

Updated Government advice for UK visa application and temporary UK residents

On Friday 27 March, the government updated its advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents.

02 April 2020

Please note: the information contained in this legal update is correct as of the original date of publication

As a consequence of coronavirus threat the UK Government is issuing more and further guidance which demonstrates the pervasive nature of the virus and how it is affecting an increasing number of aspects in people's lives.

On Friday 27 March, the government updated its advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents. It has advised the following:

Visas expiring between 24 January 2020 and 31 May 2020

All current visas are being extended to 31 May 2020 if individuals are unable to leave for two specific reasons:

1. if there are travel restrictions in place preventing them from leaving the UK; or
2. if an individual is self-isolating because of the coronavirus. (The Government has not yet set out specific scenarios in relation to this point).

If an individual falls in the above categories they must contact the [Government's Coronavirus Immigration Team \(CIT\)](#).

At the moment individuals can still apply for long term visa applications; they will still need to meet the same visa requirements.

For those who already have an appointment to attend a UK Visa and Citizenship Application Service (UKVCAS) point, they will be contacted and told what to do next. Individuals unable to attend appointments will not be negatively affected.

Individuals outside the UK

Many UK Visa Application Centres (VACs) are now closed. Any individuals with appointments will be contacted and informed their appointment will no longer take place.

Individuals have been asked to contact TLScontact if they are in Europe, Africa and part of the Middle East, and VFS global for all other countries (both are visa outsourcing specialists).

For those who need their documents returned, they will be returned if possible or when the VACs are next open.

British National Outside the UK

If a country's VAC is closed, British nationals outside the UK who need to apply for a new passport will now need to apply for an emergency travel document to return to the UK.

Individuals who still have outstanding queries can contact the Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre on:

CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk

0800 678 1767

Employers may want to consider deferring start dates for new employees coming from overseas or explore the possibility of new employees working remotely for the time being. If employers have work available, they may want to consider temporarily extending contracts for individuals who are to remain in the UK due to travel restrictions.

It is possible that we will see further deferrals on Visa applications; this will depend very much on the length of the outbreak and is something for employers to keep an eye on.

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