CLS Direct Information Leaflet 21 Jul 04

Immigration and Nationality

Your rights to live and work in the UK

Community Legal Service Direct

There are many laws and rules which say who can come into the UK. It depends on why you are coming and whether you want to stay permanently. This leaflet deals with your rights to come to the UK and stay here.

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The leaflets in this series give you an outline of your legal rights. They are not a complete guide to the law and are not intended to be a guide to how the law will apply to you or to any specific situation. The leaflets are regularly updated but the law may have changed since this was printed, so information in it may be incorrect or out of date.

If you have a problem, you will need to get more information or personal advice to work out the best way to solve it. See 'Further help' on page 19 for sources of information and advice.

This leaflet explains how and when people are allowed to come to the UK, either to visit, or to settle here. The laws and rules for people who have been granted refugee status and people seeking asylum are different. See the Community Legal Service leaflet, 'Claiming asylum' for information about this.

The ways people are allowed to come to the UK are described in rules produced by the Home Office. They are long and though most of what is in them has been there for years, details can change at short notice. The rules, and some of the guidance for the immigration officers who must apply them, are on the Home Office website (see 'Further help' on page 19).

If you are worried about whether you or a relative or partner will be allowed to stay in the UK, remember that this leaflet is only a guide. Unless you are quite sure that your situation is straightforward, you should get expert advice. See 'Further help' on page 19 for where you can find more advice.

Do I need permission to come to the UK?

Only people who have the 'right of abode' in the UK can come here without any immigration controls. This includes all British citizens, and a small number of Commonwealth and other British nationals (see 'Who has a right to British nationality?' on page 15).

This right does not cover members of their families who are not British citizens. They must meet certain conditions to enter the country (see 'Categories of entry' on page 6). There are some controls for Irish and many other European citizens (see 'What if I am a citizen of a European country?', below). All other people are checked, even if they live permanently in the UK (see 'What if I want to settle in the UK?' on page 9).

What if I am a citizen of a European country?

If you are a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area (EEA), you are generally free to enter the UK, to work here and to stay here. However, you can be deported (made to leave) if you commit a serious crime.

The EEA is made up of:

- the 14 other European Union countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Germany, the Irish Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden);
- Iceland;
- Norway; and
- Liechtenstein.

Citizens of Switzerland have the same rights here as EEA citizens.

Ten other European countries will become members of the EEA in May 2004, and their citizens will then have the same rights of free movement as those from any other EEA country.

The special rights of EEA citizens also cover their families (even if members of the family have other nationalities), as long as the EEA citizen is in the UK. If other family members travel to the UK on passports of a country outside the EEA, they will need to have entry clearance (see 'What sort of permission do I need to come to the UK?' on page 5). However, they will not have to pay a fee for it.

How is entry to the UK controlled?

There are four places where you may need to show that you are allowed to come to or stay in the UK. They are:

- at a British embassy or other consular post overseas, when you apply for a visa (or other kind of entry clearance);
- at a British airport or seaport when you arrive in the UK, or when you are getting on a Channel Tunnel train;
- at the Home Office after you have arrived in the UK, when you apply to extend your permission to stay, or to change the reason for your stay; and
- if you are questioned by immigration officers or the police in the UK when they think you may not have permission to be here.

You can also be asked about your immigration status when you apply for certain things in the UK. These things include:

- social security benefits;
- hospital treatment;
- housing from your local authority;
- a school or college place for yourself or one of your children;
- a marriage licence; or
- a job.

At any of these places, you may have to show papers such as your passport or a Home Office letter to prove that you have permission to be here. These are not immigration controls, but getting the service (for example, benefits or a job) may depend on your immigration status, and information about you may be passed on to the immigration authorities.

What sort of permission do I need to come to the UK?

The type of permission ('entry clearance' or 'visa') you need to come to the UK depends on:

- your nationality;
- why you are coming to the UK; and
- whether you are visiting or want to settle here.

If you already have permission to stay, whether for a limited time or permanently, you can travel and will have a right to come into the UK as long as you go back before that permission ends.

If you are a citizen of a European Economic Area country, you are free to come and leave the UK whenever you want (see 'What if I am a citizen of a European country?' on page 3).

Otherwise, whether you need permission (in the form of a visa) depends on whether you are a 'visa national' or not. You are a 'visa national' if you have a passport of one of the countries on a list that is part of the immigration rules. If you are from one of these countries, you will need a visa, whatever your reason for coming to the UK, and for however long you want to stay. To find out which countries are visa national countries, contact UK Visas (see 'Further help' on page 19).

If you are not a 'visa national', you don't need a visa for a visit or to study, but you will usually need to get permission before you travel to the UK for other reasons (for example, to settle here or for business).

Many visitors to the UK are not 'visa nationals' and include people from the USA and Japan, as well as many Commonwealth countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

To find out whether you need a visa for a visit to the UK, contact any British embassy or other consular post, or check the Foreign Office visa website (see 'Further help' on page 19).

If you arrive with entry clearance, this gives you the right to enter, and the immigration officer will just check that it is genuine, and that your circumstances have not changed so much that it no longer applies. However, whether you have clearance or not, an immigration officer can detain (hold) you if they are looking into your entry clearance, or if you are refused permission to enter the UK.

How do I apply for permission to come to the UK?

You normally apply for a visa or other permission at the nearest British embassy or other consular post in the country you are living in (though some don't handle visa applications). You can also download application forms from the Foreign Office website. You will have to pay a fee when you apply.

You may be interviewed when you apply. An interview is much more likely if you are applying to come to live here or to set up a business. Interviews are also more common in some countries than in others.

Your application may be sent to the UK for a decision, especially if you are applying for business reasons. If it is approved, the immigration officer will put a sticker in your passport which sets out the conditions on which you are allowed to enter and the dates of your stay. You will usually need to travel to the UK within six months of getting permission, but visas for 'settlement' (to live here) are valid for up to 12 months.

Airlines and ferry companies who bring passengers to the UK make their own checks to see whether you have the right papers to be allowed in to the UK. They can be fined for bringing you here if you do not have the right papers, so you will not be able to get on a flight to the UK unless you have a valid passport (with a UK visa if you need one).

Categories of entry

The immigration rules describe the many ways in which you can be allowed to enter the UK. The most important categories are:

- visitors;
- students;
- au pairs;
- for work or business;
- members of the family of one of these groups coming to live with that person while he or she stays here; and
- members of the family of a British citizen or other resident, who can apply to stay permanently (see 'What if I want members of my family to settle here with me?' on page 10).

Business people whose business involves negotiating agreements, going to meetings
or going on training courses while they are in the UK are allowed in as visitors, if they only plan to stay for six months or less. If you are not sure whether you can enter as a business visitor or need a work permit, get specialist advice.

From November 2003 a new rule will be introduced and over two years will be extended to cover nationals of all countries outside the EEA. This will mean that anyone coming to the UK for more than six months will need to have entry clearance before they travel here.

What if I want to work in the UK?

If you want to work in the UK, you will also usually need a work permit. If a company here wants to employ you, it is up to them to apply for the work permit, not you.

In most cases, your husband or wife and any children under 18 who are dependent on you can come with you. However this applies only if you can support them without 'recourse to public funds' (claiming benefits). There are also some restrictions on your family joining you if you are coming here on a temporary work scheme, including:

- as a working holidaymaker;
- for seasonal agricultural work (for example, fruit picking); or
- for the 'sector-based schemes' which allow people to work in certain industries.

The immigration rules also say whether you will be allowed to change from one category of entry to another (called 'switching') after coming to the UK. For example:

- If you are from a 'visa national' country, you cannot stay on as a student after you have entered the country as a visitor.
- If you want to be employed here or to start or join a business, you must generally apply from abroad unless you are a student on a degree course or a working holidaymaker.
- If you entered the country as a visitor and then marry someone who lives in the UK permanently, you will normally have to apply from abroad to work or settle here.

These rules don't mean the Home Office won't look at your application if you ask for permission to change. But if they then refuse your application, you won't be able to appeal against the decision.

What restrictions are there after I've arrived in the UK?

When you are given permission to enter the UK, you will be told the conditions of your stay. These conditions will be given to you in writing. If you arrive with a tour group, the notice may be given to the group leader. In other cases, the conditions will be written in your passport. If you don't have a passport, they will be in a letter from the immigration authorities.

Unless you are allowed to settle here straight away, the conditions will include a time limit. Depending on your reason for coming to the UK, you are also likely to be barred from having 'recourse to public funds' (claiming benefits, for example).

You may not be allowed to work or you may be allowed to do only some types of work. Visitors cannot do any work (even if it is not paid). Students on courses of six months or more have restricted permission to work. They can work full-time during their holidays and part-time during the term.

If you are a citizen of a country outside the Commonwealth and you come here to work or for business (and sometimes as a student), you may also have to register with the police.

Very occasionally, an immigration officer will tell someone coming to settle here that they must report to a medical officer (for example, if they have a particular contagious disease).

If you break the conditions of your permission to stay in the UK, you are committing a crime, and you may be sent back ('removed').

What if I want to stay longer than I was originally allowed?

If you want to stay longer than the time shown in your passport, you need to apply again. You can apply at one of the five Home Office Public Caller Units around the country, although they don't all deal with every kind of application. You can also apply by post.

There are different forms for different kinds of application. You must use the right one or your application will not be accepted. You must fill in the form carefully and make sure you include all the documents the form asks for (for example, your passport, proof of the money you have, or your student registration).

If you don't, the application will not be looked at and your form will be sent back to you.

The only circumstances in which you do not need to use a form are:

- for a European Economic Area permit (see 'What if I am a citizen of a European country?' on page 3);
- if you are seeking asylum; or
- for a work permit.

You need to pay a fee for many applications and your application will not be dealt with if you do not send the right amount of money. It is cheaper to apply by post, and it will cost you more if you apply at the Home Office in person.

If the Home Office agree to give you more time to stay, they will place a sticker, known as a residence permit, in your passport.

Supporting yourself

In almost all cases where you are given permission to come to the UK, you must be able to support yourself and any family members with you 'without recourse to public funds'. This includes:

- the cost of supporting yourselves while you are here with a time limit on your stay; and
- paying for where you will live.

If you are coming for a short time, you must have a place to stay. This can be with friends or family, or in a hotel or guesthouse. You also need enough money to live on, including paying for where you are staying.

If you are coming to live here, you need somewhere suitable to live and enough money for your family to live on, without claiming benefits. You do not need to own the place where you live – you can stay with relatives, as long as their house or flat won't become overcrowded.

If you are joining someone who lives here, you will not usually be able to claim benefits. If the person who lives here claims benefits, they probably won't be able to include you as a dependant, for example, in working out whether they would qualify for certain benefits meant to help people with a low income.

If you are receiving benefits and you are trying to sponsor a relative to come and live in the UK, you should get expert advice. See 'Further help' on page 19 for where you can find advice.

What if I want to settle in the UK?

With some kinds of entry permit, you may be allowed to settle in the UK, as long as you meet certain conditions. If you want family members to join you here, they may have to live here for a certain length of time before they will have the right to live here permanently (see 'What if I want members of my family to settle here with me?', on page 10).

There are time limits for people in other situations, too. You must be here for four years before you can settle permanently if you:

- have a work permit;
- are self-employed or a businessperson;
- are a retired person 'of independent means' (which means you can support yourself);
- are 'permit-free' (which means you do a type of work which doesn't need a permit, including foreign correspondents, sole representatives of overseas companies, domestic servants and religious ministers);
- have been allowed to stay under the 'Highly Skilled Migrants Programme'; or
- are an investor or innovator.

This four-year limit also applies if you are the husband or wife or child of someone in one of the above situations.

If you want to apply to settle in the UK after you have arrived, you must apply to the Home Office shortly before you reach the end of the time you have been allowed. If you show that you still meet the rules for living here, your time limit should be lifted, and any other conditions that are part of your permission to be here (such as not being allowed to work) will also end. When this happens, you are given what is called 'indefinite leave to remain'.

Once you are settled in the UK in this way, you can travel abroad and stay away for up to two years without needing clearance to return. But if you are away for longer than this, you will have to apply for clearance.

What if I want members of my family to settle here with me?

British citizens and anyone who is settled in the UK can 'sponsor' close family members to come over to live here. These family members can include your:

- husband or wife;
- unmarried partner (including a gay or lesbian partner);
- fiancé or fiancée;
- children (up to 18); and
- parents or grandparents over 65.

Many of these people have a time limit on their stay to begin with. The only people who are allowed to settle straight away are:

- parents;
- grandparents; and
- children who arrive on their own.

Other people will be given a time limit of two years to stay, but can apply to stay permanently at the end of that time. This applies to:

- husbands and wives;
- children who arrive with a husband or wife; and
- unmarried partners, and any children who come with them.

This time limit can sometimes cause problems for husbands, wives or partners if the relationship comes to an end before the period ends. However, if you have arrived for this reason, you should be allowed to stay if your UK partner has died, or you can prove to the Home Office that you were forced to leave them because they were violent.

If you are entering the country as a fiancé or fiancée, you will be allowed into the UK for six months. During that time you are expected to marry and apply again to the Home Office. You won't be allowed to work in the UK until you are married and the Home Office has given you permission to stay.

Children who want to join a single parent in the UK must meet extra conditions. These are meant to make sure that no other relative could care for them. However, if the children are given permission to come here, they will be allowed to settle straight away without waiting two years.

Parents or grandparents who are over 65 have to show that they depend on the child or grandchild in the UK who is sponsoring them to support them, and that they have no close relative to turn to in their own country.

Relatives not on this list who want to join someone in the UK (including parents under 65), must show that they are living alone in 'the most exceptional compassionate circumstances'. This is difficult to prove, and few people succeed with this sort of application.

Most of the relatives on the list can also apply in the UK after entering for some other reason. However, there are some things they would not normally be able to do. Some of these are listed below.

- You cannot 'switch' to staying as a fiancé or fiancée. You should be engaged before you enter the country, and you will need entry clearance for this purpose before you arrive, if you want to stay here after your marriage.
- You will not usually be allowed to stay as the husband or wife of a UK resident if you were married before you came, and you first entered the country as a visitor.
- You may be allowed to stay here if you marry while you are here as a student, for example, but not if you came for a course of no more that six months, nor if you came as a visitor.
- If you got married overseas and you did not arrive with entry clearance as a husband or wife, you will probably have to go back and apply from abroad. This may be quicker than applying to the Home Office in the UK.

If you do not have permission to stay in the UK, marrying someone here will not usually give you any right to stay. You need to get specialist advice if you are in this position.

What happens if my application is turned down?

Your application to enter or to stay longer can be turned down if the officer dealing with it thinks:

- you don't meet one of the rules for the particular category of entry;
- you don't meet one of the general reasons (for example, if you have a criminal record); or
- you are thought to be a threat to national security.

If you are turned down, you can, in most cases, appeal against the decision (see 'How can I appeal if my application is turned down?' right).

What if I stay longer than I am allowed to?

It is against the law to stay in the UK beyond your time limit, unless:

- you have applied to the Home Office for permission to stay longer or to settle and you are waiting for a decision; or
- you are appealing against a refusal.

Otherwise you become an 'overstayer' and you may be prosecuted and sent home ('removed').

The immigration authorities may also deport or remove you for other reasons. They can do this after you have settled here if:

- you are found guilty of a serious crime; or
- they discover that you told lies in order to settle here. For example, if you were allowed to settle because you married someone living here, and the Home Office later finds out that you were not living together.

However, you cannot be deported if you become a British citizen (see 'How can I become a British Citizen?' on page 15). Also, many Commonwealth citizens living in the UK since before 1973 cannot be deported.

How can I appeal if my application is turned down?

Whether you can appeal if your immigration application is refused depends on what you were applying for and where the decision was made. If you are refused entry clearance overseas, you can usually appeal. You will not be able to appeal if:

- you wanted to study in the UK for less than six months;
- you wanted to look for a study course in the UK; or
- in some cases, you applied for clearance as a visitor.

If you were refused entry clearance to visit the UK, you can appeal only if you were coming for a family visit. There are special rules about family visits, including a long list of which relatives are considered as 'family'. An appeal against refusal to visit the UK is usually dealt with faster than other appeals. You can ask for your appeal to go ahead based on the papers that you and the Entry Clearance Officer send in, or you can ask for a hearing if you have someone in the UK to represent you.

When you are refused entry at a port or airport or when coming through the Channel Tunnel, you can only appeal while you are in the UK if:

- you have entry clearance; or
- you are returning while you already have permission to be here.

Otherwise, you will be able to appeal only after you have gone back to where you came from. Some students and visitors have no right of appeal.

If you are refused by the Home Office in the UK, you will have a right to appeal if the Home Office has said you must leave the UK. You can't appeal if you are given permission to stay but it is not what you applied for (for example, if you applied to stay permanently, but were given a time limit on your stay).

If the immigration authorities want to send you back because they believe you got your permission by lying, for example, you can appeal against this decision only after you have been sent back.

Your only option while you are still in the UK would probably be a judicial review of the refusal. This procedure looks at whether the authority has acted unlawfully (broken the law) in making its decision, not at whether the decision itself was fair. If you are in this position, you will need expert legal advice.

You will not be able to appeal any decision if the refusal is 'mandatory'. This means the official has no choice but to refuse you if:

- you do not have a work permit;
- you are outside the age range allowed for one of the temporary working categories;
- you do not hold one of the nationalities required by a rule; or
- agreeing to your application would take it beyond the maximum time permitted.

How do I appeal?

If your application is turned down, you will be given a notice telling you whether you can appeal. If you can, you will also be given a form to fill in to do this. You must fill in the form and return it within:

- 10 working days if you are appealing in the UK (only 5 days if you are being held in detention); or
- 28 days if you are appealing from overseas.

You may be able to appeal under other laws as well as the immigration law. The most important of these is the Human Rights Act. This law says (among other things) that the government can't normally make decisions which would 'interfere with your right to respect for private and family life'. If it does this, it has to be for a good reason.

However, this does not mean that you have the right to choose which country you want to live in with your family. The Human Rights Act will only help your immigration appeal in the UK if you can show a good reason why you should not have to live in another country. For more on this, see the Community Legal Service leaflet, 'The Human Rights Act'.

If you think your application has been turned down unfairly because of your race or ethnic origin, you may also be able to appeal under race relations laws.

If you want to base your appeal on human rights or race relations reasons, you do not need to do this separately from your immigration appeal. You must include all the points you want to raise on the same appeal form. However, the law in these areas is complicated, and you would need expert legal advice. See 'Further help' on page 19 for more about finding advice.

Who has a right to British nationality?

There are six types of nationality. All of them can have a British passport. The largest group is British citizens, who have the 'right of abode'. Most children born in the UK become British citizens when they are born.

Until the law was changed at the beginning of 1983, everyone born here became a citizen unless their parents were here as foreign diplomats when they were born. However, since 1983, children only become citizens if the parents are settled in the UK when the child is born. If the parents still have a time limit on their stay or have no permission to be here when the child is born, the child does not become a citizen. However, the child will be able to become a British citizen if their parents settle here later.

Anyone who becomes a British citizen in the UK can pass on citizenship to their child born abroad. British citizens have rights to travel freely and to work in European Economic Area countries. Other people who live in the UK need permission from other European countries if they want to work there. People born abroad who become British Citizens because their parents are citizens cannot pass on their citizenship to their own children born abroad.

How can I become a British citizen?

If you have been allowed to settle (stay here permanently), you can apply for citizenship under a process called 'naturalisation'. There are two main ways of doing this:

- If you have lived in the UK for five years, you have been settled here for the previous 12 months, and you can speak enough English, Welsh, or Scots Gaelic to get by; and
- If you are married to a British citizen, have lived here for three years, and you are settled here. There is no minimum period for which you must be settled.

In either case, you may not be accepted if you have been outside the UK for more than three months, on average, in any one year. The Home Office will want to know that you have a good character and will check to see if you have a criminal record.

If you want to become a British citizen, you can use an application form which you can get from immigration advice centres or the Home Office. You can also download the forms from the Home Office website (see 'Further help' on page 19).

You can apply for children to be made citizens on their own. Or, if you are applying, you can include your children on your own application.

Most applications for naturalisation are accepted. But if yours is refused, you cannot appeal. The Home Office will explain the reasons for the refusal and will usually look at your case again if you think they have simply made a mistake. You can always apply again, but you will lose the fee you paid if your application is not successful.

New rules are being introduced to test how well people who apply for naturalisation speak the language and to make sure they know something about life in the UK. These changes will probably occur some time in 2004.

Where can I get help with my immigration application?

If you are making an application or appeal, and you do not have enough money to pay for a lawyer, you should be able to get specialist help or advice free through the Community Legal Service. See 'The Community Legal Service' on page 19 for more about how to do this.

It is against the law for someone to offer advice or help with immigration cases unless they work by the rules of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (see 'Further help' on page 19 for details).

Your adviser must tell you in writing:

- what service you can expect;
- who to complain to if you are not happy with the service;
- whether you will have to pay, and if so how it is worked out; and
- how to contact your adviser when you need to.

If you pay for immigration advice, your adviser must tell you that you can also get free advice.

If you are not happy with any immigration advice, or think any charge you have to pay is unfair, you can complain to the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner.

What if I need an interpreter?

If you need an interpreter, the immigration authorities will provide one for any interview they carry out. Your legal representative should also find an interpreter for you when you see them. You won't have to pay for this if you get free legal help.

Remember, the interpreter is there to help you to communicate. They should just translate what is said, not give advice or answer questions for you. You should try to avoid using friends or family members for translating all but the simplest advice.

Terms used in immigration and nationality issues

Au pair Young people who are citizens of European countries and who can come to the UK to live with an English-speaking family for up to two years.

Common travel area The UK along with the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands and the Republic of Ireland. Each of these has its own immigration controls, but you can travel between them without restrictions.

Entry clearance A sticker in your passport which shows the conditions under which you can enter the UK. The most common type of clearance is a visa.

Illegal entry Anyone who enters the UK without permission when the law says they need it can be arrested and removed from the UK without the right to appeal before they go. The same applies to people who only get permission by lying or deceiving the authorities.

Indefinite leave to remain When a person subject to control is allowed to settle permanently in the UK, and there is no longer any time limit on their 'leave to remain'. This is also known as 'permanent residence'.

Mandatory refusal When your application to enter the UK can be turned down and you cannot appeal against the decision. See 'How can I appeal if my application is turned down?' on page 13.

Overstayer A person who does not leave the UK after the time they have been allowed to stay has passed.

Permit-free The types of work which do not need approval from Work Permits UK. They include foreign correspondents, sole representatives of overseas firms, domestic servants and religious ministers.

Right of abode The legal right that British citizens and some other people have to enter and live in the UK without permission.

Schengen visa A visa issued by one of several European Union countries which gives you the right to enter any of those countries. The UK is not part of this group of countries, so you cannot use a Schengen visa to enter the UK.

Sponsor Someone living in the UK who is supporting an application from a person overseas who wants to come here.

Subject to control Anyone who needs to have permission to come in to the UK or to stay here who can be 'controlled' (checked) under the immigration laws.

Switching Changing your stay from one category of permission to another (for example, from visitor to student).

Temporary admission or temporary release If you are waiting to find out if you will be allowed to stay in the UK, immigration officers may let you in to the UK for a short time while they look at your case. If they do this, they will hold on to your passport.

Visa A coloured sticker placed in your passport. It will say how long you can stay in the UK, when your time must be used by and what conditions you must follow while you are here (for example, not being allowed to work).

Visa national A citizen of one of the countries and territories listed in the immigration rules who must always apply for a visa before they travel to the UK (unless they already have another kind of permission). Most of the world's countries are included.

Further help

Community Legal Service Direct
A free, easy-to-use service to help you solve your legal problems.

Call: 0845 345 4 345
to speak to a qualified legal adviser about Welfare Benefits, Debt or Education or find local advice services for other problems.

Log on at: www.clsdirect.org.uk
to search for a quality local legal adviser or solicitor or find links to other sources of online information and help.

The Immigration Law Practitioners Association (ILPA)
phone: 020 7251 8383
www.ilpa.org.uk

The Home Office
For more information about immigration rules
phone: 0870 606 7766
www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

Immigration Advisory Service
phone: 020 7357 7511
www.iasuk.org

The Law Society
Represents solicitors in the UK and has an immigration panel of solicitors who can offer legal representation in immigration cases.
phone: 020 7242 1222
www.lawsociety.org.uk

Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner
phone: 020 7211 1500
www.oisc.gov.uk

Refugee Legal Centre
phone: 020 7780 3220 (9.30am - 1pm Mon-Wed & Fri)
www.refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

UK Visas
The Home Office UK Visa service
phone: 020 7008 8438
www.ukvisas.gov.uk

Work Permits (UK)
Work Permits (UK) administers work permit arrangements for the UK government.
phone: 0114 259 4074
www.workpermits.gov.uk

The Community Legal Service

The Community Legal Service has been set up to help you find the right legal information and advice to solve your problems.

You can get help through a national network of organisations including Citizens Advice Bureaux, Law Centres, many independent advice centres and thousands of high street solicitors. All of these services meet quality standards set by the Legal Services Commission. Look for the Community Legal Service logo, shown below.

Many of the organisations offer some or all of their services for free. If you cannot afford to pay for advice you may be eligible for financial support through the Community Legal Service Fund (Legal Aid). You can order leaflets about funding from the LSC Leaflet line on 0845 3000 343. You can also use a Legal Aid eligibility calculator on the CLS Direct website at www.clsdirect.org.uk

Community Legal Service

The Legal Services Commission (LSC)

The Community Legal Service and the Community Legal Service Fund are managed by the Legal Services Commission. To find out more about us visit our website at www.legalservices.gov.uk or find the details for your local Legal Services Commission office in the phone book.

legal services
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The leaflets are also available online at: **www.clsdirect.org.uk**

1 Dealing with Debt
2 Employment
3 Divorce and Separation
4 Renting and Letting
5 Buying and Selling Property
6 Losing your Home
7 The Human Rights Act
8 Claiming Asylum
9 Welfare Benefits
10 Wills and Probate
11 Dealing with the Police
12 No-win, No-fee Actions
13 Problems with Goods and Services
14 Medical Accidents
15 Equal Opportunities
16 Racial Discrimination
17 Personal Injury
18 Rights for Disabled People
19 Community Care
20 Education
21 Immigration and Nationality
22 Mental Health
23 Alternatives to Court
24 Family Mediation

The leaflets are also available in Welsh, Braille and Audio
To order any of these leaflets contact the LSC leaflet line on **0845 3000 343**
or email LSCleafletline@stivesdirect.com or Fax 01732 860 270

This leaflet is published by the Legal Services Commission (LSC). It was written in association with the Immigration Law Practitioners Association and Mick Chatwin, a solicitor specialising in immigration law

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