

Name
Address

Our Ref HO Ref
Your Ref Your Ref
Date Date

Dear **Salutation**

We have arranged an interview for you to tell us about the reasons why you have claimed asylum in the United Kingdom.

Here are the details for your interview:

at **insert time**
in **language**
on **date**
place **insert location**

You must arrive for your interview at the time stated above. If you arrive earlier, you may be asked to wait outside the building.

You must wash your hands when you enter the building using soap and water, or if this is unavailable, the hand gel provided.

Please bring your Application Registration Card (ARC) with you. We need to confirm your identity before the interview starts and the ARC will help us to do this.

I enclose a map showing the location of the office you are to attend. Onsite car parking will not be available. You will need to show this letter on arrival.

Video conferencing interviews

Your asylum interview will be conducted by video conferencing. This means that you may not be in the same room as the interviewing officer or interpreter (if you need one) but you will be able to see them. If you have a reason why your interview should not be carried out by video conferencing you must call the number above to let us know as soon as possible.

Request for male or female interviewer and interpreter

During your interview, you will be asked to provide information about why you have claimed asylum. It is important that you provide relevant information to help us consider your claim. We are aware that some parts of your account may be difficult to talk about or sensitive in nature, so you may be more comfortable speaking to a man or a woman interviewer and interpreter.

Your request for a **female/male interviewer/interpreter** has been noted and we will do our best to arrange this.

If you have a preference, and have not already made a request, you need to let us know by calling the number above and we will do our best to arrange this.

Documentation

You should send in any documents or other evidence which you want to submit to support your claim before attending your interview. It is preferred that you provide documents by email where possible, sending to the address above.

All foreign language documents must be translated into English and certified as authentic translations of the originals. You should show copies of any documentation you wish to submit to your legal representative before the interview and they will help you obtain translations. If you are not represented or cannot provide translated documents, you should explain why during your interview.

Preliminary Information Questionnaire

You have been issued with a Preliminary Information Questionnaire. This form gives you the opportunity to provide us with details about your asylum claim and completing it will help you to prepare for your interview. We are yet to receive the completed copy; please return the questionnaire before your interview date.

If you cannot find the form, a copy can be downloaded from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preliminary-information-questionnaire-for-asylum-claims>.

Attendance

Asylum Interviews are categorised as an essential public service which can be continued during any COVID-19 lockdown, where this is in place. Travel to and from interview is also permitted.

You **must** arrive for your interview at the time stated above. Interview times will be staggered to allow for social distancing, and we need you to arrive on time to help us keep you and others being interviewed, safe and to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). As interviews can take several hours, you may wish to bring a bottle of water for your comfort. Only non-carbonated water in sealed plastic bottles can be brought into interview rooms.

You must wash your hands when you enter the building with soap and water, or if this is unavailable, using the hand gel provided.

In line with government advice, you should wear a face covering when you enter the building and in public areas, unless you fall into an exemption category. Further advice may be provided by staff when you attend your interview.

If you cannot attend, you must contact us on the number above as soon as possible.

Your interview will only be rearranged if there is a good reason why you cannot attend (for example, illness or severe transport disruption).

If you are unable to attend interview because of illness (not coronavirus-related)

If you are too ill to attend your interview due to illness not related to coronavirus, it is important that you contact your doctor's surgery by telephone or book an online

appointment to register your illness and request a certificate. A certificate from your doctor should be sent to us within five working days of your interview date, using the post or email details at the top of this letter.

If you are unable to attend interview because of coronavirus-related reasons

If you are self-isolating because you:

- have symptoms of coronavirus
- live with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus
- are in a support bubble with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus, or
- have been told to self-isolate by a test and trace service,

you must observe self-isolation requirements and **must** not travel or attend your interview. Please telephone or email us using the details at the top of this letter to let us know the specific reason you are unable to attend your interview. We will contact you soon with details of a proposed new interview date.

If you do not attend the interview and do not provide any explanation before or immediately afterwards, we may treat your asylum claim as withdrawn.

Recording of your interview

A written transcript of your asylum interview along with an audio recording will be made. If you have a reason why your interview should not be audio recorded, you must contact us about this on the number above before the date of your interview. You (or your legal representative on your behalf) will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript and the audio recording, either at the end of the interview, or as soon as possible by post or MOVEit (an electronic system that is used to safely transfer information to representatives who use it). No video recording of the interview will be made.

Security arrangements

Entry into Home Office and VFS buildings is subject to security control, which you will have to pass through. This is to ensure everyone's safety and is standard procedure for all visitors entering the building.

You must contact us on the number above to tell us if your legal representative or companions would like to attend the interview with you. On the day, they will need to bring photographic identification or entry to the building may be refused.

You must accompany them on arrival into the building, they will not be allowed to enter before you arrive, and entry may be refused to anyone who arrives late.

Food and medication

Your interview may take some time so you can bring something to eat, along with any essential medication that you need to take with you. However, objects such as glass or hot drinks, which may pose a hazard to Home Office staff and members of the public, must not be brought into the building.

Presence of children

Your interview is important. It is your opportunity to be open about your reasons for seeking asylum. We do not normally allow children into the interview, as it may be distressing for them to hear what you want to say. It can also make it difficult for you to concentrate and say all that you want to.

Provision of Home Office childcare

We have therefore scheduled your interview on a date when childcare is available at or near our office. This means that a qualified childcare worker can be available to look after your children during your interview if you wish. Please see the enclosed leaflet on the childcare for how to use this service.

Home Office unable to provide childcare

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide childcare during your interview. If you need to reschedule your interview so someone can look after your children, then please let us know by calling the number above.

Presence of legal representatives

Your legal representative is welcome to attend but can only do so if they are qualified under the terms of [Part V of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#). Please note that we will not delay your interview to wait for your legal representative to arrive.

Presence of others

You may bring a legal representative, social worker, a member of your faith group or other support to your interview. However, they cannot take part in your interview and we will not delay your interview to wait for supporters to arrive. Currently the requirement to maintain social distancing may limit the number of people who can safely occupy an interview room, so if you wish to be accompanied at your interview, please call us at least three days in advance to establish whether this will be possible, or whether an alternative may be appropriate.

Anyone who is attending the interview with you, including legal representatives, will also need to show photographic identification such as a passport, social worker identification card, biometric residence permit, driving licence or ARC, so that we can verify their identity.

Asylum Support

If you are currently receiving asylum support, you will be given a travel ticket to attend your interview. If you have not received a travel ticket, you or your accommodation provider should contact the office on the number above. You should quote your Home Office and Asylum Support reference numbers, together with details of the interview.

Questions or concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about your interview, please call the number given at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Signed

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The Data Protection Act 2018 governs how we use personal data. For details of how we will use your personal information and who we may share it with please see our Privacy Notice for the Border, Immigration and Citizenship system at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-information-use-in-borders-immigration-and-citizenship>. This also explains your key rights under the Act, how you can access your personal information and how to complain if you have concerns.

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