techvisa

New Ministerial Directions

Changes to visa processing priorities, in effect from 19 September 2026

Directions 121 and 122 replaced Direction 119 on 19 September 2026. **They change the order in which applications are decided, not who is eligible**. They also apply to applications **already lodged and awaiting a decision**, so matters in the queue have been re-sorted for the second time this quarter.

PRIORITY 01: INDUSTRY SPECIFIC - DIRECTIONS 121 & 122

PRIORITY 01 — Construction, healthcare, teaching, agriculture, aquaculture and fishing, resources, and occupations supporting law enforcement and defence interests — **In or outside Australia**

DIRECTION 121 · REPLACES 119
Skills in Demand (482)

PRIORITY 02	**Specialist Skills stream** (Salary above $146,575) Ranked on the stream itself, onshore or offshore
PRIORITY 03	**All other applicants in Australia** Where most corporate and professional hires now sit
PRIORITY 04	**Offshore, primary applicant only** Application not combined with anyone else's
PRIORITY 05	**All remaining applications** Includes an offshore hire bringing family

The Specialist Skills stream is defined by the higher income threshold, so it can lift a matter whose occupation sits in no priority sector.

DIRECTION 122 · REPLACES 119
Permanent & regional

PRIORITY 02	**All other applicants in Australia** Onshore outranks offshore outside the priority sectors
PRIORITY 03	**Offshore, primary applicant only** Application not combined with anyone else's
PRIORITY 04	**All remaining applications** Lowest priority, and the position of a typical offshore family

Four tiers, not five. There is no Specialist Skills equivalent in the permanent and provisional program, so the ladder below Priority 01 is one rung shorter.

Direction 121: subclass 482 visa applications, Skills in Demand and the remaining Temporary Skill Shortage caseload.
Direction 122: subclass 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 489, 491, 494, 887 and 888.
Onshore or offshore is assessed on where the primary applicant was when the application was lodged.

WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE DIRECTION 119

Four more sectors at the top

Agriculture, aquaculture, fishing and resources join construction, healthcare, teaching, law enforcement and defence in Priority 01.

Being offshore no longer costs the top tier

Under Direction 119 only law enforcement and defence kept priority offshore. A priority sector occupation now ranks first wherever the applicant is.

Specialist Skills has its own tier

The 482 Specialist Skills stream sits at Priority 02, ahead of every other onshore 482 applicant.

Nominations sit outside the framework

Direction 119 ordered nomination applications as well. Directions 121 and 122 set the order for visa applications only.

What this means for talent planning: A priority sector role is decided first wherever it is lodged, so hiring from overseas no longer costs you a place. A Specialist Skills lodgement on a 482 comes next, again regardless of location. Outside both, an onshore lodgement is the lever that still works.
Talk to our team at Techvisa about future hires and setting realistic start dates.

General information only - Prepared September 2026
Processing priority is not a processing time: the Directions set the order of decision-making and do not guarantee a faster outcome.

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IMMIGRATION & GLOBAL MOBILITY FOR TECH COMPANIES

Scale your team with global talent.

Techvisa is a specialist immigration firm with a focus on Australia's tech sector. We provide visa solutions to help tech companies access and retain the global talent they need to scale their teams.

GAME CHANGING COMPANIES THAT RELY ON US

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Our Focus

Temporary & permanent visa pathways

482 Skills in Demand

Best for: ongoing roles and assignments over six months. Employer-sponsored, valid for up to 4 years

186 Employer Nomination Scheme

Best for: retaining key hires long term. Permanent residency via the 482 transition or Direct Entry.

400 Temporary Work

Best for: short, specialised projects. Usually up to three months, with no sponsorship needed.

858 National Innovation Visa

Best for: exceptional founders, researchers and tech leaders. Permanent residency by invitation, with an Australian nominator.

Why Techvisa

10 years

in immigration, specialising in tech

Specialists

We are embedded in the tech industry and understand the occupations

Inbound and outbound

Australian, US, UK & Singaporean visas with one partner.

A senior RMA on every account

A dedicated migration agent, backed by a case team.

Compliance built in

Archie, our AI-native platform, ensures you stay compliant throughout the process

Talk to us before the offer goes out.

Bring us in early so we can confirm eligibility, timeframes and costs.

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