Immigration Service Delivery
Impact of COVID-19 on Immigration and International Protection

Frequently Asked Questions
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**Employment Permits**

Q 1. I held stamp 1 as an employment permit holder and lost my job. Is my permission still valid? If so, can I claim social welfare payments?
   A. Yes, your employment permit will remain valid and will be extended in line with the notice published on the 20th March 2020 if necessary. All queries in relation to employment permits should be directed to the Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI). All queries in relation to social welfare matters should be referred to in Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

**Change of permission to allow work in the health sector**

Q 2. I currently hold a Stamp 3 permission and I wish to change to a permission that would allow me to work in health care during the Covid 19 crisis.
   A. You should contact the HSE in relation to their “Be on Call for Ireland” campaign ([https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/oncall/be-on-call-for-ireland.html](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/oncall/be-on-call-for-ireland.html)). If the HSE confirms that you qualify under that scheme, please provide written confirmation of same to this office and your permission may be changed.

Q 3. I am non-EU Treaty Rights applicant. I am out of permission, but have a ‘live’ application with ISD. Can I get a temporary permission to while my application is being processed?
   A. No

**Students**

('Stamp 2’ permissions apply to Non-EEA students (Degree programme, Non-Degree programme and Language students) currently residing in the State under Ministerial permission for the purpose of study on a programme listed on the Interim List of Eligible Programmes (ILEP). A number of school/collage have closed down arising from the COVID-19 outbreak. The following questions arise in the context of non-EEA nationals who attend these colleges and are who hold Stamp 2 permissions which allows them to work 20 hours a week.)

Q 4. How many hours can I work each week while my school/college is closed due to COVID-19?
   A. In these circumstances, you can work 40 hours a week. This is conditional on you completing your course online if this service is provided by your school/college and represents a short term and temporary measure.

Q 5. I lost my part time job, can I access the COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment?
   A. Students who were in employment and lost their employment due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic can apply for the COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Students will be required to demonstrate that they have been in employment, that their employment has been terminated because of COVID-19 and that they are experiencing financial hardship as a consequence. Receipt of the COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will not constitute a breach of the conditions of the student’s immigration permission.
Q 6. I paid my course fees, and the college has now closed, am I entitled to a refund?
A. This is not a matter for the Immigration Services.

Q 7. I have lost my job, and cannot find a new job. Can I become self-employed?
A. No. You cannot become self employed as a student in the State

Q 8. I am on Stamp 2A permission, can I work?
A. Stamp 2A permission holders are not entitled to work under any circumstances

Q 9. Is there any update on extending the online renewal system that was previously used for third level students?
A. There is no update available at the present moment.

Q 10. Is the unit4residence@justice.ie email address still active? If not, can a contact email address be provided for urgent ICC queries?
A. Arrangements are being made to have this email address made available again. This may take a further week.

Q 11. Do students whose permission has expired or is due to expire shortly need to register with a new course/college, pay fees etc. at this time when colleges are closed?
A. Student permissions are being extended in line with the current notice of March 20th. Developments in relation to these schools and colleges in the future cannot be known at this stage and ISD is not in a position to give any commitments in relation to future courses

Workers

Q 12. I currently hold a Stamp 1 permission to work for a specific business. This business has closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Can I take up employment with another business?
A. Yes. On renewal of your permission, you will need to provide documentary evidence that the business you had worked in ceased trading as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Dependents (Stamp 3 holders)

Q 13. I am on a Stamp 3. Can I take up employment?
A. No. You are not allowed to take up employment on this immigration permission.
EU Treaty Rights

Q 14. I had an appointment to register my temporary Stamp 4 permission on 2 April 2020. This has now been cancelled. My question is when this is all over, will I be issued with an appointment automatically or will I need to try to make appointment myself?
   A. If this is your first time to register your permission, you will need to make an appointment. Please refer to http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/updates-announcements for any updates in relation to registration of your

Q 15. My Residence card is due to expire in early May 2020, will my card be automatically extended for two months?
   A. Yes for now. However, in the meantime, you should submit an application for a permanent residence card (EU3) if applicable. No further extensions will be granted if you do not submit an application between now and 20 May 2020.

Q 16. I had an appointment to register my temporary stamp 4 permission. This has been cancelled. Will my temporary residence card be posted out to me?
   A. The Registration Office will be in contact with you in relation to your residence card. In the meantime, you should ensure that the letter issued to you by EU Treaty Rights Division is safely retained by you.

Q 17. Are EU Treaty Rights Division receiving new applications for residence cards or for review?
   A. Yes, EU Treaty Rights Division will continue to accept intake of new residence card applications even if some documents are missing and if applicants can justify why they cannot obtain the document(s).

Q 18. Will EU Treaty Rights continue to process applications?
   A. Yes, EU Treaty Rights Division continues to process applications for residence cards and requests for review.

   During the current emergency situation, no application in progress will be closed or refused due to lack of documentation (for example, if it is not possible to obtain evidence of address, certified documents etc.) unless ample opportunity has been given to an applicant prior to the current crisis.

Q 19. Will EU Treaty Rights continue to issue temporary permission letters?
   A. Yes, EU Treaty Rights Division will continue to issue temporary permission letters by post to those who qualify for temporary permission.

Q 20. I am a Stamp4 EUFam residence card holder. My EU citizen family member has temporarily lost their job due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak, will this impact on my current residence status?
   A. For the duration of the current COVID-19 crisis and until further notice, this will not impact your current residence status as long as both you and your EU citizen family member are otherwise in compliance with the Directive.

Q 21. I have temporarily lost my job due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak, where can I get information on welfare entitlements?
   A. You can find information on support measures on the following webpage https://www.gov.ie/en/service/be74d3-covid-19-pandemic-unemployment-payment/
Q 22. Where can I find general information on the Coronavirus/COVID-19?
   A. You can find information in the Coronavirus/COVID-19 on the following webpage


Q 23. Will temporary Stamp 4 EUFams continue to be granted to those who have submitted EU Treaty Rights applications?
   A. Yes, EU Treaty Rights Division will continue to issue temporary permission letters by post to those who qualify for temporary permission.

Registration

Q 24. I am currently under 16 but will turn 16 in the next 2 months and would normally be required to register. Does the 2 month extension period apply to me?
   A. No, the 2 month extension period only applies to existing permissions and not to applicants seeking to register for the first time. However, as Burgh Quay and all local registration offices are currently closed, the requirement to register will not arise until Burgh Quay (and other registration offices) re-open or alternative arrangements are put in place.

MDU - International Protection applications

Q 25. I have received a recommendation from the International Protection Office (IPO) that I should be granted refugee status or subsidiary protection. When can I expect to receive my grant from the Minister?
   A. You will be hearing from the Minister in due course in relation to your application for international protection. In the meantime, you remain an applicant under the International Protection Act 2015. If your Temporary Residence Card (TRC) is due to expire, please consult the IPO website http://www.ipo.gov.ie/ or contact the IPO.

Q 26. I have received notification from the International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT) that my appeal was successful and that I should be granted refugee status or subsidiary protection. When can I expect to receive my grant from the Minister?
   A. You will be hearing from the Minister in due course in relation to your application for international protection. In the meantime, you remain an applicant under the International Protection Act 2015. If your Temporary Residence Card (TRC) is due to expire, please consult the IPO website http://www.ipo.gov.ie/ or contact the IPO.

Q 27. I have received a recommendation from the International Protection Office (IPO) that I should be refused refugee status or subsidiary protection. What happens next?
   A. If you have not lodged an appeal against this decision you will be hearing from the Minister in due course in relation to your application for international protection and your position in the State. In the meantime, you remain an applicant under the International Protection Act 2015. If your Temporary Residence Card (TRC) is due to expire, please consult the IPO website http://www.ipo.gov.ie/ or contact the IPO.
Q 28. I have received notification from the International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT) that my appeal was unsuccessful and that I should be refused refugee status or subsidiary protection. What happens next?

A. You will be hearing from the Minister in due course in relation to your application for international protection and your position in the State. In the meantime, you remain an applicant under the International Protection Act 2015. If your Temporary Residence Card (TRC) is due to expire, please consult the IPO website http://www.ipo.gov.ie/ or contact the IPO.

Travel Document applications

Q 29. I have applied for a travel document. When can I expect to receive it?

A. Normal processing times are being maintained for the time being. Applications for a travel document may take up to sixteen weeks to process although sometimes the turnaround is shorter. The stated processing period includes the time it takes for the Passport Office to print the travel document booklet and this element of the process is not under our control. The Passport Office has advised us that its printing service continues to be operational.

Q 30. What can I do to help reduce delays with my travel document application?

A. You can help us to reduce the time it takes to process your application by making sure that the application form you send us is fully completed and accurate. Use the checklist on the form to make sure that you have provided all the required information. If you have already applied for a Travel Document, please provide your email address, along with your full name and date of birth, to INIStravdoc@justice.ie. This will allow the Travel Document Section to contact you electronically if further information is required, thereby helping to prevent unnecessary delays to the processing of your application. If you are making an application, please include your email address somewhere on the application form.

Q 31. What do I do if I need to contact the Travel Documents Unit about my application?

A. If you have an emergency you should email INIStravdoc@justice.ie explaining the reason for the urgency and we will do what we can to assist you. You may be asked to provide proof of the need for prioritization. Please do not write to us by letter. We regret that we will not be able to respond to routine queries regarding the status of an application within the standard 16 week processing period.

Arrangements

Q 32. Can I still make an application for voluntary return given the current situation?

A. Due to the Covid-19 situation and the disruption to travel we are unable to process voluntary return applications at the moment. You can still express an interest in Voluntary Return with us and this will be recorded on our systems. It will then be open to you to make a proper application to us for processing once travel disruptions have ceased.
Q 33. What will happen to my application for voluntary return which I made before the Covid-19 developments?

A. Your application will be kept open but cannot be processed to conclusion at present. We ask that you contact us once the situation improves and commercial flights are more generally available. We can then proceed to process your application for Voluntary Return.

Q 34. I have a Deportation/Removal/Transfer Order and am required to present and report to the GNIB during this period, should I continue to do so?

A. In light of the recent COVID 19 Pandemic, the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) at Burgh Quay are currently issuing new presentation letters to all persons subject of Deportation Orders/Removal Orders/Transfer Orders that are due for presentation in the coming four (4) to six (6) weeks. New letters have issued to persons with a reporting requirement commencing from the 16/03/2020 postponing their current presentation/reporting date. These new letters have been posted to their current recorded address and contain new presentation/reporting dates. The situation will be continually monitored and will be reassessed in the coming weeks. If there are any queries in relation to reporting/presentation during this challenging period, persons should contact the GNIB at GNIB_DV@garda.ie or, outside of Dublin, their local Immigration Officer.

Q 35. I have received a Proposal to Deport, what if I can’t make submissions within the 15 date timeframe?

A. In the light of the current extraordinary circumstances the Immigration Service Delivery of the Department continues to provide its services in line with National efforts to deal with the current COVID-19 situation. This matter is under constant review and pragmatic decisions will be made where required.

This approach applies to the deportation process in general, including the issue of proposals to deport and the making of Deportation Orders, and takes cognisance of the fact that access to legal advice and legal proceedings are potentially restricted in the current difficult and stressful climate.

No permission to be in the State

Q 36. I do not hold a current permission to be in the State, does this notice apply to me?

A. No. The notice applies to those with a current permission. It does not apply to persons who have no valid permission to be in the State

Q 37. I have no permission to be in the State, if I access essential healthcare or other public services related to Covid-19 will the Immigration Authorities be informed?

A. Given that information gathered by health, and other State authorities, is used in the national fight against COVID-19 the Immigration Services of the Department do not require State authorities to gather or communicate information in relation to the immigration status of any person seeking access to essential healthcare or other public services related to Covid-19. As such immigration concerns of undocumented foreign nationals should not be construed as a barrier or “firewall” to seeking essential healthcare.
Citizenship Applications

Q 38. I will be absent from the State due to Covid-19 travel restrictions or isolation measures will this impact a Citizenship application?
   A. A pragmatic approach will be applied in this emergency

Q 39. If I’m temporarily unemployment and or in receipt of Covid 19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment, will this impact my Citizenship application?
   A. A pragmatic approach will be applied in this emergency

Family Reunification

Q 40. I’ve been granted family reunification and can’t travel due to Covid 19, will I be permitted to enter the state after the expiry of the 12 month time frame which was outlined in the decision letter granting them family reunification.
   A. ISD will operate in as flexible and pragmatic a manner as is permitted by law. In the circumstances where a family reunification beneficiary cannot travel within the time specified in their permission, this can be extended during the current crisis. Anyone in that position should contact the relevant unit.

Q 41. I am an International Protection recipient and I want to apply for family reunification but will not have an effective access to legal advice while NGO/solicitor offices are closed. Will an extension on the 12 month limit be considered?
   A. The International Protection recipient should inform the Family Reunification Unit in writing of their intention to make a family reunification application stating the details of the family members it is intended to apply on behalf of. This should be done before the expiry of the 12 month period. The remainder of the application, including required documentation, can be completed in the normal way thereafter.

Visas

Please note –

The full notice re Visa arrangements is on the Immigration Service website - http://www.inis.gov.ie/

Q 42. What action do we take or who do we contact if we believe a case to be an emergency?
   A. If you believe your case to fit into an emergency/priority category, then make your on-line application as normal. This is stated at the end of the notice on the ISD website:

   “If your application falls into one of these categories, you can apply on-line in the usual way. Once you’ve completed the on-line application, you should follow the instructions given on the summary page as to where you should submit your application.”
You may be advised to contact your local embassy or the office here in Dublin for further advice.

Q 43. I can’t submit documents on the AVATS system?
   A. The on-line application is retained as per the Privacy Policy and you can revise and modify it up until the point where it is submitted for decision. You will be able to submit your documentation if you wish to do so when Embassies and missions re-open after the current emergency situation.

Q 44. Can I still appeal my Visa decision? What happens if I have trouble obtaining documents etc. within the 2 month deadline?
   A. Visa appeals can be submitted, but please note the categories of visa decision that will be processed on the [www.inis.gov.ie](http://www.inis.gov.ie) website. A flexible and pragmatic approach will be applied in respect of difficulties accessing documents and /or advice during the Covid-19 crisis.

Residence

Q 45. Will ISD still be processing regular residence applications or are these on hold? E.g. ICC, SINU? Any consideration given to continuing to process urgent cases – e.g. where a decision would allow someone to move out of homelessness etc.?
   A. These Units are currently processing applications.

Q 46. If an applicant has been given a deadline to reply to a letter issued to them in the course of a residency application and to provide further documentation – e.g. bank statements, letters from employers, landlords, DEASP, GPs, school/college etc. – can these deadlines be disregarded/extended given the difficulty people now have in accessing the required information and documents?
   A. Deadlines in these cases will be extended as appropriate given the prevailing circumstances

General ISD

Q 47. Clarification on 2 month extension of permission – are eligible people’s permissions being extended for 2 months from the date of expiry? Or for two months until latest date of 20 May?
   A. The two month extension is from the date of expiry for permissions expiring between 20th March 2020 and 20th May 2020. As an example, a permission expiring on March 29th is extended for 2 months to May 29th.

Q 48. NGOs receive letters to their offices on behalf of clients; however their offices may now be closed and post may not be collected at all, or very infrequently. Therefore deadlines may be missed, people may not be aware of decision made in their cases (positive or negative). Any allowances or considerations here?
A. Decision letters are sent both to the applicant and copied to the NGO/Support group. In respect of other correspondence latitude will be given in respect of deadlines given the prevailing circumstances.

Q 49. Concerns from some EU citizens and their non-EEA family members whether accessing s/welfare at this time due to COVID-19 will still be considered a period where the EU citizen is exercising treaty rights? No interruption/negative effect on the right to reside, or a future EU3 application due to being unemployed and accessing state supports?

A. ISD will be as flexible and understanding as possible and expects to apply latitude in circumstances where the law allows and not penalise anyone for the COVI-19 crisis.

Q 50. People who received a permission letter from ISD for example in February/early March and were due to register with BQ or local Immigration Officer in the coming weeks. Can it be clarified publicly for applicants, and also for potential employers, landlords, local authorities, social welfare etc. that their ISD permission letter is sufficient proof that they are now ‘in status’? Many of these people do not have a current/recent IRP card or recent stamp in their passport so they have no permission to ‘extend’ as such, so their permission letter is all that they have as evidence of lawful residence.

A. A Permission letter is considered to be sufficient proof.