

# Using VEVO to check work rights

Protecting work rights. Supporting compliance.

Every employee in Australia has basic rights and protections in the workplace, including minimum pay and conditions, regardless of their visa status. No employment contract can take away these rights, regardless of what the worker has agreed to.



Learn more about workplace rights in Australia.

## Using VEVO when hiring migrant workers

Every employer in Australia is responsible for making sure their staff have the right to work. That includes citizens, permanent residents - and anyone on a visa.

If an employer employs or plans to employ someone who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, they are legally required to confirm that the worker has the right to work in Australia.



The easiest way to check visa conditions is through the [Visa Entitlement Verification system \(VEVO\) system](#).



VEVO allows visa holders, employers, education providers and other organisations to check visa conditions

## What is VEVO?

VEVO is a free online tool provided by the Department of Home Affairs.

It allows employers to check a non-citizen workers:

- Visa type
- Visa expiry date
- Conditions attached to the visa (e.g. allowed hours, employers restrictions)



**Reminder:** A worker's visa status must not be used to justify underpayment, unsafe conditions or unfair dismissal. **This is illegal.**

## Keeping workers informed

Employers should:

- Get informed consent from the worker before checking VEVO
- Explain clearly what the employer is checking and why
- Share the results with the worker if they request it
- Respect privacy—handle visa and identity information securely
- Never use visa status to intimidate or threaten a worker



Employers can never cancel a visa, even if the worker has breached their visa conditions. **Only the Department of Home Affairs, including the Australian BorderForce, can grant, refuse or cancel visas.**

Employers are responsible for conducting VEVO checks on migrant workers not only at the time of hiring, but also on a regular basis throughout employment. The Department of Home Affairs records when an employer is registered with VEVO and can review whether checks have been carried out at reasonable times.

## The limits of VEVO

VEVO can only provide current visa information about visa holders whose details are available in the Department of Home Affairs' systems. A migrant may not have a searchable record if they migrated to Australia before 1990 and have not travelled out of Australia. In this case, they may provide an [electronic record of their permanent visa](#).

A migrant may not have a searchable record if they migrated to Australia before 1990 and have not travelled out of Australia. These workers may need to request an [electronic record of their permanent visa](#).



Australian citizens have unlimited work and study rights in Australia. You cannot use VEVO to confirm Australian citizenship. A citizen can provide a copy of their Australian citizenship certificate or their Australian passport as proof of their Australian citizenship.

## Strong penalties for workplace exploitation

### A business must never:

- Assume visa holders have fewer rights—they are covered by the same workplace laws as citizens
- Use VEVO checks as a weapon to discriminate against workers
- Pressure workers to break their visa rules (e.g. asking students to work extra hours). This is now a serious criminal offence.
- Use a worker's visa status to pressure them to do anything or accept any arrangements at work.

**This is also now a criminal offence.**



**Migrant Work  
Rights Hub  
Tasmania**

This information was approved on 30 September 2025. Content is accurate at the time of approval but may be subject to change. For more information, contact the team at Migrant Work Rights Hub Tasmania on (03) 6216 7602.

