



Home Office

UK Visas and Immigration  
Asylum Operations  
Lunar House  
40 Wellesley Road  
Croydon  
CR9 2BY

[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

12 January 2021

Dear Stakeholders,

Happy New Year. I hope this letter finds you, your family and colleagues in good health and spirits.

As you will be aware, over the past few weeks the UK has had further national restrictions introduced due to COVID-19, including lockdown measures in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland which are due to last several weeks.

We have again considered the risks associated with maintaining operations and have concluded that our temporary surge intake units and asylum interview operations will still continue in all our regions – England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. I can confirm that asylum and immigration services and interviews are classed as critical public services across the UK and we have confirmed this with Devolved Administrations. I can provide reference to this guidance on request.

As previously stated, whilst we would prefer for customers to utilise our existing video conferencing and face-to-face interviewing infrastructure, we understand that there will be situations where it may not be possible and/or appropriate to do so. Attending an asylum interview is important to the overall progression to decide claims and the invitation to interview letter has been amended to provide further guidance to customers in situations that they feel unwell to attend or are self-isolating on the date of the interview. I have enclosed a copy of the Invitation to Interview template letter for your information. It is important that customers carry this letter with them when travelling to and from the appointment. If challenged by authorities, it will provide information for them to indicate that the requirement to travel is authorised.

We understand that there may be concerns regarding the health and safety of claimants attending our offices, however, we can assure you that “Safe Systems of Work” have been enhanced as a result of COVID-19 and all our sites continue to have COVID-19 secure measures in place, including additional cleaning regimes for public areas including our interview suites.

I would like to thank you again for your continued co-operation and understanding. I would welcome any feedback you get from your clients in relation to COVID-19 related logistical problems associated with attending the Asylum Interviews.

For any queries please get in touch via [AsylumOpsStakeholder@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:AsylumOpsStakeholder@homeoffice.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nadeem Nabi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Nadeem Nabi  
Head of Customer Experience