

JUST IMMIGRATION SOLICITORS

Newsletter: 24th March 2020

Home Office Coronavirus Guidance: Visa Holders and Short Term Residents in the UK: Dated 24th March 2020

The Home Office has issued updated guidance for individuals affected by travel restrictions associated with the coronavirus. Key Points to note are:

Visa holder in the UK. Visa will be extended to 31st May 2020.

1. No individual who is in the UK legally but whose visa is due to or has already expired and who cannot leave because of travel restrictions related to COVID - 19 will be regarded as an over stayer or suffer any detriment in the future.
2. A visa will be extended to 31st May 2020 if an individual cannot leave the UK because of travel restrictions or self-isolation related to COVID-19.

What Must Individual Do?

3. It is important to note that individuals who want to benefit from the above policy **MUST EMAIL THE COROAVIRUS IMMIGRATION TEAM TO ADVISE OF THEIR SITUATION** stating their full name, date of birth, nationality, existing visa details and the reason that has required them to extend their stay eg: the suspension of all flights to their place of permanent residence. The contact details of the Coronavirus Team are:

Tel: 0800 678 1767

Email: CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk

Once the details are received, the Coronavirus Team will update the relevant details on the UKVI database. Individuals will be advised that the UKVI have noted their details. They will not be subject to enforcement action and this period will not be held against them in future applications.

4. The requirement to contact the Coronavirus Team applies to individuals of any nationality whose leave expires between 24th January 2020 and 30th May 2020.

Individuals whose leave expire between 24 January 2020 and 30 May 2020 and who are normally required to apply for a long term visa from their home country.

5. Where individuals would normally be required to return to their country of residence to apply for long term visa, they will now be able to apply from the UK to switch. This potentially will cover switching from categories such as a marriage visitor visa to a spouse visa or from a visitor visa to a spouse or fiancé/ fiancée visa under Appendix FM.

6. They will need to be switching from and to a published eligible route and will need to meet the same visa requirements and pay the same application fee.

Students and distance learning:

7. Tier 4 Students are not normally permitted to undertake distance learning courses. However, due to the current exceptional circumstances, the UKVI will not consider it a breach of sponsor duties to offer distance learning to existing Tier 4 students in the UK or to those who have chosen to return overseas but wish to continue their current studies. Sponsors do not need to withdraw sponsorship in these circumstances.

8. If a student has permanently withdrawn from or formally deferred studies, the usual reporting requirements of the sponsors apply.

9. New international students who have been issued with a Tier 4 visa but have been unable to travel to the UK are permitted to undertake distance learning and sponsorship does not need to be withdrawn.

10. New international students who have not yet applied for a visa but wish to commence a course by distance learning do not need to travel to the UK to do so and therefore do not require sponsorship under Tier 4.

11. The above arrangements apply until 31st May 2020 by which date they will be reviewed.

Workers sponsored under Tier 2 and Tier 5 and who are working from home rather than their normal workplace due to the coronavirus pandemic:

12. Tier 2 and 5 sponsors are normally required to notify UKVI of such changes of circumstances. However, due to the current exceptional situation, UKVI will not require sponsors to do so if working from home is directly related to the pandemic. Other changes must still be reported.

Individuals who are unable to attend a biometric appointment due to coronavirus:

13. They will not be regarded as an overstayer or be subject to enforcement action if they are unable to attend a biometric appointment due to coronavirus or if there are delays in processing their applications.

Agnes Lai (Principal – Solicitor)



If you would like advice or assistance on any of the issues raised in this note/article, please contact Agnes Lai by email at

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