



KEY MESSAGES FOR BOAT ARRIVING REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

The announcement

On Sunday 12 February 2023, the Minister of Immigration made an announcement about boat arriving refugees and permanent visas.

It applies to those who have ever held a TPV or SHEV visa if that visa has not been cancelled.

From 14 February 2023, a small number of people will be asked to apply for a permanent visa. Most people will not be able to apply for a permanent visa until late March 2023. We strongly recommend that you do not make contact with the Department until you have been to a RAILS information session or spoken to one of our lawyers. It can be easy to make a mistake and this could impact your visa or application.

How RAILS can help

In Queensland, RAILS will hold information sessions with language support starting next week (from 20 February 2023). At our information sessions, we will tell you how the announcement applies to you, how RAILS can help you and what you should do next.

You can book into these after Wednesday this week (15 February 2023) through our website: <https://www.rails.org.au/get-involved/events>.

We will also have fact sheets on our website which will be translated: <https://www.rails.org.au/education/tpv-shev-conversion> The Department of Immigration also has information on their website at [Subclass 851 Resolution of Status \(homeaffairs.gov.au\)](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/subclass-851)

RAILS will provide free legal help if you need it. You do not need to pay a lawyer to help you.

Should you contact RAILS?

We are extremely busy at this time.

If you are a boat arriving refugee or asylum seeker and you have worked closely with RAILS in the last 6 months, your RAILS lawyer will call you.

For others, please only contact us at this time if:

- Your current SHEV visa expires in the next three months,
- You have a physical illness, disability or condition that interfere with your ability to work or go about your daily life,
- You have a mental illness, disability or condition that interferes with your ability to function,
- You are homeless or at risk of homelessness,

- You are experiencing family violence or have recently left a violent relationship,
- You are aged under 18 or over 60 and are not part of a family group here in Australia,
- You (or someone in your family here in Queensland) is expecting a new baby, or
- You have a child overseas who is aged between 17 and 23.

Email: pr@rails.org.au (preferred)

Phone: 07 3846 9333

If one of the above does not apply to you, please do not contact us by phone or email at this time. Please book into an information sessions (as above). At our information sessions, we will tell you how the announcement applies to you, how RAILS can help you and what you should do next.

Support if you need to talk about how you're feeling

We understand this is long anticipated information and people have been very stressed and anxiously waiting. We understand that for people who now have a pathway to stay in Australia there is relief and enthusiasm to get this happening as soon as possible, as well as concern about the process and what is involved. We understand that, for the people who still do not have a pathway to stay in Australia, this announcement will likely cause further distress.

Existing clients of QPASTT are encouraged to contact their QPASTT worker directly. QPASTT will continue to see survivors of torture and trauma regardless of their visa status, including people in detention and the community. If anyone wishes to seek QPASTT's services or talk to someone about how they are feeling they can call the QPASTT support line to speak to a duty counsellor Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on (07) 33916677.