SOFTWARE & TECH

Form 1290 Australian Citizenship

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Your Guide to the Form 1290 Australian Citizenship Application

Becoming an Australian citizen is a significant milestone for many permanent residents. It represents a commitment to the values, rights, and responsibilities that come with being part of the Australian community. For most adult applicants, the key document that starts this journey is the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**application. This comprehensive guide will walk you through what this form is, who needs it, and how to navigate the application process smoothly.

What Is Form 1290 Australian Citizenship?

The **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**is the official application document used by the Department of Home Affairs for people seeking citizenship by conferral. This is the standard pathway for most permanent residents who wish to become Australian citizens. The form collects detailed personal information, residency history, and evidence of your eligibility. It is a legally binding document, so accuracy and completeness are essential.

Who Uses This Form?

This form is primarily for adults aged 18 years and over who are permanent residents or eligible New Zealand citizens. If you are applying for a child under 18, you would use a different form, such as Form 1291. The **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**application is designed for those who meet the general eligibility criteria, including residency requirements, good character, and knowledge of Australia.

Eligibility Requirements for Form 1290

Before you begin filling out the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**, it is crucial to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria. The Department of Home Affairs has specific requirements that must be satisfied at the time of application.

General Residency Requirement

You must have been living in Australia on a valid visa for the past four years. This includes:

- Being physically present in Australia for at least 12 months out of the 4 years immediately before your application.
- Being a permanent resident for at least 12 months immediately before applying.
- Not having been absent from Australia for more than 12 months in total in the 4 years before application, and no more than 90 days in the 12 months before application.

Knowledge and Language Requirements

Applicants must demonstrate a basic knowledge of the English language and an understanding of what it means to be an Australian citizen. This is usually assessed through the citizenship test, which covers Australian history, values, and government. Some applicants may be exempt from the test, such as those over 60 or with a permanent physical or mental incapacity.

Character Requirement

The Australian government expects all citizens to be of good character. When you submit the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**, you consent to the Department conducting character checks. This includes reviewing your criminal history, if any. You must declare any convictions or pending charges. In some cases, you may need to provide penal clearance certificates from overseas.

Residency and Intention to Live in Australia

You must intend to live in Australia, or maintain a close and continuing association with Australia, if you are living overseas. The **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**asks about your future plans, so be prepared to explain how you will remain connected to Australia.

Step-by-Step Guide to Completing Form 1290

Completing the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**can seem daunting, but breaking it down into sections makes it manageable. Here is a step-by-step overview of what the form covers.

Part A: Personal Details

This section asks for your full name, date of birth, gender, and contact information. You will also need to provide details about your current passport and any previous names. Ensure that your name matches your official documents exactly.

Part B: Residence and Travel History

You must list your travel history for the last 4 years. This includes every time you left Australia, the dates, and the purpose of travel. Use your passport stamps, travel records, or ImmiAccount history to ensure accuracy. Any discrepancies can delay your application.

Part C: Character and Criminal History

This is a critical section. You must declare any convictions, traffic offenses, or involvement in any court proceedings. Even minor offenses should be disclosed. If you are unsure, it is better to over-disclose than to omit something that could be considered a failure to provide accurate information.

Part D: Supporting Documents

The **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** requires you to attach specific documents. Typical documents include:

- Certified copies of your birth certificate and passport.
- Evidence of your permanent residency (such as a visa grant letter or your current visa label).
- Two passport-sized photographs that meet Australian passport standards.
- Character references or penal clearance certificates if living overseas.
- Any documents related to name changes (such as marriage certificates).

Part E: Declaration and Signature

You must sign the form in the presence of an authorised witness. This can be a Justice of the Peace, a police officer, or a registered migration agent. The witness confirms your identity and that you have provided the information truthfully.

How to Lodge Form 1290 Australian Citizenship

There are two main ways to submit the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** application.

Online via ImmiAccount

Most applicants now lodge their application online through the Department of Home Affairs ImmiAccount system. This is the fastest and most convenient method. You upload scanned copies of your documents, pay the fee electronically, and track your application status in real time. The online system will also guide you through the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** questions step by step.

Paper Application by Post

If you cannot lodge online, you can print the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**, complete it manually, and post it to the Department's processing center. However, paper applications take longer to process. You will need to include certified copies of all documents and a cheque or money order for the fee.

Fees and Processing Times

The application fee for the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** is reviewed regularly by the Department. As of 2025, the standard fee is approximately $540 for most adult applicants, with a reduced fee for applicants aged 16 to 17. Fees are non-refundable, even if your application is unsuccessful, so ensure you meet all criteria before applying.

Processing times for citizenship by conferral vary. The Department aims to process applications within 10 to 14 months for most applicants. However, complex cases, those with travel history issues, or character concerns may take longer. You can check current processing times on the Department of Home Affairs website.

What Happens After You Submit Form 1290?

Once you have lodged the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**, the Department will acknowledge receipt. Here is what typically happens next.

Application Assessment

The Department will review your application and supporting documents. They may request additional information or ask for further evidence. Respond promptly to any requests to avoid delays.

Citizenship Test or Interview

Most applicants aged 18 to 59 are required to sit the citizenship test. The test covers Australian values, history, and government. You will receive a notification with the date and location of your test. Study the official resource, Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond, to prepare.

If you are exempt from the test, you may still need to attend an interview to discuss your application and confirm your identity.

Approval and Ceremony

If your application is approved, you will receive a letter of approval. You must then attend a citizenship ceremony within 12 months of approval, where you will make the Australian Citizenship Pledge. At the ceremony, you will receive your Australian citizenship certificate. You can then apply for an Australian passport.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Filling out the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** is straightforward, but some mistakes can cause unnecessary delays.

Inconsistent Travel History

One of the most common errors is providing travel history that does not match Department records. Double-check your dates and be honest about any absences. If you are unsure about a specific trip, check your passport or ImmiAccount history before submitting.

Incomplete Character Declarations

Failing to declare a traffic ticket or old conviction can be considered a serious omission. Even if you think something is minor, declare it. The Department will verify your criminal history independently, and discrepancies can lead to refusal.

Missing or Incorrect Documents

Ensure all documents are certified correctly if filing a paper application. For online applications, ensure your scanned copies are clear and legible. Missing documents can result in a request for further information, slowing down your processing time.

Tips for a Successful Application

To increase your chances of a smooth process, follow these tips when submitting the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**.

- Read the application guide carefully before you start.
- Gather all required documents before you begin the form.
- Use a checklist to ensure nothing is missing.
- Keep copies of everything you submit.
- Respond to Department requests within the specified timeframe.
- Consider using a registered migration agent if your case is complex.

Frequently Asked Questions About Form 1290

Can I apply if I have a criminal record?

It depends on the nature of your conviction. You can still apply, but you must declare it. The Department will assess whether you meet the good character requirement. Serious convictions may result in refusal.

Do I need to sit the test if I am over 60?

No, applicants over 60 are exempt from the citizenship test. However, you still need to submit the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** and attend an interview if requested.

Can I apply from overseas?

You must be physically present in Australia when you lodge the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**. There are no exceptions to this rule. You also need to be in Australia when your application is decided.

Can I include my children in my application?

No. Children under 18 must apply separately using Form 1291. However, you can lodge your applications together and attach the child's form to your parent application.

Conclusion

The **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship** is the gateway to becoming a citizen of one of the world's most vibrant and inclusive nations. By understanding the eligibility criteria, completing the form accurately, and submitting all required documents, you can navigate the process with confidence. Remember to double-check your travel and

character declarations, prepare for the citizenship test, and be patient during processing. Australian citizenship is a rewarding journey that grants you the right to vote, access to an Australian passport, and the full benefits of belonging to this nation. Take your time with the **Form 1290 Australian Citizenship**, and you will be well on your way to calling Australia home officially.

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