

Pacific Labour Scheme

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- Aged Care Workforce Branch, Department of Health
- Wednesday 15 December 2021

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Emma Gleeson

**Assistant Secretary, Aged
Care Workforce Branch**

Department of Health

Aged Care Workforce Pillar

Over the next **three years** will support the **growth, training and upskilling** of the aged care workforce.

1

Home Care
\$91.8 million

2

**Financial support for
Registered Nurses**
\$135.6 million

3

**Dementia and palliative
care training**
\$49.4 million

4

Scholarships
\$27.2 million

5

**Additional 33,800
training places**

Workforce Advisory Service

<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workforce-advisory-service>

Supporting aged care providers with best practice guidance

- free, independent and confidential business advice.
- local strategies to **recruit, retain and grow** the skills of workers
- coordinated approaches to workforce skills and training.

Financial Support for Registered Nurses

Payments for eligible Registered Nurses working in aged care

- Same aged care provider over 12-months = **\$3,700 per year**
- Commenced 1 Nov 2021 with **first payments in Nov 2022**.
- Additional payment of **up to \$2,300 per year** for:
 - rural and remote areas (MMM5-7);
 - post-graduate qualification;
 - additional training responsibilities.

Rural Locum Assistance Program (RLAP)

<https://www.rurallap.com.au/>

Ensuring rural and remote aged care consumers experience continuity of clinical care and strong clinical leadership.

- \$25.1 million over three years
- Temporary surge workforce - high staff turnover or sudden departures
- Incentive scheme for permanent placements
- First locum placements - early 2022.

Michelle Tuchin

**VIC/TAS Business, Industry
and Regional Outreach
Officer**

**Skilled Visa Branch,
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Anna McNicol

**Director, Pacific Labour
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Alison Boundy

**Industry Engagement
Manager, Aged Care and
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Pacific Labour Facility

PALM Scheme

Providing reliable workers to fill labour gaps in Australia

Alison Boundy
Industry Engagement Manager - Aged Care
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Australian Government





The Pacific Labour Facility

Who are we?

The **Pacific Labour Scheme** (PLS) has been the name of the program connecting Australian employers with **low-skilled and semi-skilled** workers from 9 Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste when local labour is not available, on 1 to 3 year visas.

The Pacific Labour Facility (PLF) is contracted to administer the scheme on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Through the PLF, **approved employers** have been supported to source qualified workers from the Pacific into semi-skilled roles in aged care and disability.



Key Industries



Hospitality

e.g. wait staff, management, baristas, kitchen staff



Aged care

e.g. personal carers, kitchen staff, cleaning



Tourism

e.g. front of house, reception, call centres



Maintenance and trades

e.g. builders, gardeners, forklift drivers



Fisheries

e.g. workers for Great Barrier Reef Tuna (Cairns)



Agriculture, horticulture, meat-processing, forestry

e.g. farm work, fruit picking and packing, processing

Suitable Roles in Aged Care



Personal Care Workers



Hospitality, Cleaning & Laundry Workers



Allied Health Assistants



Maintenance and groundskeepers

Business benefits



- Recruitment costs minimised
- Staff turnover
- Qualified, engagement workers
- Consistency of Care

Approved employer process



<https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/>

Approved employer costs

Activity	Cost to Employer	Further Information
Approved Employer Application	\$0	There is no fee for becoming an approved employer.
Employer Site Visit	\$0	As part of the Application process, your Industry Coordinator will visit the proposed location of the workers at our cost.
Temporary Activities Sponsorship Fee	\$420	This is a one-time only cost, payable to the Dept. of Home Affairs, via your Immi-Account.
In-country recruitment	Dependent on location	Prior to COVID employers were encouraged to undertake in-country recruitment trip to develop employer/sending country links; establish direct relationships between Labour Sending Units & employer; create merit lists for future recruitment; and increase cultural understanding between Pacific and Australia.
Worker Visa	\$315 per person – recouped from worker	403 Visa Period – 12 months to 3 years. The PLS is not a vehicle to permanent residency. Visa cost can be legally deducted from employee's pay over 3-month period from commencement of employment.
International Airfare	Range - \$500-\$1500 – recouped from worker	Aim is to book as early as possible to keep the airfare as low as possible for the worker. The airfare cost can be legally deducted from employee's pay over 3-month period after commencement of employment.
Travel to site	Dependent on location	Employer to pay for domestic transfer to work site. We encourage this to be the cheapest, most common way for travel to location (ie. Bus or Train to Central Qld).
Accommodation	Dependent on location	Employer to assist workers in finding suitable, reasonably priced local accommodation. Some Approved Employers have temporary onsite accommodation which workers use while they save up for bond/ rent in advance; others support them to get a rental property at commencement. This is very much dependent on local housing situation and is worked through with our team.
Health Insurance	\$18 per week (approx.)	403 Visa holders must have and maintain health insurance while in Australia. We ask employers to set up this cover (with our assistance) and deduct from employee wages.
Miscellaneous clothing and footwear	Dependent on your requirements	Some Approved Employers offer workers a small advance to cover non-uniform (PPE related) clothing and footwear required at commencement. This can be legally deducted from the employee's pay over 3 months period after commencement of employment.

The role of Labour Sending Units (LSUs)

Participating countries

Each country has their own processes and systems for managing recruitment and mobilisation.



Fiji



Kiribati



Nauru



Papua New Guinea



Samoa



Solomon Islands



Timor-Leste



Tonga



Tuvalu



Vanuatu

Labour Sending Units (LSUs)

Labour Sending Units (LSU) are key partners in Labour Mobility.

- As sovereign nations, our partner countries' LSU have their own LM policies, process and systems.

LSUs are responsible for:

- Recruitment and preparation of workers through the work ready pool (WRP), registration, interviews, fitness test, Pre Departure Briefings, Team leader training etc.
- Engage with key in-country stakeholders on LM priorities: Training and TVET providers, Panel doctors, Immigration, Police etc
- Organise reintegration activities to support workers when they return in-country.

LSUs role in recruitment and mobilisation

- **LSUs have many local stakeholders**
- **We work together on a 10 week timeframe**
- **They help with managing worker expectations**
- **COVID19 has had impacts on LSU budgets**
- **LSUs also work with families**

WORKER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Supported by the Solomon Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade

Joining the program is **FREE**. No fees need to be paid to agents or others.

Workers must be:

- ✓ Between 21-45 years old
- ✓ Hold a valid passport
- ✓ Physically fit and healthy
- ✓ Of good character

1 Registration

Complete the two-page registration form.



2 Interview

We check English comprehension, your attitude and your motivation to work in Australia.

I am fit to work!

How are you?

4 Police Check

Pay fee at Inland Revenue. Submit the form to Rove Police Headquarters. Pick up once processed.

If you have a police record you cannot join the program.

3 Fitness Test

The work in Australia is hard. We test your physical fitness, strength and endurance.

5 Medical Test

Includes X-ray for TB, blood tests for Hep B, HIV and pregnancy tests at an approved clinic. Pay a fee to the clinic and then receive a Medical Approval Certificate.

6 Work Ready Pool

If you have passed steps 1-5 you join the Work Ready Pool.



7 Job Offer

If selected, you will be given a contract.

8 Visa

Once contracts are signed the Labour Mobility Unit will apply for your Australian visa.

9 Pre-departure Training

Includes topics such as: contracts, Australian law, employer and worker roles and responsibilities and living in Australia.

10 Travel to Australia

Your time in Australia can vary.

Solomon Islands

Australia

In Australia you will work hard picking or packing fruit or vegetables. Your employer will arrange accommodation and transportation.

Work hard and earn Australian dollars!



For further information contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Labour Mobility Unit.
Phone: +677 212 50 / 20251 / 21252 Email: lm@mfat.gov.sb Website: www.heretoworksolomons.com/



In-country recruitment process



Registration

Complete the two-page registration form to join the work ready pool.



Work-Ready Pool

We check the candidate's English, motivation and attitude about working in Australia.



Police Check

All candidates must pass a police check.



Interview

When recruitment plans have been approved, the in-country team organises interviews between candidates and employers



Medical Tests

X-ray, blood tests, HIV and pregnancy tests are undertaken at an approved clinic and candidates receive a Medical Approval Certificate.



Fitness Test

Candidates are tested for physical fitness, strength and endurance.



Job Offer and Visa

If selected then workers will receive a contract, and once signed, visas are able to be applied for



Pre-departure

Includes topics such as contracts, Australian law, employer/workers roles and responsibilities and working in Australia.

Worker recruitment and mobilisation

Recruitment is currently occurring via video, but we do encourage in-country recruitment.

Once letters of offer are signed, then the visa processes can commence.

Employers apply for worker visas via their IMMI Account. You may also choose to use a migration agent.

Worker welfare takes a 'community of care' approach



- Setting the scene - settled workers are productive workers
- Accessing local services, churches and sport
- Healthy relationships here & at home
- Safe driving, alcohol and substances
- Appropriate communication
- Understanding shared cultural norms
- Developing cultural competencies together
- Accessing other available resources

Net skill gains for returning workers and Pacific nations

Technical skills further developed

- Dementia specific care
- Stroke management
- Chronic heart conditions
- Diabetes & amputation management
- Managing difficult behaviours
- Nutrition for older people
- Swallowing disorders management
- Food safety
- Oral hygiene
- Skin care
- Case management
- Correct lifting techniques
- Infection control and management
- Assist with medication
- Palliative care

Quality care mindset

- Facilitation of consumer dignity and choice
- Person-centred care
- Reablement and empowerment
- Elder abuse - identification and understanding
- Family liaison and partnerships in care
- Observation of changes - ongoing assessment and planning



Standard 1 - Consumer dignity and choice



Standard 3 - Personal care and clinical care



Standard 4 - Services & supports for daily living



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www.palmscheme.gov.au

Elizabeth Mandelkow

**Talent Acquisition
Manager**

Bolton Clarke

Pacific Labour Scheme: An Employer's Perspective

December 2021

Who is Bolton Clarke?

- Customer-led not-for-profit organisation specialising in providing aged care services
- Largest non-faith based aged care provider in Australia
- We offer
 - Support at home
 - Retirement living
 - Residential aged care

Why the PLS for Bolton Clarke?

- Increased demand for aged care services due to an aging population
- National shortages of skilled and qualified nurses and personal care workers
- The PLS was an ideal program for Bolton Clarke to invest in as it:
 - Supported our talent needs for Personal Care Workers, and
 - Gives back to Pacific Island communities through training, education, career and financial opportunities

Our journey

- 2018 - first PLS workers joined Bolton Clarke in Longreach after in-country recruitment
- 2020- through COVID impacting hospitality in Qld a small number of PLS workers transferred to Bolton Clarke increasing our numbers to 17 workers between the sites of Longreach and Bowen
- 2021 – 23 PLS workers joined Bolton Clarke between the sites of Longreach, Bowen and Emu Park.

2021 Process – pre-uplift

- Highly compressed timeframe of 6 weeks
- Emu Park not an accredited site
- Labour Market Testing
- Interviews completed by MS Teams
- Pre-departure briefing

Arrival and transfers

- Quarantine - 14 days @ Grantham
- Domestic transfers to Longreach, Bowen and Emu Park
- Local managers organised transport from the local airport to arranged accommodation.
- Most workers started within 4 days of arrival
- All have settled in well

Learnings

- Managing time differences for interviews
- In-country interviews more beneficial
- Different document exchange platforms
- Ensuring all required documentation was provided to support the visa application
- Tight deadlines and needing immediate financial payments from Accounts Payable and international flight approvals by the CEO
- Flu vaccinations and appropriate clothing
- Sites need to manage opening bank accounts etc

Arrival snap at the airport



Starting off

Emu Park



Q & A Session

Thank you

For more information, please contact
the Department of Health.

AgedCareWorkforceReform@Health.gov.au