



E-3 Visa for Australian Citizens

Insights

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U.S. employers wishing to hire a foreign worker who is an Australian citizen should consider the E-3 visa category. The E-3 visa category is only available for Australian citizens. The E-3 visa category permits Australian citizens to work in the U.S. in “specialty occupations” on a temporary basis.

Specialty occupations are those which are professional in nature and require at least a bachelor’s degree in a specific field. In order to qualify for the E-3 visa category, the Australian citizen must also possess the required bachelor’s degree or the equivalent in education or work experience.

There is an annual limit of 10,500 new E-3 visas available to Australian citizens each year. Under the E-3 visa category, an Australian citizen can obtain employment authorization in two-year increments and renew indefinitely. Spouses and children of E-3 visa holders are also given E-3 visa status, but they are not counted against the annual cap. Additionally, spouses of E-3 visa holders are eligible to apply work authorization in the United States.

In order to apply for the E-3 visa category, an Australian citizen may apply directly at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Alternately, an Australian citizen already in the U.S. may apply to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to change his or her status to E-3 while in the U.S.

An application for the E-3 visa category must include the following:

- Valid Australian passport as proof of citizenship;
- A Labor Condition Application (LCA);
- Offer letter of employment from a U.S. employer, detailing the professional position and applicant’s credentials; and
- Proof of the applicant’s qualifications, including degree, diploma, and/or experience letters.

While there is a limit on the number of E-3 visas available each year, the E-3 visa cap has not been reached this year. Therefore, U. S. employers with immediate hiring needs should consider the E-3 visa as a viable option for hiring Australian citizens into professional positions. Once employers have identified a potential candidate, they should contact an immigration attorney to evaluate whether the offered position and the candidate’s credentials meet the E-3 visa requirements.

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