

# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

2020-276 | June 9, 2020



# United Kingdom - COVID-19: Visa Application Centres Reopening in U.K. and Overseas

As the COVID-19 crisis in the United Kingdom appears to be abating, the U.K. government is ending the temporary closures of U.K. visa application centres in the U.K. and around the world.<sup>1</sup> Services are being restored in most cases. (For prior coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2020-182](#), 17 April 2020.)

## WHY THIS MATTERS

The U.K. Visa and Citizenship Application Centres (UKVCAS) play a key role in immigration application processing and eligibility assessment. They also support fingerprinting services for some immigration applications (biometrics). Applicants who had their appointments cancelled due to centre closures will receive new appointment notices. Appointment notices will include further guidance for visiting the UKVCAS facilities.

The full list of UKVAS centres which reopened on 1 June can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/ukvcas>. Individuals with submitted applications and booked appointments, who were not able to attend their appointment due to COVID-19, are able to start re-booking appointments from 1 June.

Those who had no prior appointments will likely have to continue to wait to get things started or in order to complete any necessary biometric appointment to continue the processing of their application.

## Application Centres in the U.K.

After closures due to COVID-19, some UKVCAS have reopened for existing customers (i.e., applicants who had already booked an appointment but were unable to attend due to COVID-19) on 1 June 2020.

For individuals with appointments at centres which have not reopened on 1 June, the Home Office will have been in contact to confirm the further postponement of the appointment. Individuals' immigration status is unaffected by the inability to attend an appointment.

Individuals who had not previously booked an appointment, are not yet able to schedule new appointments.

## Application Centres Overseas

For individuals outside the U.K., some U.K. Visa Application Centres (VACs) are also resuming services. Where services are resuming, those with existing appointments will be contacted.

For further information on the status of the VACs, individual applicants can contact:

- [TLS contact](#) if they're in Europe, Africa and parts of the Middle East;<sup>2</sup>
- [VFS global](#) for all other countries.<sup>3</sup>

*(Please note that these are 3<sup>rd</sup> party (non-governmental, non-KPMG) websites. Providing these links does not represent an endorsement of the websites by KPMG.)*

Where the VAC remains closed, British nationals in those countries will be unable to apply for a British passport, although if travel is urgently required, then it may be possible to obtain an emergency travel document<sup>4</sup>.

Some English Language Testing Centres are also resuming services and live updates can be found at:

- [International English Language Testing System \(IELTS\)'s website](#);
- the [Pearson Test of English website](#);
- the [LanguageCert website](#); or
- contact the test centre for more information

*(Please note that these are 3<sup>rd</sup> party (non-governmental, non-KPMG) websites. Providing these links does not represent an endorsement of the websites by KPMG.)*

Where an individual's 30-day entry visa to travel to the U.K. for work, study, or to join family has expired, or is about to expire, it is now possible to request a replacement visa with revised validity dates free of charge until the end of this year (2020). Requests should be made to the Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre<sup>5</sup>. An individual will not face any penalties for being unable to collect their Biometric Residence Permit while coronavirus measures are in effect. This process will remain in place until the end of 2020.

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## KPMG NOTE

The re-opening of centres is not yet helping those who did not have pre-booked appointments, or new applicants who are hoping to move ahead with their immigration and citizenship matters.

Overall, employers and individual applicants should continue to expect delays in processing of all visa applications.

## FOOTNOTES:

- 1 For additional information, see the guidance published on 29 May 2020 on the government website at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents> .
- 2 TLS contact: <https://uk.tlscontact.com/> . (Note that this is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (non-governmental, non-KPMG) website. Providing this link does not represent an endorsement of this website by KPMG.)
- 3 VFS global: <https://www.vfsglobal.co.uk/en> . (Note that this is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (non-governmental, non-KPMG) website. Providing this link does not represent an endorsement of this website by KPMG.)
- 4 Emergency travel document, guidance, and how to apply at: <https://www.gov.uk/emergency-travel-document> .
- 5 Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre contact details at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents#helpline> .

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## KPMG LLP (U.S) Webcast: “Work Anywhere, Together”

**June 11, 2020, 02:00 PM EDT (GMT -5)**

**1 CPE Credit**

We're witnessing an accelerated evolution...from global mobility — to global immobility — to the new reality of "Work Anywhere." Work Anywhere, Together is an employee-centered approach to supporting the transition from "working from home" to working anywhere in the world.

KPMG LLP ("KPMG") in the United States is pleased to invite you to an informative TaxWatch webcast that will share KPMG's perspective on how organizations are addressing the potential tax implications of global remote work arrangements. During the session we will cover:

- Market trends and considerations for employees working remotely;
- The potential benefits of developing a Work Anywhere operating model and managing tax risk;
- Tax considerations of bringing Work Anywhere to life for your organization.

For more information, and to register, click [here](#).

## Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional\* or the following professional with the KPMG International member firm in the United Kingdom.

The KPMG Legal Services – Immigration Team has a wealth of experience in transactional, advisory, and compliance assurance services. We will be able to advise your business in relation to practical considerations in light of the above changes, as well as what this means for your long-term recruitment and compliance strategies.



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*\*Please note the KPMG International member firm in the United States does not provide immigration or labour law services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.*

**The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in the United Kingdom.**

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