

Evidence that your relationship is genuine

When your eligibility for a Partner visa is being actively assessed, your case officer will be reviewing the evidence you have previously provided and if required, requesting additional evidence that supports your claims of a genuine and continuing relationship with your partner. **You are not required to provide further evidence of your relationship until specifically requested by your case officer.** However, you should ensure that you gather and retain as much evidence as you can that you believe will support your claims.

For de-facto relationships, you should ensure that you have evidence that confirms that your relationship has been of a de-facto nature for a minimum of 12 months prior to lodgement of your application.

Evidence of your relationship

As well as evidence demonstrating your relationship history with your sponsor, there are 4 broad categories of evidence that you need to provide to your case officer (if you have not already done so).

- financial aspects;
- the nature of the household;
- social context of the relationship; and
- the nature of your commitment to each other.

The lists below are only a guide and are neither all inclusive or exclusive. You may be asked to provide additional information during processing of your application.

Financial aspects

Evidence will be required that you and your partner share financial commitments and responsibilities, including:

- evidence of any joint ownership of real estate or other major assets (for example, cars, appliances) and any joint liabilities (for example, loans, insurance);
- sharing of finances;
- legal commitments that you and your partner have undertaken as a couple;
- evidence that you and your partner have operated joint bank accounts for a reasonable period of time; or
- sharing of household bills and expenses.

The nature of the household

You will be asked to provide evidence that you and your partner share responsibilities within your household, including:

- your living arrangements;
- a statement outlining the basis on which responsibility for housework is distributed;
- joint ownership or joint rental of the residence in which you live;
- joint utilities accounts (electricity, gas, telephone);
- joint responsibility for bills for day-to-day living expenses;
- joint responsibility for children; or
- correspondence addressed to both you and your partner at the same address.

Social context of the relationship

How your relationship with your partner is seen by your friends and family will be considered including:

- evidence that you and your partner are generally accepted as a couple socially (for example, joint invitations, going out together, friends and acquaintances in common);
- the assessment of your friends and acquaintances about the nature of your relationship (see 'Statutory declarations' on page 27 Booklet 1 Partner Migration downloadable from <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/booklets/books1.htm>);
- evidence that you and your partner have declared your relationship to government bodies, commercial/public institutions or authorities;
- statutory declarations made by your or your partner's parents, family members, relatives and other friends;
- joint membership of organisations or groups;
- evidence of joint participation in sporting, cultural or social activities; or
- joint travel.

Note: Providing only statutory declarations from your and your partner's parents, family members, relatives and other friends is not normally sufficient to evidence your relationship.

The nature of your commitment to each other

Factors that could assist in evidencing mutual commitment between you and your partner include:

- knowledge of each other's personal circumstances (for example, background and family situation, which could be established at interview);
- intention that your relationship will be long-term (for example, the extent to which you have combined your affairs);
- the terms of your wills; or
- correspondence and itemised phone accounts to show that contact was maintained during any period of separation.