

Community  
Legal Service



# COVENTRY LAW CENTRE

## IMMIGRATION

## RETURNING RESIDENTS

**Information about returning residents**  
(people who return to the United Kingdom to live)

**This leaflet explains what the Immigration Rules say about people who return to live in the United Kingdom.**

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Registered with Charity Commission as Coventry Law Centre: 1087312  
Registered as a limited company in England & Wales: 4149673

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## **Who is a returning resident?**

A returning resident is someone who, having been given permission to live in the United Kingdom with no time limit, has left the United Kingdom and wants to come back to live here again.

## **Do you need to apply to return to the United Kingdom as a resident?**

If you were settled in the United Kingdom when you last left and you have not been away for more than two years and are returning to live here permanently, you may return as a resident (unless you were given public funds to meet the cost of leaving the United Kingdom).

If you have been away for more than two years, you may still qualify to return to the United Kingdom to live if, for example, you have strong family ties here or have lived here most of your life.

## **If you have been away for more than two years, you must apply for entry clearance at the nearest British High Commission or Diplomatic Post.**

If you are travelling on a new passport which does not contain a stamp confirming that you permanently live in the United Kingdom, you should also take your old passport with you, or other evidence that shows you previously lived in the United Kingdom.

Similarly, if you get a new passport after you return to the United Kingdom, you should send it to the Home Office so they can transfer the permission to enter or stay in the United Kingdom to the new passport.

## **What is entry clearance?**

Entry clearance is a visa or entry clearance certificate that you are given so that you can travel to the United Kingdom. You must apply for entry clearance to the British Embassy, High Commission or other British Diplomatic Mission (known as British Diplomatic Posts) in the country where you live.

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

The Law Centre offers free legal advice and representation.

## **APPEALS**

The Law Centre will advise you about how to prepare and lodge an appeal and may represent you at the hearing. You can contact Coventry Law Centre or telephone our free legal advice line on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10:00 and 12:00 on 024 76253168.