



The Buddhist Society of Western Australia (Inc.)

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BSWA Policy on Visas for visiting teachers

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Written by: Hon Secretary, Geetha Mendis

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POLICY ON VISAS FOR VISITING TEACHERS

Monastics and lay teachers who use BSWA premises have to make sure they are properly insured (for travel, health, and indemnity) and hold an appropriate visa (if they are not a Permanent Resident or Australian Citizen) to engage in religious work.

Explanatory Notes:

Recently introduced regulations by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection require that all visiting teachers (lay and monastic) seeking to lead or assist in meditation retreats and other short stay religious work (for example Dhamma teaching activities) have a Special Visa, that is subclass 408 visa as an Invited Participant.

A Visitor's Visa is no longer acceptable for religious work.

For those visiting Australia for less than 3 months on the 408 visas, the teacher will need a letter of invitation from the relevant Australian Buddhist organization (or group) setting out the proposed activities and period of stay. There is no formal sponsorship requirement. Therefore, the application process is similar to that for a visitor visa.

For details please refer to

<https://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa-1/408->

All organizations or persons in charge of organizing visiting teachers who are not permanent residents or citizens of Australia using BSWA venues will be informed of the need to comply with the new regulations.

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