

Adoption—Indigenous status, code N

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Adoption—Indigenous status, code N

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Element
Short name:	Indigenous status
METEOR identifier:	651224
Registration status:	Children and Families , Superseded 20/01/2021
Definition:	Whether an adoptive parent identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, as represented by a code. This is in accord with the first two of three components of the Commonwealth definition.
Context:	Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples occupy a unique place in Australian society and culture. In the current climate of reconciliation, accurate and consistent statistics about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are needed in order to plan, promote and deliver essential services, to monitor changes in wellbeing and to account for government expenditure in this area. The purpose of this metadata item is to provide information about people who identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Agencies or establishments wishing to determine the eligibility of individuals for particular benefits, services or rights will need to make their own judgments about the suitability of the standard measure for these purposes, having regard to the specific eligibility criteria for the program concerned.
Data Element Concept:	Adoption—Indigenous status
Value Domain:	Adoption Indigenous status code N

Value domain attributes

Representational attributes

Representation class:	Code	
Data type:	Number	
Format:	N	
Maximum character length:	1	
Permissible values:	Value	Meaning
	1	Indigenous Australian
	2	Other Australian

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use: For use in Adoptions data collections.

CODE 1 Indigenous

Record this code if the person is:

- Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
- Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

CODE 2 Other Australian

Record this code if the person is:

- Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin
- Of unknown Indigenous status.

Comments: This metadata item is not based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) standard for Indigenous status. For information on the Indigenous status standard refer to the [Person—Indigenous status, code N](#) data element.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Steward: [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

Data element attributes

Collection and usage attributes

Collection methods: The standard question for Indigenous Status is as follows:

[Are you] [Is the person] [Is (name)] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

This question is recommended for self-enumerated or interview-based collections. It can also be used in circumstances where a close relative, friend, or another member of the household is answering on behalf of the subject. It is strongly recommended that this question be asked directly wherever possible.

When someone is not present, the person answering for them should be in a position to do so, i.e. this person must know well the person about whom the question is being asked and feel confident to provide accurate information about them.

This question must always be asked regardless of data collectors' perceptions based on appearance or other factors.

Comments: The following definition, commonly known as 'The Commonwealth Definition', was given in a High Court judgement in the case of Commonwealth v Tasmania (1983) 46 ALR 625.

'An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives'.

There are three components to the Commonwealth definition:

- descent;
- self-identification; and
- community acceptance.

In practice, it is not feasible to collect information on the community acceptance part of this definition in general purpose statistical and administrative collections and therefore standard questions on Indigenous status relate to descent and self-identification only.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Steward: [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

Reference documents: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014. Indigenous Status Standard Version 1.5, Canberra. Viewed 29 September 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/a866861f12e106e0ca256a38002791fa/5609d66dcc94996eca257d6a000fb3fc!OpenDocument>.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2010. National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets. Cat. no. IHW 29. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 29 September 2015, <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=6442468342>.

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Has been superseded by [Adoption—Indigenous status, code N](#)
[Children and Families](#), Standard 20/01/2021

See also [Person—Indigenous status, code N](#)
[Aged Care](#), Standard 30/06/2023
[Children and Families](#), Standard 20/01/2021
[Disability](#), Standard 29/02/2016
[Early Childhood](#), Standard 24/07/2018
[Health](#), Standard 19/11/2015
[Homelessness](#), Standard 10/08/2018
[Housing assistance](#), Standard 30/08/2017
[Independent Hospital Pricing Authority](#), Qualified 23/11/2015
[Indigenous](#), Standard 16/10/2017
[Tasmanian Health](#), Superseded 10/11/2023
[Youth Justice](#), Standard 15/02/2022

Implementation in Data Set [Adoptions DSS 2013-16](#)
Specifications: [Children and Families](#), Superseded 20/03/2018

Implementation start date: 01/07/2013

Implementation end date: 30/06/2016

DSS specific information:

Indigenous status is collected up to three times: once for the adopted child subject to finalised adoption; once for the adoptive parent(s) of Indigenous children; and, once for the adult adopted person (aged 18 years or older) if they lodge an application for information. If the adoptive parent is either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both, they are recorded as Indigenous. Where only one adoptive parent is Indigenous, the adoptive parents should be coded as Indigenous. Where a person's Indigenous status is unknown, that person should be included in the category 'Other Australian' (neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin).

[Adoptions DSS 2016-17](#)
[Children and Families](#), Superseded 12/11/2018

Implementation start date: 01/07/2016

Implementation end date: 30/06/2017

DSS specific information:

Indigenous status is collected up to three times: once for the adopted child subject to finalised adoption; once for the adoptive parent(s) of Indigenous children; and, once for the adult adopted person (aged 18 years or older) if they lodge an application for information. If the adoptive parent is either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both, they are recorded as Indigenous. Where only one adoptive parent is Indigenous, the adoptive parents should be coded as Indigenous. Where a person's Indigenous status is unknown, that person should be included in the category 'Other Australian' (neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin).

[Adoptions DSS 2017-18](#)
[Children and Families](#), Superseded 02/12/2019

Implementation start date: 01/07/2017

Implementation end date: 30/06/2018

DSS specific information:

Indigenous status is collected up to three times: once for the adopted child subject to finalised adoption; once for the adoptive parent(s) of Indigenous children; and, once for the adult adopted person (aged 18 years or older) if they lodge an application for information. If the adoptive parent is either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both, they are recorded as Indigenous. Where only one adoptive parent is Indigenous, the adoptive parents should be coded as Indigenous. Where a person's Indigenous status is unknown, that person should be included in the category 'Other Australian' (neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin).

[Adoptions DSS 2018-19](#)
[Children and Families](#), Superseded 20/01/2021

Implementation start date: 01/07/2018

Implementation end date: 30/06/2019

Conditional obligation:

Conditional on adoption type being a 'local' or a carer (known child) adoption.

DSS specific information:

Indigenous status is collected up to three times: once for the adopted child subject to finalised adoption; once for the adoptive parent(s) of Indigenous children; and, once for the adult adopted person (aged 18 years or older) if they lodge an application for information. If the adoptive parent is either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both, they are recorded as Indigenous. Where only one adoptive parent is Indigenous, the adoptive parents should be coded as Indigenous. Where a person's Indigenous status is unknown, that person should be included in the category 'Other Australian' (neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin).