



# UK Visas & Immigration

Dear Overseas Domestic Worker applicant

You have applied for a visa to go to the UK as an Overseas Domestic Worker. Overseas Domestic Workers work in the private home of a visitor to the UK, or in the private home of a diplomat who is posted to the UK.

You and your employer will have already agreed your conditions of employment, for example your working hours, pay and time off. You will have also agreed your role and duties, which could include looking after children, cooking or cleaning.

You should have signed a document showing these as part of your visa application, and your employer should have given a copy to you.

If you are granted a visa, it will be placed in your passport. You, not your employer should retain your passport. It contains your permission to be in the UK and is your identification.

## **(a) What will happen when I arrive in the UK?**

On your arrival at the UK border, you and your employer will see a Border Force Officer. The officer will check the visa in your passport, and ask you about your reason for coming to the UK and how long you will stay. If the officer is satisfied that there have been no changes in your circumstances, or your purpose in coming to the UK since you obtained your visa, you will be allowed to enter the UK.

## **(b) How long you can stay in the UK and what you can and can't do**

The length and conditions of your visa will depend on whether you are working in the home of a visitor to the UK or in the home of a diplomat.

- **If you are working in the home of someone who is visiting the UK**, you must travel with or join that employer in the UK and you can work only for them. You must leave the UK when your employer does or at the end of 6 months whichever is sooner. You cannot bring members of your family with you.
- **If you are working in the home in the UK of a diplomat**, you must travel with or join them there and can work only for them. When they leave the UK so must you. Your visa will initially be for 24 months and before the end of that time, if your employer is still in the UK and you are still working for them, you may apply to stay longer. If this is granted you will be able to stay for another 12 months. You can apply to extend your visa each year - up to a total period of 5 years. At the end of 5 years or when your diplomat leaves the UK you must also leave. You can bring members of your family with you and they may work, but they must leave the UK when you do.

Further information is available on the UK Visas and Immigration website.

**(c) What do I do if I have problems with my employment?**

Like UK workers you will have a number of rights. These include a right to be paid according to the National Minimum Wage Act 1998. If, once you are in the UK, you have any worries about your work situation or you think your employer is not respecting your rights, you can seek help and advice from the Pay and Work Rights Helpline on 0800 917 2368 or the ACAS Helpline on 0845 474 747. Advice is available in a number of languages. Alternatively you can call the charity Kalayaan – see below.

Further information about the Pay and Work Rights Helpline is on:

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/DG\\_177940](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/DG_177940) and the ACAS helpline on :  
<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2042>

**(d) Where to go for more information, advice and help you if you are in difficulty**

Everyone in the UK has the right to be treated properly and with respect. If you think you have been a victim of crime you can go to your local police station or in an emergency phone 999

If you think you have been /are being mistreated in any way (for example you haven't been given any time off, or there are problems with your pay) or you have been a victim of crime, you can talk to one of the following organisations who will provide you with confidential, independent advice:

- Kalayaan  
St Francis Centre  
13 Hippodrome Place  
London  
W11 4SF  
  
020 7243 2942
- Unite  
128 Theobalds Road  
London  
WC1X 8TN  
  
020 7611 2500

If you decide you want to return home, you can contact your country's Embassy or High Commission in the UK. Alternatively, Choices, a charity, can offer you confidential advice and information about returning home voluntarily. You can contact them on 0808 800 0007.

**October 2013**