

Visa fees scrapped for Non-UK Service Personnel

At present, all non-UK personnel leaving service who wish to settle in the UK have to pay the full fee of £2,389 for indefinite leave. This fee will now be waived for those with at least six years' service or who are discharged due to an illness or injury attributable to their service.

The fee waiver will also apply to eligible veterans currently living in the UK who have not regularised their immigration status.

Currently there are over 9,000 non-UK citizens serving in the UK armed forces from countries around the world including Australia, Canada, Fiji, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, St Lucia and South Africa, many of whom may consider applying for indefinite leave to remain in the UK when their service ends.

The Defence Secretary Ben Wallace and Home Secretary Priti Patel made the announcement while visiting personnel set to benefit from the change at London District, the headquarters of British Army units in London.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Last year we sought views from non-UK personnel about how we can best support and recognise their incredible contribution to the UK Armed Forces. I am delighted to announce that eligible personnel and veterans who have served for a period of six years or more, and wish to settle in the UK, will no longer have to pay the visa fee.

It is only right that we have taken this important step to express our sincere gratitude to the brave men and women from outside of the UK who have made such a valuable contribution to the defence of this country.

Today, it was a pleasure to meet personnel who will benefit from this change. I wish them all the best for the future.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

There are thousands of brave men and women across the Commonwealth who have served our country with distinction in the military over the years.

Waiving the visa fee for those Commonwealth veterans and Gurkhas with six years' service who want to settle here is a suitable way of acknowledging their personal contribution and service to our nation.

This is a significant step towards improving the process for eligible non-UK citizens serving in our Armed Forces in attaining settlement.

The Ministry of Defence and the Home Office work closely with non-UK citizens who serve in the UK Armed Forces to ensure they are fully aware of the support available to them and their families to settle in the UK. The new policy will improve this support even further.

Current support includes working with the Joining Forces Credit Union to offer financial advice, savings packages and loans to help personnel pay for visa costs.

It is expected the new policy will come into effect this Spring.

The Government's response to the public consultation can be found [here](#).

Nothing is off the table in our response to Putin's aggression towards Ukraine: Article by Liz Truss

In threatening the innocent people of Ukraine and violating its sovereignty, President Putin is also undermining Europe's security and stability. We will use every lever at our disposal to stop him in his tracks.

Time after time, we and our allies have said that any further invasion would have severe consequences. Now Russia has chosen to abandon diplomacy, we have a moral duty to stand with Ukraine and demonstrate that we mean what we say.

We have put in place our toughest sanctions regime against Russia. Nothing is off the table. This first wave will target the individuals and companies closest to the Kremlin. I held a conference call with our G7 allies to agree the next package. This is the start of a closely co-ordinated effort to ratchet up the pressure.

We will be curtailing the ability of the Russian state and key Russian companies to raise funds on our markets, and further isolating Russian banks' ability to operate internationally. We have already frozen the assets and imposed travel bans on three leading members of the Russian elite. We have also frozen the assets of five banks active in bankrolling the occupation and

propping up Russia's defence sector.

We are looking at sanctioning members of the Russian Duma and Federation Council. And we will extend the territorial sanctions imposed on Crimea to the separatist-controlled territories in the Donbas. No UK individual or business will be able to deal with these territories until they are returned to Ukraine.

We have a long list of those complicit in the actions of the Russian leadership. Should Russia refuse to pull back its troops we can keep turning up the heat, targeting more banks, elites and companies of significance. We will introduce measures to limit Russia's ability to trade and prohibit a range of high-tech exports, degrading the development of its military-industrial base for years. In time, even those close to President Putin will come to see his decisions this week as a self-inflicted wound.

We will work in lockstep with our allies including the US and the rest of Nato. If we don't stand up now, Russia's strategy of aggression will not end. Instead President Putin's focus will simply move on to the next target. While Russia seeks to turn back the clock to a mythical past, we are standing with Ukraine in defence of its right to decide its future.

[Apply to the Attorney General's Civil Panel Counsel – London A, B and C Panels, 2022 competition](#)

The Attorney General is seeking to appoint new members to 3 of her panels of junior counsel, the London A, B and C panels, to undertake civil work for government departments.

Membership of the London panels is open to both barristers and solicitors with the appropriate qualifications.

London A Panel

Members of this panel deal with the most complex government cases in all courts and tribunals, including the Supreme Court. They will often appear against QC's. Those previously appointed to the A panel have generally had in excess of 10 years advocacy experience in actual practice (from end of 2nd 6 months' pupillage for barristers, date of commencement of advocacy for solicitors).

London B Panel

Members of this panel deal with substantial cases, but in general not as complex as those handled by the A panel. They will generally be instructed where knowledge and experience of a particular field is required. Those previously appointed to the B panel have generally had between 5 and 10 years advocacy experience in actual practice (from end of 2nd 6 months' pupillage for barristers, date of commencement of advocacy for solicitors).

London C Panel

Members of this panel will be expected to have at least 2 years' experience in actual practice (from end of 2nd six months' pupillage for barristers, date of commencement of advocacy for solicitors). Those appointed to the C panel will often (but not exclusively) provide the A and B panel members of the future and so should have the potential to join the A panel.

In choosing which of the panels to apply to, candidates will want to make a careful decision based on which best suits their level of expertise and experience. Appointments will be for 5 years.

As is the case every year, the Attorney General is looking for applicants with experience in:

- general public and administrative law
- employment
- personal injury

For the 2022 exercise, the Attorney is also looking to deepen the capacity of the panels by appointing specialists in the following areas:

- Charity/Trusts
- Clinical negligence
- Construction
- Contracts, Partnerships and Commercial Law in general (including private international law aspects)
- Costs (including routine and/or mass group litigation experience)
- Customs control – customs duties and other customs matters
- Defamation
- Education
- Energy/Utilities
- Family and Children's Law
- General Tax Work – Direct and Indirect, Personal and Business
- Health and social care including medicines ethics and mental health
- Industrial Diseases
- Industrial Relations
- Inquests
- Insolvency
- Intellectual Property
- Land and Planning/Environmental
- Pensions

- Proceeds of Crime
- Procurement
- Professional regulation
- Property (including Landlord and Tenant)
- Rating and Valuation
- Restitution
- Social Security, including free movement, social justice and statutory payments
- Trade including Competition, State Aid and subsidies, international arbitration, and shipping
- VAT and Duties, including VAT fraud

The Attorney General is also looking to appoint applicants capable of advising departments on the interface of public and commercial law issues, and also where criminal or regulatory issues arise in public law cases.

Application

To obtain details about the application process, we recommend reading our [Information for candidates](#) (ODT, 47.7 KB) document and the [FAQ sheet for candidates](#) (ODT, 51.7 KB) sheet.

Helpful videos explaining the process for reference selection and replying to the Government litigation question can be found below.

[General references](#)

[Judicial references](#)

- Other than judicial references

[Other than judicial references](#)

[Government litigation](#)

To make an application please email panelcounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk and register an interest in applying. Please note that registering an interest does not commit you to making an application if you later decide not to do so.

Once you have registered, you will be provided with a link to access our online portal to obtain the full application pack.

Completed applications must be submitted by noon on Thursday 7 April 2022.

Further information and our mentoring scheme

If you have any queries, please feel free to raise them in the first instance with the Government Legal Department Panel Counsel Secretariat via email panelcounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk

We wish to encourage applications from as wide a range as possible of those

eligible to apply. We will therefore endeavour to put advocates who are considering applying and who want to discuss the application process in touch with an established Panel member. The mentor will discuss either by telephone or in a meeting the application process, the eligibility criteria and the presentation of relevant information on the application form.

If you are considering applying and want a mentor please contact the Panel Counsel Secretariat: panelcounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk by Friday 18 March 2022.

[Light dues for the year 2022 to 2023](#)

A strong and growing maritime industry is vital to the economy of the United Kingdom and it is critical that we treasure and protect this vital artery if we are to remain a world-leading maritime centre.

The work of the [General Lighthouse Authorities \(GLAs\)](#), which provide and maintain marine aids to navigation and respond to new wrecks and navigation dangers in some of the busiest waters in the world, is crucial to underpinning that vision while maintaining our vigorous safety record and continuously improving safety standards.

Light dues are paid by the shipping industry such that the GLAs' costs are met without the need to call on the UK Exchequer.

Light dues have reduced by 40% in real terms since 2010 due to significant efficiency and other savings made by the General Lighthouse Authorities.

However, the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has both added additional operational costs and led to a significant reduction in light dues income, reflecting the major impact it has also had on the shipping industry.

To ensure the GLAs have the funding they need to complete their vital maritime safety work, I have, therefore, made the difficult decision to increase the light dues rate by two and a half pence to 41 pence per ton for 2022 to 2023.

Light dues remain lower than they were in 2010 in real terms and will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the GLAs are challenged to provide an effective and efficient service that offers value for money to light dues payers.

UK sets out new multi-million dollar economic package of support for Ukraine

Press release

The UK government has announced a new economic package that is designed to support Ukraine's continued stability.



Foreign Secretary Liz Truss reiterates the UK's commitment in standing ready to guarantee up to \$500 million in loans to support Ukraine and mitigate the economic effects of Russian aggression.

Following the [Prime Minister's announcement yesterday](#), the UK stands ready to offer guarantees of Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) lending for projects that will support economic stability and vital reforms such as tackling anti-corruption.

This support will help mitigate economic impacts on Ukraine's economy due to Russia's aggression.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

We are putting our money where our mouth is and using Britain's economic expertise and strength to support the people of Ukraine. These guarantees can help inject vital capital into Ukraine and help its economy weather the storm of Russian aggression.

Britain stands four-square behind Ukraine and its people. We stand ready to offer direct economic support, providing defensive weapons, and exposing Russian attempts to engineer fake pretexts for invasion.

In December, the UK also increased the amount of financial support available to Ukraine from UK Export Finance (UKEF) – to £3.5 billion – and signed a new

treaty that will help Ukraine access the world-class UK supply chain to enhance its naval capabilities.

This economic support comes on top of increased support for military equipment from the Ministry of Defence and enhanced support to the humanitarian system in Ukraine.

- Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) are international financial institutions that provide financial assistance to developing countries and are owned by shareholding governments (eg The World Bank)
- the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is not an MDB
- in addition, a £100 million 3-year package of Official Development Assistance was announced on 17 February 2022, designed to bolster the most vulnerable parts of the Ukrainian economy and reduce Ukraine's reliance on gas imports. Ukraine is heavily reliant on energy imports such as coal and gas, a fact which Russia has long exploited
- this funding will be used to co-finance a new World Bank energy efficiency programme, which will help Ukraine cut its emissions in line with its COP26 commitments. The UK is the first donor country financing this project and we hope to mobilise with partners to coordinate further support

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