



Home Office

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Thank you to those who have emailed or written to ask the Home Office about relatives of those directly affected by the Grenfell Tower fire. Rather than sending out several letters and emails in individual responses to such similar matters, I wish to provide a single published response, as the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service with responsibility for Grenfell victims work. This follows a letter from the Home Secretary to the chair of the Home Affairs Committee to highlight a change to the Grenfell relatives' immigration policy, published to the Parliamentary library under reference DEP2018-0623 on 26 June 2018, which is available to view on the parliamentary library website here: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?fd=2018-06-25&td=2018-06-30&page=2#toggle-623>.

The devastating fire which took place on 14 June 2017 was a national tragedy and our priority has always been the welfare of survivors and their families. Home Office staff have provided help and assistance in the community regarding visa applications for victims and their relatives, to replace lost documents and passports.

The Home Office put in place dedicated survivors' immigration policy for those without status to start a 5-year route to permanent residence in the UK. Visa applications were expedited for relatives to get here quickly and be granted leave on an exceptional basis where the Immigration Rules couldn't be met. This ensured that survivors got the support of their loved ones, and that bereaved families could arrange funerals for those who tragically lost their lives.

We will do everything we can to support the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry and enable Core Participants to give evidence. I can assure you that every Grenfell case is being handled by dedicated caseworkers, who take individual circumstances into account in a sensible and flexible way.

On 11 October 2017, a dedicated Grenfell relatives' policy was put in place to allow those granted short periods of leave outside of the Immigration Rules, to remain here for up to six months.

On 26 June, the Home Secretary extended the relatives' policy, to allow those with Core Participant status or who are called to give oral evidence, to extend their stay and remain in the UK for up to six months at a time. This will provide them with further leave for the anticipated duration of the Inquiry oral evidence sessions. The policy has been developed and agreed in consultation with the Public Inquiry team.

Eligible relatives will be able to extend their leave free of charge under the policy. There is nothing in the policy that precludes a further grant of six-months' leave, and any requests for further extensions of stay will be considered on a case by case basis.

We have updated our guidance available on gov.uk at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grenfell-tower-handling-relatives-immigration-cases>.

Relatives overseas, including those who are called to attend the Public Inquiry, or who have Core Participant status can enter the UK as a visitor. Where Core Participant status is raised in an application, we are committed that applications will be decided in a timely way by our dedicated teams to ensure relatives are able to attend the Inquiry.

Relatives who wish to remain in the UK for a longer period, or those who do not have Core Participant status, may wish to consider whether they meet the requirements and are eligible to apply for leave under existing published policies.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Nick Hurd". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP