

Community  
Legal Service



# COVENTRY LAW CENTRE

## IMMIGRATION

### Information about children

**This leaflet explains what the Immigration Rules say about children coming to join their parents or a parent who is settled in the United Kingdom. They are only a guide and aim to answer frequently asked questions.**

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### ***How do I bring my child to the United Kingdom?***

You must be able to show that:

- you currently live and are settled in the United Kingdom legally, with no time limit on your stay;
- you have adequate accommodation where you can all live without help from public funds; and
- you are the child's parent (this includes the stepfather or stepmother of a child whose father or mother is dead, both the father and mother of an illegitimate child and an adoptive parent in certain defined circumstances).

### ***How can my child qualify to join me in the United Kingdom?***

Your child must show that:

- they are not leading an independent life, are not married and have not formed an independent family unit; and
- they are under 18.

Children cannot normally come to live in the United Kingdom if one parent is living abroad, unless the parent here has sole responsibility for the child or if there are serious reasons why the child must be allowed to come here. (Exceptions may be made in the case of children under 12).

Your child must get entry clearance before they travel to the United Kingdom.

### ***How long can my child stay?***

If both you and your husband or wife are settled here or you have sole responsibility for the child, they will normally be allowed to stay here permanently from the date they arrive.

If your child comes here with your husband or wife, they will normally be given permission to stay in the United Kingdom for the same length of time as your husband or wife (usually a year). If your husband or wife is allowed to stay here permanently, your child will normally be allowed to stay here permanently as well.

### ***What are public funds?***

If you come to live or stay in the United Kingdom, you must be able to support and accommodate yourself without claiming certain state benefits. These are:

- Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA);
- housing and homelessness assistance;
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit;
- Working Families Tax Credit;
- a social fund payment
- Child Benefit, or
- any disability allowance.

### ***What is entry clearance?***

Entry clearance is a visa or entry clearance certificate given to you so you can travel to the United Kingdom. You must apply for entry clearance to the British Embassy, High Commission or other Diplomatic Mission in the country where your child lives.

You can get advice about which British Diplomatic Posts can issue entry clearance from any British Diplomatic Post abroad.

You can get guidance leaflets and information about visas from Coventry Law Centre.

### **APPEALS**

Coventry Law Centre offers free legal advice and representation.

The Law Centre will advise you about appealing and may represent you at the hearing. You can contact the Law Centre for an appeal appointment or telephone our free legal advice line on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10:00am and 12:00noon on 024 76253168.