



Coronavirus (COVID-19) factsheet: visa customers outside of the UK

Tuesday 24 March 2020

Guidance on immigration provisions made by the Home Office for individuals affected by travel restrictions associated with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Key lines

- The Home Office has [published guidance on GOV.UK](#) on immigration provisions for individuals affected by travel restrictions associated with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Visa customers outside of the UK:

- Many of the UK's Visa Application Centres (VACs) are currently closed and we anticipate more closing. Many that are open are offering limited services.
- For up to date advice on services in each country individuals should access the relevant commercial partner:
 - Europe, Africa and parts of the Middle East visit: uk.tlscontact.com
 - All other countries visit: vfsglobal.co.uk
- Visa customers outside of the UK who are affected by travel restrictions associated with coronavirus should visit the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents](#) GOV.UK page for the latest information and guidance.
- Due to border restrictions affecting several countries across the globe, our commercial partners (TLS and VFS) consignment logistics are being affected. This means we cannot print and send visa vignettes across certain borders and routes.
- Where visa applicants have an appointment and the VAC is now closed, commercial partners are contacting customers to advise them the appointment is not going ahead.
- If customers have paid for courier return, commercial partners are sending passports back (where courier routes remain open to allow them to do so). If applicants are concerned about their passport, customers can contact [Coronavirus Immigration Team](#) for advice.
- If an individual's passport is currently held in a VAC but they have not previously arranged for it to be returned by courier, please contact either TLS contact or VFS global directly.
- English Testing Centres across the world are currently seeing restrictions by the relevant local and national authorities. For all the latest information, please visit



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the [International English Language Testing System \(IELTS\)'s website](#), or applicants can contact their test centre directly by email.

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) has set up a dedicated email account for customers with immigration queries related to coronavirus, including questions about urgent, compelling, compassionate cases. Customers can contact: CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk

Additional Information

What guidance does Home Office have for those who have a valid visa but haven't travelled to the UK yet?

Applicants who hold a valid visa should check initially with their own government websites to ensure that they are up to date on latest travel restrictions from their current locations. In addition, applicants should check the Gov.UK website which is updated regularly.

How does Home Office plan to return passports to applicants in regions where there are VAC closures?

Applicants are advised that they should check the relevant Visa Application Centre (VAC) website relating to the applicant point where they submitted their passport. Where local permissions allow for customers have paid for courier return, Commercial Partners are sending passports back (where courier routes remain open to allow them to do so). If applicants are concerned about their passport, they can contact the Coronavirus Immigration Team at CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk. In countries where significant movement restrictions are in place some of our VACs are closed and our Commercial Partner is required to comply with all local restrictions.

If an individual has applied for a visa from overseas but would now like to withdraw their application, how do they do this?

The applicant can contact UKVI directly to discuss the withdrawal of their application. Please visit our gov.uk web pages at <https://www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk> for further details. They may also contact the Visa Application Centre (VAC) via our Commercial Partner websites to ask for their application to be withdrawn. In countries where significant movement restrictions are in place, some of our VACs are closed which may make it difficult for us to return documents to them.