

News story: Free citizenship for the Windrush generation

The offer, which will be available to people from all Commonwealth countries, not just Caribbean nationals, will extend to individuals who have no current documentation, those who already have leave to remain and want to advance their status, and children of the Windrush generation.

In addition, the [Home Secretary confirmed](#) that a compensation scheme will be set up for individuals who have suffered loss or damage because of their inability to evidence their right to be in the UK and to access services. The Home Office will be engaging with stakeholders on the scope of the compensation on offer and appointing an independent adviser to oversee the scheme.

A new customer contact centre will be set up to make sure that anyone struggling to navigate the many different immigration routes can speak to a person and get appropriate advice. The centre will be staffed by experienced caseworkers who will offer expert advice and identify a systemic problem much more quickly in the future.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

The contribution of the Windrush generation and their right to be in the UK is in no doubt and I deeply regret the situation that has arisen.

It is only right that the significant contribution the Windrush generation have made to the UK is recognised. That is why I want to ensure they can acquire the status they deserve – British citizenship – quickly, at no cost and with proactive assistance through the process. It is also why I want to make sure we set up a compensation scheme that works in the best interests of those affected.

I hope that the measures I announced today will begin to reassure people as to their position and their valued status in this country.

As well as not having to pay the fees associated with a citizenship application, people in these circumstances will not be required to pass the normal Knowledge of Language and Life in the UK test.

People who arrived in the country between 1973 and 1988 will also be supported to access the most suitable route to regularise their status. In order to establish which route is most suitable, people in this group will be able to take advantage of the new dedicated team which has been set up to help people confirm their status and will be given a decision on their

application within 2 weeks of the necessary evidence being collected.

The new team has already successfully resolved 9 cases and made 84 appointments to issue documents to individuals who have been in touch with the team through the freephone helpline.

In addition, extra measures will be introduced to help those who arrived before 1973, spent their life in the UK and are now having difficulty returning either for a visit or to reside. The Home Office will help to facilitate their return on the most suitable route and waive any associated fees.