

Immigration@OzPoz FAQ, Welcome and General Information

Version 1.1 – 13/5/2005

Welcome to Immigration@OzPoz. This document tells you about the list, gives some guidelines and information for posting, and forms the terms of service for the mailing list (immigration@ozpoz.org). You should familiarise yourself with the information below, and keep a copy of this document in case you need to refer to it later.

What is a mailing list? [1.] Like its paper equivalent, an internet mailing list is a list of names and addresses that mail is to be sent to. On the internet what this means is that members of the list can send email messages to a central email address, and that message is then distributed to all of the members of the list. The re-distribution of the message to its recipients, and the administration of membership of the list is taken care of by a computer program housed on the website ozpoz.org.

Who and what is this list for? [2.] Immigration@OzPoz is an internet discussion list, in operation since May 2005, for both emotional support and sharing information for *gay men who are HIV-positive and applying for permanent resident status in Australia based on an interdependent relationship, and their partners.*

This is a *closed* list. Requests to join Immigration@OzPoz are dealt with by the facilitator who must confirm that prospective subscribers meet the membership requirements outlined below.

This is a *private* list. The list of subscribers is available only to the facilitator and will not be shared, sold, or passed on by OzPoz. While we take all reasonable steps to ensure the privacy of OzPoz members, remember that there are limits of the degree to which information in email messages can be kept secure.

Who runs OzPoz? [3.] Immigration@OzPoz (the mailing list) and ozpoz.org (the web site) is hosted, operated and facilitated by Paul Kidd, an HIV-positive Australian gay man with a longstanding involvement in the internet and the HIV+ gay community.

OzPoz is not affiliated with, or funded by, any other organisation.

Who can join? [4.] You are invited to join this list if you are:

- (a) A gay man who is HIV-positive and who has applied for, or is contemplating applying for, Australian permanent resident status under the Interdependent Partner category.
- (b) The Australian partner of someone in category (a).
- (c) Someone who has previously been in category (a) or (b) and who has completed the Interdependent Partner process (whether or not the end result was in your favour).
- (d) A bona fide community advocate working in the area of HIV migration in Australia.
- (e) Another person (even someone listed in [5.] below) who has been directly invited to participate.

[5.] You are *not* invited to join this list if you are:

- (a) A lawyer or migration agent.
- (b) An employee, agent or representative of the Department of

Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs or a related government agency.

This is a private peer support list and not a public forum. Please respect our privacy.

How do I join?

[6.] Joining Immigration@OzPoz is simple, but there are several steps to the process. If you've joined other internet mailing lists, the process is much the same:

- (a) You send a subscription request to OzPoz via email or on the web. *Either* send a blank email message to immigration-join@ozpoz.org; *or* go to <http://lists.ozpoz.org/listinfo.cgi/immigration-ozpoz.org> and follow the instructions.
- (b) The mailing list software sends a confirmation email to the address you specified to confirm that your email address is valid. *You must follow the steps outlined in that email before your subscription request can be processed.*
- (c) Your subscription request is then be passed on to the facilitator. In most cases, the facilitator will contact you to confirm that you meet the eligibility requirements for membership.
- (d) The facilitator then approves (or declines) your subscription request. You will receive an email informing you of this.

If you have difficulties with the subscription process, contact the facilitator directly at owner-immigration@ozpoz.org, and he will be happy to assist you.

Now I'm subscribed, what do I do?

[7.] It would be nice if new members posted a short introduction about themselves to the list. Just a few lines about who you are, what stage you're at in the process and what you're interested in is all that's needed. See the next section for details on how to send a message.

How do I send a message to the list?

[8.] To send a message to the group, just email immigration@ozpoz.org and your message is automagically distributed to the whole group (including back to you). If your message doesn't appear in your own mailbox straight away, don't re-send it – it can take a while for the list computer to send out all the copies of the message that it has to.

Messages to the list can only be posted by list members. If your message originates from an email account other than the one you're subscribed as, it will be 'held for approval' – you may get a message from the list server saying "Your message to immigration@ozpoz.org awaits moderator approval." If this occurs, try re-sending your message from the account you first subscribed to Immigration@OzPoz from.

If you have more than one email account, be sure to always send OzPoz messages from the same account.

What can I post to the list?

[9.] Immigration@OzPoz is an *unmoderated* forum. Members are free to post whatever they wish without censorship, subject to the guidelines below.

- (a) Feel free to discuss your experiences, feelings or concerns about the process and the way it is affecting you, your partner and your relationship. This is the primary purpose of this group.
 - (b) Questions or requests for guidance about the immigration process are also welcome. Remember that the members of this group are not legally qualified to provide advice, but may volunteer their own experiences of
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the process.

- (c) More general discussion about government policy as it relates to people with HIV, partner immigration and the immigration arena is also welcome (but remember that this is a peer support group, not an academic discussion forum).
- (d) Some things are *off-topic*, and we ask that members not engage in discussions about :
 - (i) the competence or capability of specific individuals working as migration agents or their firms (if you are looking for a recommendation of a good lawyer, individual members of the group may be able to discuss this with you in private correspondence, but for legal reasons discussions of this nature are not permitted on the list);
 - (ii) the specifics of any immigration application other than your own, except for the published decisions of the Migration Review Tribunal;
 - (iii) any matter which the consensus agrees is irrelevant, inappropriate or deliberately inflammatory.
- (e) Please treat each other with respect and courtesy. Posts which are defamatory, racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise offensive or illegal are not permitted.
- (f) No advertisements for commercial services are permitted. Notices of community events, or services provided by list members, are generally OK if they are non-commercial in nature.
- (g) Please take the time to make your message the best it can be. Consider your posting carefully before sending it out. Is it appropriate to an e-mail support group? Will it further the purpose of the group? Remember, your message will be seen by lots of people who are taking their time to read it. Proper spelling, capitalisation, punctuation, and line and paragraph breaks will help make your message more readable.
- (h) Post text messages only. Small images and other attachments may be permitted at the discretion of the facilitator. Sounds, movies and attachments which are not relevant to the discussion are not permitted.
- (i) Remember: the internet (and mailing lists in particular) have their own history, customs and rules of etiquette. If you're new to all this (or even if you're not) it's worth taking a little time to learn what these are. You can get a few tips on mailing list etiquette by visiting <http://www.firststep.com.au/articles/list-etiquette.html> or <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.
- (j) Reposting, publishing or otherwise sharing material from Immigration@OzPoz outside the list is expressly forbidden and represents a grave abuse of this list, unless you have first obtained the explicit approval of the author(s) of the material you want to repost.

I haven't received any emails from OzPoz. What's wrong?

[10.] Like many similar lists, Immigration@OzPoz goes through cycles of increased and decreased activity. The specific subject matter of this list means the total number of subscribers at any given time is likely to be small, and there is no 'active facilitation' on Immigration@OzPoz to keep the conversation going, so discussion depends on member input. If things are quiet and you wish there was more discussion, it's up to you to kick things off. Don't be afraid to post a brief "hello world" message, a question or an idea for discussion.

What happens if I breach these guidelines?

[11.] The facilitator reserves the right to revoke your membership if you breach the guidelines in this document or for any other reason if your actions negatively impact the harmony and order of the group. In most cases, the facilitator will endeavour to resolve the problem with you before taking whatever action he deems necessary, however in more serious cases the facilitator reserves the right to unsubscribe members breaching these guidelines without warning.

If you are removed from the list, you are welcome to discuss the matter with the facilitator, who may restore your subscription with whatever conditions he deems appropriate, however the facilitator's decision is final.

How do I get off the list?

[12.] You can *cancel* your membership any time by *either* sending a blank email message to immigration-leave@ozpoz.org; *or* going to <http://lists.ozpoz.org/listinfo.cgi/immigration-ozpoz.org> and following the instructions there.

If you wish to *temporarily suspend* your membership (if you're going away on holiday, for example), you can do this through the control panel – see below.

How do I use the control panel?

[13.] You can control many aspects of your membership through the web-based control panel at <http://lists.ozpoz.org/listinfo.cgi/immigration-ozpoz.org>. To use this facility, you will need to know the email address at which you're subscribed and your OzPoz password. If you don't know your password, you can have a reminder mailed to you – just follow the instructions on the control panel.

(The address of the control panel is included at the bottom of every message sent via OzPoz).

With the control panel you can:

- Change your email address (for example, if you're moving to a new ISP)
- Unsubscribe from the list.
- Change your password.
- Temporarily disable delivery of list messages (set *Mail delivery* to "disabled") if you need to take a break from the list.
- Switch to digest mode (if you'd rather receive a single message each day with all that day's posts, rather than individual messages).

If you have difficulty using the control panel, contact the facilitator (immigration-owner@ozpoz.org) who can help you set up your subscription the way you want.

Legal notices

[14.] Immigration@OzPoz ("the mailing list") is operated as a free public service by Paul Kidd ("the Host"). By subscribing to the mailing list you acknowledge and agree as follows:

- (a) The Host gives no warranty, guarantee or representation about the accuracy, reliability, timeliness or otherwise of the information contained on the mailing list.
- (b) To the full extent permitted by law the Host disclaims any and all warranties, express or implied regarding:
 - (i) the accuracy, reliability, timeliness or otherwise of any information contained or referred to on the mailing list;
 - (ii) the merchantability or fitness for any particular purpose of the

mailing list or of any service or product contained in or referred to on the mailing list.

- (c) The Host will not be liable under any circumstances for any damages of any kind recognised by law (even if it has been advised of the possibility of such loss of profits or damages) which are the consequence of you acting or failing to act on any information contained on or referred to on the mailing list.
- (d) The Host does not guarantee or make any representations that the mailing list is free or will be free of software viruses such as worms and Trojan horses.
- (e) The Host is not liable to you for any defamatory, offensive or illegal material on the mailing list, whether caused through negligence of the Host or through any other cause.
- (f) The Host accepts no liability for opinions expressed on the mailing list, and the contents of postings are not the opinions of the Host unless otherwise stated.
- (g) This is not a legal advice service. Neither the Host nor the subscribed members are qualified to give legal advice.
- (h) The mailing list is an unmoderated, closed discussion group and not a public medium. The Host is not the publisher of any material disseminated via this mailing list and accepts no liability for the content of messages.
- (i) By subscribing, accessing or posting to the mailing list, you agree to indemnify, and keep indemnified, the Host against any claim arising out of your use of the mailing list.
- (j) The Host reserves the right to withdraw or withhold the mailing list service from any person at any time and for any reason without penalty.
- (k) [Privacy Statement] Any information provided by you to the Host will be used for the sole purpose of providing you with the mailing list service, and will not be passed on to any third party except as provided for by law. The Host will take all reasonable steps to secure any personal information provided by you, however due to the technical limitations of the email medium, the Host makes no representation as to the security of information posted by you to the mailing list service.
- (l) These terms of service and usage guidelines may be amended by the Host at any time.

If you have any question about Immigration@OzPoz that's not dealt with in this document, please don't hesitate to drop me a line and I will do my best to help.

Paul Kidd (paul@ozpoz.org)
OzPoz Facilitator