



STEPS YOU CAN IF YOU OR YOUR FAMILY ARE IN AFGHANISTAN

Critical Time Limit

Here is critical information about visas and where RAILS can best help before the Kabul airport closes. Another fact sheet will explain what happens after this.

Be aware that in many cases it will be impossible to leave Afghanistan before 31 August, or even after. RAILS deeply hopes for peace and safety for you and your family.

Important warning

In dealings with the government all information and documents must be true and genuine. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) checks extremely closely, and any inconsistent information can make the application fail and may risk having the visas of the relatives already in Australia refused or cancelled, or their citizenship refused. If you don't have a document, give a statement of the reasons you don't have them. If there is inconsistent information (names spelt different etc) then explain and prove why this is so.

1 Australian citizens and temporary and permanent visa holders in Afghanistan

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) advises to register with them at <https://covid19.dfat.gov.au>. Urgently send name, visa details, ID documents, location and contact details (phone and email in Afghanistan and Australia) to foreign.minister@dfat.gov.au and afghanistanvisaenquiries@dfat.gov.au.

DFAT advises there's an ongoing and very high threat of terrorist attack in large crowds and say do not travel to Kabul Hamid Karzai International Airport. If you are in the area of the airport should move to a safe location and await further advice from DFAT. The DFAT phone contact is +61 2 6261 3305 (then select 6 for Afghanistan).

The travel advice may change. Regularly check the Australian government Smart Traveler advice. <https://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/destinations/asia/afghanistan>

2 Permanent residents or citizens with 'immediate family' in Afghanistan

If you are a permanent resident or citizen and have a wife, husband, partner, dependent child or orphan relative in Afghanistan, send accurate details and documents about name, identity, any visa that has been applied for, location, details of Australian relatives, contact (phone number and email in Afghanistan and Australia) to foreign.minister@dfat.gov.au and afghanistanvisaenquiries@dfat.gov.au.

You could also speak to your local Federal Member of Parliament and ask for their help.

If there is already a visa application, contact the DHA processing section using their reference number asking that they make a decision on the application urgently.

If you are a permanent resident and arrived in Australia by boat, you should ask DHA not to follow Direction 80 which gives the application low priority. It is best to get legal help with this.

If you have not yet sponsored your immediate family then urgently get legal help (see below).

3 Relatives in Afghanistan who are at extreme risk

If a relative is at extreme risk of harm because they are associated with the Afghan, Australian or other Western governments, are a human rights activist or a single or widowed woman without male protection, then they may be at extreme risk.

Urgently send name, ID documents, location, details of Australian relatives, contact details (phone number and email in Afghanistan and Australia) to foreign.minister@dfat.gov.au and afghanistanvisaenquiries@dfat.gov.au. Include specific detailed information about why the relative fears harm and any documents to support this.

You could also speak to your local Federal Member of Parliament and ask for their help.

4 Others in Queensland who are worried about friends, relative or colleagues in Afghanistan

If you have a TPV, SHEV or bridging visa, tragically the government have said that you still can't sponsor your family to join you in Australia. Unless your family member is in an extreme risk category as above, unfortunately RAILS does not have the resources to give you legal help about your family members before 31 August. Please look out for our next information sheet about how we may be able to assist in relation to your own visa.

If you are a permanent resident and citizen and you have a family member in Afghanistan who is not the wife, husband, partner, dependent child or orphan relative, unfortunately RAILS does not have the resources to give you legal help about your family members before 31 August. We hope to be able to give you legal help soon. You can still follow the steps above yourself.

IMPORTANT CARE

Many will not be able to leave Afghanistan before 31 August. Please take steps to look after yourself and your families in these times of deep crisis. There are strong community groups and support agencies and you are encouraged to seek these out. We all need to look after each other. You can contact QPASTT ([www.https://qpastt.org.au](https://qpastt.org.au)) and World Wellness Group (www.worldwellnessgroup.org.au) as well as places such as Lifeline (Ph 13 11 14) for support.

Getting legal help

If you cannot afford to pay for legal help please complete this [referral form](#) and email to admin@rails.org.au. If you are unable to complete this form just, [email admin@rails.org.au](mailto:email_admin@rails.org.au) or phone 07 3846 9300. Before 31 August RAILS can only help people in Sections 1, 2 and 3 above.

For paid private migration agents or lawyers see www.mara.gov.au or the Queensland Law Society (www.qls.com.au).

The is legal information only, not legal advice. See a migration lawyer or registered migration agent for specific legal advice. Information will change rapidly. Please see our website <https://www.rails.org.au/education/legal-info> for the latest version of this form.

Other information You may also wish to look at the RAILS Fact Sheet '[Refugee Family Reunion](#) and 'Humanitarian Visas' at www.rails.org.au/education/legal-info