

The Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
Direct Communications Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Dear Suella,

28/09/2022

We are writing to you regarding the current delays in visa application processing. We are acutely aware of the toll the increased waiting times for visa applications is having on our constituents, with many waiting far beyond the standard timeframe.

We applaud the efforts to process as many visas as possible as a result of the Russia's illegal and barbaric military actions in Ukraine and understand that these efforts have allowed the UK to serve as a place of safe refuge. Despite this, the Home Office's focus on Ukrainian visa applications has led to our constituents encountering delays for all other types of visa applications. With the Home Office continuing to work quickly to process visas related to the Ukrainian crisis, yet more visa applications of all other kinds are joining the backlog.

While we appreciate that not all visa applications are straightforward, and that some demand further checks to be completed, at present there is an undeniable trend of applications taking far longer to process than advertised by the Home Office. This is particularly true for Work Visas which are currently stated to take eight weeks to process - however we have countless constituents who have been waiting over three months for their work visas to be processed. The same is true for Health and Care Worker Visa applications.

The consequences of the delays are two-fold. Firstly, not only do they affect the lives of our constituents, often resulting in them losing job offers, missing key family events abroad, or developing poor mental health, but secondly, they are exacerbating the shortage of workers in the NHS and other key services by preventing these constituents from accepting job offers or continuing their work with a renewed visa.

We try to manage the expectations of our constituents by explaining the reasons for the backlog of visa applications, but we are writing to ask the Home Office also to take on greater accountability for the delays in their services. We call for the Home Office to assess its visa processing procedures, and to bring them in line with its own timescale guidelines. We also ask the Home Office to assume responsibility for any application which does encounter a delay, by communicating this effectively and regularly with applicants.

We applaud all efforts which have led to the number of visas processed due to the Ukrainian crisis, however we are calling for more to be done to prevent constituents who have applied for other visas from experiencing further delay.

We hope you will consider these requests.

Kind regards,

Liberal Democrat MPs