

# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon. Gary Hardgrave MP**

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## IMPORTANT CHANGES TO CITIZENSHIP FOR CHILDREN

Children under 18 who were born after a parent lost Australian citizenship will now be able to claim their birthright after changes announced today by the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs Gary Hardgrave.

Mr Hardgrave said the policy amendment, which took effect yesterday, follows changes to section 17 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* on 4 April 2002, which allowed Australians taking out citizenship of another country to retain their Australian citizenship.

Mr Hardgrave said that before this change, Australian citizens who acquired the citizenship of another country automatically lost their Australian citizenship, as did their children.

“Since 1949, people who lost their citizenship under Section 17 have been able to apply for its resumption. However, I have received numerous representations from parents whose children were born after their parent’s loss of citizenship and before their citizenship was resumed,” Mr Hardgrave said.

“These children were not eligible for registration by descent because of these circumstances at the time of their birth, and policy guidelines did not provide for the grant of Australian Citizenship to these children in their own right.

“Having considered these circumstances, I decided that changes to the policy guidelines were necessary against the background of the changes to the Act last year.

“Therefore, I am pleased to advise that children under 18 whose parent(s) lost Australian citizenship under the now repealed Section 17 are now eligible for the grant of Australian citizenship under section 13 (9)(a) of the Act.”

“This would not be an automatic process but would require an application in accordance with the Act. People who previously applied but were unsuccessful should now apply.”

“Similar provisions for people currently over 18 would require amendments to the Act and I will give consideration to this need over the coming months,” Mr Hardgrave said.

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