to consider the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme. Visit www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/Programs/PSWPS and www.immi.gov.au/skilled/pacific-seasonal-worker.htm for more information.
- Foreign nationals working in Australia are entitled to the same pay and work conditions as Australian residents and citizens. Visit www.fairwork.gov.au for more information.

How do I know if a foreign national holds a valid visa with work rights?

A foreign national working in Australia without a visa or in breach of their visa conditions is an illegal worker. It is a criminal offence to employ an illegal worker, so it is important that employers check the work entitlements of non-citizens they wish to employ.

Not all visa holders have their visa details recorded in their passports. The best way to quickly and easily check the work entitlements of non-citizens is via the department's Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) and Visa Entitlement Verification Faxback services. The services are free and VEVO is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For more information visit www.immi.gov.au/vevo or phone the Employers' Immigration Hotline on 1800 040 070.

What should I consider before hiring a Working Holiday Maker?

- Work should not be the primary purpose of the stay. Any work that is undertaken should be secondary to the main purpose of the stay – a holiday.
- The visa holder can only work with the same employer for a maximum period of six months.
- Additional visa conditions may be imposed and a breach of any condition could result in the visa being cancelled and the visa holder having to leave Australia.
- Where licensing or registration applies to an occupation (such as health and trade occupations), or other certification is required, you should check the visa holder has skills to the Australian standard. Employment in an occupation in a foreign country does not guarantee skills to the Australian standard.

Where should I go for more information?

For more information on the Working Holiday Maker program visit www.immi.gov.au or phone the department on 131 881.

To find out more about the department's VEVO service visit www.immi.gov.au/vevo or phone the Employers' Immigration Hotline on 1800 040 070.