

Permit Information

Why do I need an AAPA lands permit?

Under the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972*, permits are required for reserves managed by the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority (AAPA). Permits are provided by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

If you have any queries, please contact the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage via telephone or email:

1300 651 077

+61 8 6551 8000

alps@dplh.wa.gov.au

You can visit www.dplh.wa.gov.au for more information.

Visitors* to some Aboriginal reserves are required by law to obtain an entry permit (*people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent do not need a permit).

The AAPA lands permit system is designed to help protect the privacy of Aboriginal communities, preserve Aboriginal heritage and culture, safeguard the natural environment and to promote visitor safety.

What type of AAPA permit do I need?

Most visitors will require a **transit permit** to enter and pass through certain Aboriginal reserves. These are generally for short-term visits by people wishing to visit or travel through reserves for:

- tourism or recreation purposes
- business purposes (other than mining)
- visiting art or cultural centres
- pre-arranged business with communities (such as consultation on matters that are of interest to communities).

Transit permits do not apply to people wishing to enter reserves for mining purposes, unless entry is required for consultation only.

Mining Entry Permits are required for any mining activity (surveying and/or marking out of tenements, fossicking, prospecting, exploring and mining) on any Aboriginal reserve subject to Part III of the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972*; and travelling through such Aboriginal reserves to access mining tenements outside of the reserve for prospecting, exploration or mining purposes.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs issues mining entry permits after seeking the views of the Aboriginal Lands Trust, which in turn consults with any resident Aboriginal community and relevant native title holders.

Are AAPA permits required legally?

Yes, permits are required for anyone visiting or passing through an Aboriginal reserve subject to Part III of the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972*.

People travelling together can be included in the one permit, which is usually issued in the name of the nominated lead driver. The names of all passengers should be listed on the permit application.

Permits are **not** required by:

- people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- a member of either House of Parliament of the State or Commonwealth Governments
- a person lawfully exercising a function under the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* or otherwise acting in pursuance of a duty imposed by law
- a person authorised in that behalf under the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act Regulations 1972*

If you are unsure whether you are exempt or not, please contact the department for advice.

How do I know which land requires a permit?

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage provides an online mapping tool which allows you to plan your trip and identifies which land requires a permit:

<https://aapapermits.microsoftportals.com/>

Most communities and reserves requiring a transit permit are in remote areas of Western Australia. Travellers are strongly advised to take all safety precautions when travelling in these areas.

How long does it take to get a permit?

You should submit applications well in advance of your planned trip, as processing may take some time depending on the requirements for consultation with communities.

Applications for the purposes of transit/refuelling only may be processed within a day, particularly if the application is lodged online.

In peak tourist seasons or where consultation with the relevant community is required, this may take longer. Applications for extended stays on reserve lands, travel by unusual circumstances, e.g. camel, bicycle, or along more remote roads will also take longer to process as the department generally seeks comment from the resident communities.

Are you travelling for work/recreation/in a group?

Individual

Tourists / people travelling in one vehicle who are generally on holiday or leisure time.

Organisation

Transiting on business, such as a Commercial Tour Operator or in a convoy such as group of 4 or more vehicles.

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- *4WD Club*
 - A group of 4WD owners travelling for recreational reasons.
- *Convoy*
 - Group of 4 or more vehicles travelling together.
- *Commercial Tour Operator*
 - A business operating a tour with paying clientele.

Contractor/Subcontractor of Government

Organisation/entity providing a service to community via a Government contract.

Government Employee

An employee of the Local/State/Commonwealth Government.

Generally, people travelling alone on bicycles or walking will not be issued a permit, unless they are accompanied by a support vehicle, for visitor safety reasons.

Is there a charge?

No, transit permits are free of charge. However some Aboriginal communities levy an entry/camping/activity fee for people wishing to visit or remain on the reserve for an extended period, such as when tourists stay over for fishing activities. These visitors' passes/levies are not managed or administered by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

Where do I apply?

[You can apply online.](#) Please ensure you have read all of the information on this page before applying.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is open during **office hours** only between 9.00am and 4.30pm Western Standard Time and not available on Western Australian public holidays.

Contacts:

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alps@dplh.wa.gov.au

Important information for travellers

Within a community – permits are issued with conditions and visitors should be aware that these can vary from location to location.

Weather – Check the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) www.bom.gov.au for weather updates, particularly during the cyclone season (November-April) as remote roads can become impassable due to flash-flooding.

Prescribed burning activity – visitors should check if there are prescribed burns planned during your travel: <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/fire/prescribed-burning/burns>

Safety – visitors traveling to Aboriginal lands in Western Australia are strongly advised to ensure they are well-prepared for the rigours and challenges of traveling in remote areas. Some roads in remote areas can become difficult or impassable in adverse weather conditions. Further information can be found at:

www.flyingdoctor.org.au/about-the-rfds/preparing-to-travel/

<https://patient.info/health/health-advice-for-travel-abroad/travelling-to-remote-locations>

<https://travelmap.mainroads.wa.gov.au/>

Emergency – visitors should note that mobile phone coverage can be extremely limited in some remote areas of Western Australia. Emergency services can be contacted through 000.

Cancellations – your travel arrangements may be cancelled or rescheduled for cultural reasons if there is a death in the community. If you change your travel plans and no longer wish to visit a community, please contact the Transit Permits Officer on 08 6551 8000/1300 651 077 or alps@dplh.wa.gov.au.

If the department requests additional information in support of your application and does not hear back from you within a reasonable timeframe, your application may be cancelled.

Permits outside Western Australia - the Department does not issue permits for areas outside of Western Australia.