

Fake Agents – The Philippines is overflowing with them!

We hear sad stories on a far-too-regular basis. People deal with fake agents. Many of them are cheap, and this is often the attraction. There is a cost involved in putting together a thorough application. There is also a cost involved in running a legitimate office, and keeping up with the constant changes in the law, maintaining a professional library of legislation, etc.

Of course the fake agents are cheaper. They don't do any real work!

If you deal with a Migration Agents Registration Authority ([MARA](#)) registered agent like Down Under Visa, you have the protection of an Australian Government operated authority.

Don't take the risk!

The following are some examples of emails we've received over time from victims of non-registered agents. We suggest that you stay safe and don't join their ranks.

From anonymous client

Well initially I had asked for a total cost for all the fees and visa. And what paperwork we required so we could prepare before applying. But it seems the agent has already registered the application with the embassy. And the fees and such keep going up. She insists she needs 30000 peso for medical and seminars by tomorrow. The visa fee I was to pay tonight was 55700 peso then tonight just before I send it I am told now it is 76000. It seems I am either not told all of the costs or misinformed of the costs. And because the application was sent before I knew I am ill prepared with paperwork and it would appear all of the required money. I am concerned that the application may fail because I have not been informed of the true cost and requirements to plan or prepare for them. How long is an application valid for at the embassy? What will happen if we are unable to meet the cost or requirements in time?

From: Jeff Harvie <jeff@downundervisacom.au>

Date: xxxxxxxx

To:xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Subject: Re: Form Submission

xxxx, is this a MARA-registered agent you're dealing with?

- did you fill out a Form 956 Appointment of a Migration Agent?
- did you sign a cost agreement that outlined all fees and costs at the start?
- did you sign a 40SP and a 47SP forms?

I'm wondering whether an application went in at all! There are some serious con artists out there, and generally nothing ever gets lodged. Just money taken! If you didn't pay the visa fee

yet it's unlikely it WOULD have been lodged, because the Embassy requires payment on lodgement.

If you didn't sign those three forms, then nothing went in!

You don't "register" an application with the Embassy before applying either. No such function exists.

If you haven't included all your requirements, then you get notified later to please supply them (generally, depending on what was missing).

Can you tell me step by step what you've actually done? What did you sign? What info did you give? What documentation did you give? All sounds very odd to me!

Regards

Jeff Harvie

I have not signed anything. No I don't believe she is a registered agent. I have not met her. She is in the Phillipines with my fiancé. A friend of a friend as it were. My fiancé says she has all of the paperwork completed there but I do not know exactly what forms they are. But the agent says she has **already registred the application** with the embassy. This is why I am concerned. **My fiancé is very inocent and trusting**. I have a feeling my fiancé has been encouraged to get things started prematurely. There is such an urgency attached to fees and such but **I am told we can pay the fees now even though my paperwork is not there. Nor is there even a copy of them there.**

From: Jeff Harvie <jeff@downundervisa.com.au>

Date: xxxxxxxxxx

To: xxxxxxxxxx

Subject: Re: Form Submission

You've been conned, xxxx!

If you haven't signed forms, you've not made an application!

And there is **no such thing as a "registered application"**!

So the bad news is you've wasted your money!

The good news is you haven't messed up anything!

Now....would you like us to help you make a REAL application??

Jeff Harvie

From anonymous client

i have hired an immigration agent (xxxx xxxx xxxx, Inc.) which is not mara registered. i have paid her (xxxx xxxx) P70,000 as professional fee and have also paid the filing fee for our application (AUD\$2175) last october 2009. she had my credentials assessed by vetasses and i had my ielts exam in february 21, 2009. i had scored 7 in listening and speaking, 7.5 in reading but had 6.5 in writing. ms. xxxx told me that she had my ielts remarked and it was positive and has applied it for CSL. she also gave me an acknowledgment letter by diac of my application. i just learned this march that SIS has clients which filed cases against ms. xxxx (owner) for non-filing of their application after the fees are already paid.

From anonymous client

The main reason is that I resigned from work since Feb. 2008 and started review classes for IELTS. Because I applied for a job in Canada. The 1st application didn't work out. Then 2nd application, it went out smoothly and Thank God the Canadian Approved my Working Visa last Sept 29, 2009. Then went to the POEA (Phil Overseas Employment Agency Phils) to secure an OEC (Overseas Employment Certificate) but they required to send a Compliance Letter to my Employer. I did what they told me. But to my dismay, Its been a month now they haven't send me that letter. The agent is saying so many things like the employer is too hard to catch, too busy etc... The employer also is always nowhere to be found. My LMO (Labour Market Opinion) will expire at the end of the month and none of them can give me an assurance if I could still work in Canada or not.

I was absolutely frustrated about whats happening to my application. Thats why for now, I'm again on the verge of Job Hunting..

I don't know where to ask for help nor advice about this matter. I'm already "zero balance" because of this application.

I'm sorry If i blurted it out the failure.

Maybe next time, for now I didn't meet your requirements but hopefully the next time I will email you again to try-out.

Thank you for your time.

XXXX XXXX

You have every right to “blurt out”, Ms xxxx. It appears that you have been scammed by somebody, and the Canadian job offer probably never existed. It is only human to feel angry, and it’s honest to not keep it to yourself. These are very Australian qualities. You always know what we are thinking, because we will always tell you. No pretence.

I don’t know whether anything good will happen to you regarding the job in Canada. I hope for your sake it will.

If not?

- (a) Go and get a job (in nursing)
- (b) Practice your English. Read, write, speak and listen English all the time. If your friends think you are mayabang, ignore their comments. Reading and writing were your weakest areas? Practice practice practice! Use your notes from your studies.
- (c) When you are confident you have improved, take another IELTS examination. Try to get a band score of 7.0
- (d) When you do this, contact me and we can organise your nursing skills assessment.
- (e) When you have done all this, and you have worked for 12 months as a nurse, then you will be ready to apply.

It’s only a year. And in the long term, it’s well worth the effort. The rewards are great. And sometimes God works in ways we least expect. And you need to get another job anyway, di ba?

Yeah, your right. And, Thanks again. Hoping that in a years time, I'm ready for it.

Hope you won't close your doors for me. Thank you..

XXXX

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