

General Information

About South Australia



Visitors to South Australia are usually delighted at what they find – a welcoming, vibrant, cultured, dynamic, inspiring and diverse place to live.

The capital city Adelaide is home to more than one million people from over 200 ethnic communities, all living in harmony and sharing the best of their cultural heritage.

Weather

Adelaide has a Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and wet, cold winters. Be careful of the harshness of the sun in summer and always wear a hat and sunscreen, particularly in the middle of the day.

Banking

Before arriving in South Australia you may wish to open a bank account. Locate a bank in your own country that has a branch or corresponding bank in Australia, and ask them to open an account for you.

Credit ratings from your country of origin are not transferable to Australia. However, some evidence of a good credit or savings history may be useful when applying for loans.

Customs and quarantine

Make sure you know what items you cannot bring into Australia and what you need to declare. Australian customs and quarantine officers may question travellers at any time and conduct a detailed examination of you and your baggage.

Detector dogs and x-rays are also used to search for illegal drugs and prohibited items, including food, plant and animal material, which must be declared on your incoming passenger card. This is a legal document and there are penalties for not filling it in correctly and honestly.

If you are found with undeclared items you may receive an immediate fine. In serious cases you may be sent to a Court of Law where penalties may apply and a criminal conviction recorded against your name.

For information on what goods you cannot bring into Australia refer to the *Know Before You Go* brochure on www.customs.gov.au or visit www.agriculture.gov.au

If you want to import a cat or dog into Australia or are returning with your pet, you need to apply to AQIS at least five months prior to departure.

To find out more visit www.agriculture.gov.au/

Driver's licence

Visitors to South Australia can drive using a current foreign licence. You may only drive a vehicle of equivalent class and you must not be disqualified from driving in South Australia or elsewhere. If your licence is in a language other than English, a translated copy is required. This can be done either before or after you arrive.

You must obtain a South Australian licence within three months of becoming a permanent resident. To obtain a South Australian drivers licence you may need to pass a theory and practical test.

For more information visit www.sa.gov.au/directories/customer-service-centres to find your nearest Service SA centre.

Service SA

Telephone 13 10 84

www.sa.gov.au/topics/transport-travel-and-motoring/motoring

Health Services

Permanent residents are entitled to health services under Medicare, but this entitlement does not usually extend to temporary or provisional residents. It is therefore highly recommended that you take out private health insurance to cover yourself and your family.

Medicare – www.humanservices.gov.au/?utm_id=9

Private Health Insurance Administration Council – phiac.gov.au/

Pets

Insurance

You need to take out insurance cover for your personal items and contents of your home once you arrive in South Australia.

A cover note can be arranged immediately through an insurance broker and some may be able to assist after business hours. Agents or brokers are listed in the Yellow Pages under 'insurance' or go to www.yellowpages.com.au/

When choosing a broker be sure to select one that is a member of the National Insurance Brokers Association (NIBA).

If you had a motor vehicle insured overseas, bring some evidence from your existing insurer outlining your claims history over the past five years. This can help you qualify for 'no claim bonus' points and a reduction in insurance cost.

Mail

You can arrange to receive mail in Australia even if you do not have a permanent address. Mail can be addressed to you at:

Your Name
Poste Restante
C/- General Post Office
ADELAIDE SA 5001 AUSTRALIA

To collect mail from the General Post Office (GPO) you need to show identification, e.g. passport.

Your mail can also be addressed poste restante to any other post office in South Australia providing you know its postcode.

Remember that post offices will return any uncollected mail to the sender after a month.

Another option if you do not have a permanent address is to organise for a locked private post box at any post office. Costs vary depending on the box size and location of the post office.

Australia Post – auspost.com.au/

Telephone

A mobile/cell phone may be the most convenient option to keep in touch with people until you have a more permanent address.

Normally it is cheaper to use mobile phones to call another mobile phone and a land line to call another land line (conditions apply).

For international telephone calls, it is cheaper to use international phone cards. This is a pre-paid calling card that works from virtually any phone in Australia.

Internet

Internet services are available for short-term hire in some cafes and hotels if you want to email or search web pages.

Taxation

Australia's financial year is from 1 July to 30 June.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is the Australian Government's principal revenue collection agency.

If you intend to work in Australia, it is essential that you have a Tax File Number (TFN), a unique number issued by the ATO.

All workers are required to lodge a tax return by the end of October for the previous tax year.

The ATO website www.ato.gov.au/ offers important information, including current tax rates, and assistance on all areas of taxation.

IMMIGRATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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For further information, please contact us at:
Immigration South Australia, GPO Box 320, Adelaide SA 5001, Australia Telephone: +61 8 8303 2420

Please Note: Any information about the law in Australia or South Australia is provided as general information only and is not legal advice. This fact sheet is a starting point only and is not a substitute for legal or professional advice. While the Department has attempted to ensure the information is accurate at the time of publishing, no responsibility will be accepted for any errors or omissions and the Government of South Australia will not be liable for any loss or damage incurred by any person as a consequence of any use, reference or reliance on this information. Any such use, reference or reliance shall be at the sole risk of that person who should seek their own legal and/or professional advice if required.

www.migration.sa.gov.au

