



Home Office

Home Secretary

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[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

4 April 2019

Dear Colleague

### **Windrush Compensation Scheme**

Since I became Home Secretary eleven months ago, I have spoken in Parliament several times about my determination to right the wrongs suffered by members of the Windrush generation who – through no fault of their own – experienced losses due to their inability to prove their right to live in the UK.

In the past year over 2,400 individuals have been given documentation confirming status via the dedicated Commonwealth Citizens Taskforce set up on 16 April 2018, and over 3,600 individuals have been granted citizenship under the Windrush Scheme, opened on 30 May 2018. The Taskforce has a dedicated Vulnerable Persons Team which has provided support to 665 individuals and continues to receive new referrals every week. 258 referrals to DWP have been made in relation to fresh claims and reinstatement of benefits, with 191 individuals given advice and support on issues relating to housing.

Yesterday I announced a compensation scheme for those affected. The details are set out in this letter. This is another key milestone in delivering on our commitment to the Windrush generation. Although it has taken some time to deliver the scheme, this reflects the importance we have attached to getting the design right, and making it as fair and accessible as possible, having listened to affected communities and the independent adviser – Martin Forde QC.

I know colleagues from all parties will have shared my shock at what happened to some members of the Windrush generation. As a result of the policies of successive governments, women and men who had lived for decades in the UK and contributed so much to our nation, found themselves entangled in measures designed to tackle illegal migration. Over the past few decades, there has been a collective failure of government to identify and act upon the challenges people faced as a result of having lawful status to be in the UK but without giving them the ability to prove it.

I have read and listened to heart-breaking stories from some of your constituents who have lost jobs or been unable to access services and benefits as a result, and I know that many of you will also have met affected individuals in surgeries and elsewhere. I am sure we all share the same determination to do right by those who have suffered.

The compensation scheme is one way we can seek to rebuild trust with affected communities, and I hope you will do what you can to promote it to your constituents – whether through correspondence, local press or social media. This will help to support all the work Government will be doing to promote the scheme.

Set out below are details of who is eligible and how people can claim.

### **Who is eligible?**

The compensation scheme will provide payments to individuals who suffered losses as a result of not being able to evidence their lawful status in the UK. These could range from a loss of employment or access to housing, education or NHS healthcare to emotional distress or a deterioration in mental and physical health.

The eligibility for the Scheme broadly mirrors eligibility for the Taskforce and if you have a right of abode or settled status (or are now a British citizen) and arrived to live in the UK before 31 December 1988, you will be eligible to apply regardless of your nationality when you arrived – even if you are not a Commonwealth citizen. In some circumstances children and grandchildren of Commonwealth citizens settled in 1973 and close family members of eligible claimants may also be able to apply. At this link you can [read more](#) on all the categories of eligibility.

The Home Office will also refund fees paid for certain, unsuccessful immigration applications, and reimburse legal fees that were incurred in relation to these.

### **How to apply?**

We have ensured it is as quick and easy to make an application as possible, and help is available to those who require additional support to make a claim. Claim forms can be downloaded and guidance on completing the application can be found at [www.gov.uk/windrush-compensation](http://www.gov.uk/windrush-compensation).

Anyone would needs a claim form to be sent by post can call our helpline on **0800 678 1925** or via email [WindrushCompensationScheme@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:WindrushCompensationScheme@homeoffice.gov.uk) where they can also request a call back if they are overseas.

### **Events**

We will be running a series of open events around the country for those affected, as well as for key faith and community leaders. The events will explain the detail of the Scheme and give everyone who is eligible, from any nationality or background, the opportunity to hear about the scheme, and ask questions. Full details will be available on Gov.UK shortly. The first event is in Brixton on Friday 5 April and will be open to the public.

As well as the compensation scheme, and the other measures described above to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush cohort, I have also put in place an independent lessons learned review, led by Wendy Williams. She is examining what went wrong and how to prevent it happening again. I will report to Parliament on the recommendations of the report, and our response, in due course. The recommendations will be another important landmark in ensuring that justice is done for the Windrush generation.

In the meantime, I hope you will welcome the launch of the compensation scheme.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Javid', with a small flourish at the end.

**Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP**