

Moving your spouse to the UK after Brexit

The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, popularly known as Brexit, has brought about several changes to immigration laws and procedures. One of the most affected areas is the process of moving a spouse to the UK. This article aims to provide a comprehensive guide on the [spouse visa](#) process for individuals who wish to move their spouse to the UK after Brexit.

Eligibility Requirements for a Spouse Visa

Before applying for a spouse visa, it is essential to understand the eligibility criteria. To be eligible for a spouse visa, the following conditions must be met:

- The sponsor, i.e., the person living in the UK, must be a British citizen or have settled status in the UK.
- The sponsor must be able to support their spouse without relying on public funds.
- The sponsor and spouse must have met in person and be in a genuine and subsisting relationship.
- The sponsor and spouse must be able to provide evidence of their relationship, such as joint bank statements or photographs.
- The sponsor and spouse must be able to meet the English language requirement, which is either by taking an approved test or by being a national of a majority English-speaking country.

The Spouse Visa Application Process

The spouse visa application process can be divided into several stages:

- **Submit the online application form:** The first step in the spouse visa application process is to complete an online application form. This form requires personal information, financial information, and other relevant details.
- **Pay the visa fee:** The visa fee must be paid at the time of submitting the online application. The fee for a spouse visa is £1,523, and additional fees may apply for the Immigration Health Surcharge and the English language test, if required.
- **Book an appointment at a Visa Application Centre (VAC):** The next step is to book an appointment at a Visa Application Centre (VAC) to provide biometric information, such as fingerprints and a digital photograph.
- **Provide supporting documents:** The applicant must provide a range of supporting documents, including proof of their relationship with their sponsor, financial and employment information, and evidence of the sponsor's settled status in the UK.
- **Wait for a decision:** After the application and supporting documents have been submitted, the applicant must wait for a decision. The processing time for a spouse visa can vary, but it usually takes around 12 weeks.

Extension of Spouse Visa

Once the spouse visa has been granted, the holder can apply to extend their visa before it expires. To extend a spouse visa, the following conditions must be met:

- The sponsor and spouse must still be in a genuine and subsisting relationship.
- The sponsor must continue to be able to support their spouse without relying on public funds.
- The spouse must continue to meet the English language requirement.

The extension process is similar to the initial application process and involves submitting an online application form, paying the fee, providing biometric information, and providing supporting documents.

Settled Status and Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)

After living in the UK for five years on a spouse visa, the holder can apply for settled status, also known as Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR). To be eligible for ILR, the following conditions must be met:

- The sponsor and spouse must still be in a genuine and subsisting relationship.
- The spouse must not have spent more than 180 days outside the UK during the five-year period.
- The spouse must have passed the Life in the UK test and met the English language requirement.
- The spouse must not have breached any immigration laws or committed any criminal offenses.

The process of applying for ILR involves submitting an online application form, paying the fee, and providing biometric information. The decision on an ILR application can take several months, and the fee for the ILR application is currently £2,389.

Conclusion:

Moving your spouse to the UK after Brexit can be a complex process, but by understanding the eligibility criteria and following the correct procedures, the process can be made easier. It is important to keep in mind that the rules and requirements for a spouse visa may change, and it is always advisable to seek the latest information and professional advice.

In conclusion, the spouse visa process is a multi-step process that involves submitting an online application, paying a fee, providing biometric information, and waiting for a decision. It is important to understand the eligibility criteria and to provide all the required supporting documents. After living in the UK for five years on a spouse visa, the holder can apply for ILR. This guide provides a comprehensive overview of the spouse visa process, but it is always advisable to seek professional advice if you have any specific questions or concerns.



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