



Home Office

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Minister of State for Immigration

2 Marsham Street,
London SW1P 4DF
www.gov.uk/home-office

Jean Lambert MEP
Office of the Green MEPs
CAN Mezzanine
49-51 East Road
London
N1 6AH

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Thank you for your letter of 14 May to the Home Secretary regarding the fee structures for immigration and nationality applications. I am replying as the Minister of State for Immigration.

The fees for border, immigration and citizenship considerations are set at a level that helps provide resources necessary to operate the border, immigration and citizenship (BIC) system.

Application fees are set to support the Home Office's ambition to reduce the overall level of funding that comes from general taxation, by reducing costs and increasing the proportion which is funded by income generated from fees. This is permissible with fee setting powers contained within Section 68(9) of the Immigration and Nationality Act 2014.

BIC fees are reviewed on a yearly basis and any new fees, and changes to existing fees, are set within strict parameters agreed with HM Treasury and Parliament. Fees have increased in recent years to ensure that the BIC system is fair and equitable to all. The Home Office believes it is right that a greater share of the cost of operating the system is borne by those applicants who directly use it.

The Home Office does not make a profit from application fees charged above the estimated cost to process the application. Any income generated above the estimated unit cost is used to contribute to the wider operation of the BIC system.

The Immigration and Nationality (Fees) Regulations 2018 includes exceptions to paying application fees for those who are applying for temporary or permanent leave to remain in the UK in a number of limited circumstances, such as those residing in the UK based on convention rights, and where payment of a fee would be incompatible with that right, or children who are in the care of a Local Authority.

In terms of those who are exercising convention rights, a fee waiver will be granted to applicants who are destitute, or would be made destitute through payment of the fee, or where there are exceptional financial circumstances. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate by way of evidence that they meet the terms of the fee waiver policy. Where an applicant provides insufficient evidence of their personal finances and circumstances, a fee waiver will not be granted; this is to preserve the integrity of the charging regime.

The Home Office believes that this strikes the right balance between ensuring that individuals are able to obtain status in the UK and access appropriate services, without adding an additional burden to the UK taxpayer.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom, am' on the top line and 'Caroline' on the bottom line.

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