

The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme

Who is this for?

This factsheet is for people in Australia who:

- have a Subclass 403 PALM visa;
- are worried about their working, health or living conditions; and
- want to know if they have other options in Australia.

What is the PALM Scheme?

The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme is a temporary migration program allowing workers from 9 Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste to fill labour shortages in Australia.

Visa Type and Duration

Your subclass 403 PALM visa is a temporary visa which is linked to your eligible employer.

Under the PALM scheme there are 2 cohorts of workers:

- short-term workers who can access a multi-year visa to return to Australia for placements of up to 9 months each year for 4 years; or
- long-term workers who can work in placements of between one and 4 years.

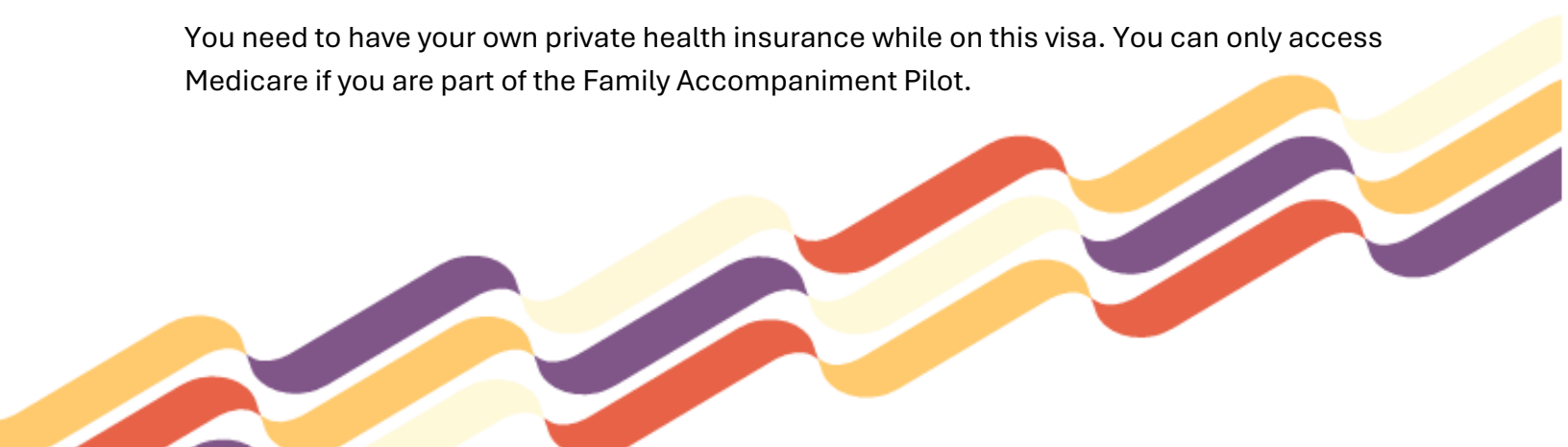
If you have a short-term visa, you may be able to transition to a long-term placement without having to leave Australia.

What you Need to do When on this Visa?

If you hold a subclass 403 PALM visa, work in the role your visa was granted for, with your approved PALM employer and do not ever work for yourself or run your own business.

What Happens if You are Sick or Injured?

You need to have your own private health insurance while on this visa. You can only access Medicare if you are part of the Family Accompaniment Pilot.



Can you Bring your Family?

If you are a short-term worker, you cannot bring family to Australia. However, if you are a long-term worker, you can apply to bring your spouse/partner and dependent children under the 2024 Family Accompaniment Pilot.

What does your Employer have to do?

Under the PALM Scheme your employer have to:

- Give you a job;
- Support your wellbeing and welfare;
- Give you:
 - fair pay (no underpayment or unpaid work);
 - leave entitlements such as sick pay;
 - safe working conditions; and
 - suitable housing (clean, safe, and uncrowded accommodation).
- Your employer cannot take money out of your wages unless:
 - You agree to it in writing; and
 - It is mainly for your benefit.

What are Your Rights?

You have the same workplace rights and entitlements as any other employee in Australia.

You have the right to:

- join a union;
- make a complaint without punishment or being fired;
- be protected from exploitation, unfair treatment, poor working and living conditions, harassment, sexual harassment, assault, discrimination and coercion; and
- have protections against workplace injuries.

You can leave your job at any time, but you cannot work for anyone else until you have contacted the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and they have agreed that you can work for another PALM employer.

If you are **pregnant**, you cannot be fired, demoted or treated less favourably because of that. You have the same rights as any other pregnant employee in Australia.



Applying for Other Visas

You may be able to apply for other types of visas, depending on your circumstances. Before you apply for another visa, you should get advice from a lawyer or registered migration agent. After you have applied for another visa, your lawyer or registered migration agent can advise on whether or not you still need to meet the conditions of your PALM visa.

Support and Help

These organisations provide **LEGAL ADVICE** to people in Queensland with employment law issues, such as discrimination, unfair dismissal and underpayment of wages:

Organisation	Contacts
<i>Legal Aid Queensland</i>	Phone: 1300 65 11 88 Website: https://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au
<i>Basic Rights Queensland</i>	Phone: 1800 358 511 Website: https://brq.org.au
<i>Caxton Community Legal Centre</i>	Phone (07) 3214 6333 Website: https://caxton.org.au

The following government agencies can give you more **INFORMATION** about employment rights

Agency	Contacts
<i>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)</i>	Phone: 1800 515 131 Website: palmscheme.gov.au
<i>Fair Work Ombudsman</i> <i>Information about pay and employment standards and entitlements</i>	Phone: 13 13 94 Website: https://www.fairwork.gov.au
<i>WorkSafe Queensland</i> <i>Information about employers' duty to provide safe work environments</i>	Website: https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/
<i>WorkCover Queensland</i> <i>Information about making a claim when you have an injury at work</i>	Website: Claims WorkCover Queensland

This factsheet is general information not legal advice. You should always speak to a lawyer before applying for a visa, sponsoring someone or doing anything that might affect your immigration status. Last updated 4 September 2026.

