



PRACTICAL GUIDE

Foreign & Temporary Resident Buyer Guide

FIRB approval, additional duty, vacancy fee and the established-vs-new dwelling rules for non-resident buyers.

FIRB approval

- Required before signing for non-residents.
- \$14,700+ application fee depending on price.
- Approval typically restricted to new dwellings, not established homes.
- Temporary residents can buy one established home as principal residence.

Additional duties

- Foreign Purchaser Additional Duty: 8% surcharge on top of standard land transfer duty.
- Absentee Owner Surcharge: 4% annual on top of land tax.
- Vacancy Fee Federal: if property is vacant 6+ months in a year.

Spouse on partner visa

- Treated as foreign until PR granted.
- FIRB approval required; surcharges apply.
- Some PR pathways trigger refund of past surcharges within set timeframes.

Structure considerations

- Joint purchase with Australian spouse changes treatment proportionally.
- Trust structures can trigger foreign-controlled trust rules.
- Always get cross-border tax advice before structuring.

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