

Evidencing Immigration Status



Why is evidencing immigration status important?

- Rights & entitlements to many things depend on immigration status – e.g. right to welfare benefits, homelessness assistance, health services, etc.
- Many organisations therefore need to check immigration status to establish entitlement
- Inability to evidence status will cause problems in accessing services – e.g. the Windrush scandal

eVisas

- Government stopped issuing biometric cards & permits in 2024
- Most people should have an e-visa which shows their immigration status & associated rights and entitlements
- Can give access to view eVisa to employers, landlords etc by obtaining a share code
- Not having an eVisa does not necessarily mean that a person does not have immigration status – should [set one up](#) asap
- Lost access to eVisa? [Contact UKVI](#) to start recovery process

Getting a share code

- [View and prove your immigration status: get a share code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/share-code)

Asylum & Refugee status

- People who have applied for asylum will NOT have an eVisa but should have an Application Registration Card (ARC)
- If granted refugee status, UKVI should set up an eVisa for the grantee.
- In the interim, local authorities & DWP should accept ARC plus Home Office decision letter/email as proof of status



Visitors

- Visitors granted permission to come to the UK for a maximum of 6 months
- Do not have an eVisa – Visa vignette will be stamped in their passport
- Visitors have very limited rights & entitlements in the UK



Legacy documents

- Letters and stamps in passports showing someone has Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settled status are still valid status documents
- However, those holding such documents should be advised to apply for an eVisa asap. To do this they will need to make a No Time Limit application to the Home Office
- Government guidance for employers & landlords confirms that old paper documents are still valid
- EU Permanent Residence documents are NOT valid – Permanent Residence ceased to exist on 31/12/2020. Holders should have applied to the EUSS

Organisations that can verify immigration status

- A number of statutory bodies can verify immigration status without asking for a share code
- NHS can contact Home Office directly to check status of non-UK citizens
- DWP will ask people for share code but also have the ability to check immigration status directly with Home Office
- Local authorities should be able to check immigration status – members of [NRPF Connect](#) or the [RTPF Checker](#) can use those systems, or local authority staff can email on ICESSVECWorkflow@homeoffice.gov.uk

Local authority duties

In homelessness cases the [Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities](#) states that:

7.13 *If there is any uncertainty about an applicant's immigration status, it is recommended that authorities contact the Home Office or associated partners and organisations. In some circumstances, local authorities may be under a duty to contact the Home Office.*

Immigration status checking for voluntary sector

- Those working for voluntary organisations can check status for those who are rough-sleeping or at imminent risk of rough sleeping through the [UKVI Homelessness Escalations Service](#)
- Need consent of service-user to use this service

What if the Home Office give incorrect information?

- If someone believes that the Home Office has made an error with regard to their immigration status and, as a result, they have been stopped from working, had a bank account closed, been refused benefits etc., they can [contact the Home Office](#) to request a check be done.

More guidance on identifying immigration status



- Shelter training - [Identifying Immigration Status for Frontline Staff](#)