

# Applying for SA Health Essential Traveller status

## SA Health Essential Traveller online application form

If you wish to enter South Australia as an Essential Traveller, you may need approval from SA Health before submitting your [Cross Border Travel Registration](#) to SA Police. This includes Essential Travellers in categories for urgent medical, surgical or dental treatment, compassionate grounds, and health care workers who are required to undertake work on behalf of SA Health.

From 1 September 2020, you need to seek this approval using the online [SA Health Essential Traveller Application form](#). Your Cross Border Travel Registration cannot be processed for these categories until you have written approval from SA Health. A Health Exemptions Panel, led by the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer and authorised officers, meets regularly to consider the applications.

### Who needs approval from SA Health before registering for cross border travel into SA?

If you wish to enter SA from a state or territory with border restrictions and quarantine requirements, you need approval from SA Health for these Essential Traveller categories:

- > Urgent medical, surgical or dental treatment
- > Compassionate grounds
- > Health care worker required by SA Health to enter or re-enter SA.

If you do not meet the requirements for these Essential Traveller categories, you may be eligible for an exemption, depending on your circumstances. For example:

- > University students who reside in another state or territory but undertaking study in SA,
- > Planned relocation to SA from interstate.

In these circumstances, you may be required to quarantine for 14 days in a designated medi-hotel at your own expense. These approvals are only being granted in a small number of instances.

### I am coming from a state or territory with no restrictions on entering SA. Do I still need approval from SA Health to enter?

- > No. If you are entering from a 'low community transmission zone' that has no restrictions in place for more than 14 days, you do not need approval from SA Health for urgent medical, surgical or dental treatment, compassionate grounds or as a health care worker.
- > However, you must complete a [Cross Border Travel Registration](#) with SA Police.

### How do I get approval from SA Health?

- > From 1 September, 2020, if you require approval from SA Health to travel to SA, you will need to complete the online [SA Health Essential Traveller Application form](#).

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- > This should be submitted with evidence to support your application *before* you apply for a [Cross Border Travel Registration](#) from SA Police.
- > SA Police advise you should aim to complete the Cross Border Travel Registration at least 14 days before you plan to travel to South Australia, regardless of where your travel begins.
- > SA Health approval may take up to 72 hours, but there have been longer delays because of the high volume of requests for approval.

### What sort of evidence is needed for my application?

- > You will need to provide written evidence to support your application.
- > This can be a letter, email or scanned document from your treating doctor, workplace, funeral home, aged care facility or treating doctor for your immediate family member.

### What factors are taken into consideration when assessing an application?

- > The key factor is the public health risk of introducing the COVID-19 virus into SA, based on the number of active cases and community transmission in other jurisdictions.
- > Evidence that a health condition requires urgent management and that there are no suitable alternate options that do not require interstate travel for medical treatment also needs to be presented.

### Can I come to South Australia to visit a critically or terminally ill family member or to attend a family member's funeral?

- > You can apply to SA Health to enter South Australia as an Essential Traveller under the compassionate grounds category, if you have an immediate family member who is critically or terminally ill, or if you are coming to attend the funeral of an immediate family member.
- > If you will be visiting your immediate family member at a hospital, health care, disability care or residential care facility, you must ensure the relevant facility will allow you to visit. Documentation of this will need to be included in your application to SA Health as a supporting document.
- > If you will be entering SA from Victoria (or have been in Victoria in the 14 days prior to your intended arrival in SA), you will be required to delay the funeral while you undertake 14 days mandatory quarantine in a government-approved medi-hotel at your own expense.

### What evidence do I need to submit to support my application for Essential Traveller status on compassionate ground?

#### Attending a funeral of an immediate family member

- > You will need to provide written evidence from the funeral home with the date and location of the funeral ceremony. You may only be granted an approval to attend the actual ceremony, not the wake, commemoration or memorial, depending on where you are entering from.

#### Visiting immediate family member in palliative care or who is critically unwell:

- > You will need to provide written evidence from the doctor, hospital or hospice with your application.

#### Visiting critically or terminally ill immediate family member in residential aged care facility:

- > You will need to provide written evidence from the treating doctor of your immediate family members, as well as written permission from the residential aged care home, as they have particular requirements for entry.

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### I will be entering from Victoria. Can I come to SA for urgent surgery or for regular medical treatment that I usually get?

- > These applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration your individual circumstances and health.
- > SA Health will continue to be guided by the clinical assessment from your doctor or specialist.
- > Your doctor or specialist may also be able to provide suitable alternate options that do not require interstate travel for medical treatment.

### Can I come to SA from Victoria on compassionate grounds?

- > If you are travelling to SA from Victoria (or have been in Victoria in the 14 days prior to your intended arrival in SA), current restrictions mean you will need to obtain written approval from SA Health if you need to enter to attend a funeral of an immediate family member.
- > The funeral would need to be deferred, as you will need to undertake 14 days mandatory quarantine at an approved medi-hotel at your own expense.
- > Other circumstances that are considered under the compassionate grounds exemption will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### How long will it take to receive a response to my application?

- > It will take up to 72 hours to receive a response. There have been longer delays because of the high volume of requests for approval.
- > Include in your application the planned date of your appointment or surgery, or an indication of the urgency of a request under compassionate grounds, as well as your expected travel date and mode of travel.
- > SA Health is working to respond as quickly and compassionately as possible during this difficult time for you.

### I have already booked my treatment or surgery. Will I get my approval in time?

- > You can submit your Essential Traveller application in advance and should allow for at least a week to get permission from SA Health and for SA Police to process and approve your application.
- > You should talk to your doctor or clinic if you are concerned that you may not receive approval in time to attend your appointment or have your urgent treatment or procedure.
- > SA Health will be guided by advice from your doctor or specialist.

### Can I apply for both my Health approval and Cross Border Travel Registration with SA Police at the same time?

- > It is recommended that you wait for the outcome of your SA Health Application before submitting your Cross Border Travel Registration to SA Police.
- > Without written approval from SA Health to support your application in these Essential Traveller categories, your cross border registration may be declined.
- > If you have received approval from SA Health, you can make your Cross Border Travel application immediately and include the written approval from SA Health.

# COVID-19 FAQs

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I have an urgent need to enter SA in the next 24 hours. How can I get a quick response?

- > SA Health will prioritise genuine urgent requests wherever possible.
- > Include in your application, information about the urgency, including the date of travel and mode of transport and why the application needs to be considered urgently.

Should I go to the SA border if I haven't received my written approval from SA Health before I need to travel?

- > You may be denied entry to SA if you do not have the approval and supporting documentation for the categories that require SA Health approval.
- > It is recommended you get that approval before you travel.

I have been waiting for more than 72 hours for a response to my application to SA Health. What should I do?

- > SA Health is currently processing a high number of requests. If you have not received a response after five days, email [HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au)

I applied to SA Health before the online application was available. Do I need to reapply?

- > If you submitted your application prior to 1 September 2020, you do not need to reapply using the online form.
- > SA Health is currently processing a high number of requests, which have resulted in some delays.
- > If you do not receive a response after five days, email [HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au)

What if my application is denied?

- > The Health Exemptions Panel considers applications on a case-by-case basis, and in exceptional circumstances, appeals may be considered.
- > If you wish to dispute a decision by the SA Health Exemptions team and panel, please contact SA Health at [HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au) with any additional information to support your request for a review of the decision.
- > The appeal process will be arbitrated by two senior health officials, independent of the Health Exemptions Panel. You will be notified of the outcome in writing.

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SA COVID-19 Information line 1800 253 787

[sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019](https://sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019)

[covid-19.sa.gov.au](https://covid-19.sa.gov.au)

Department for Health and Wellbeing

SA Health, Government of South Australia

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