



HM Government

# Frontier worker permit for EU citizens



## Frontier worker permit for EU citizens

A frontier worker is an EU\* citizen who is employed or self-employed in the UK but resident elsewhere. If you are a frontier worker and you were working in the UK on or before 31 December 2020 you can still enter the UK for work. However, you must hold a frontier worker permit to enter the UK for work from 1 July 2021 onwards.

\*References to citizens of the European Union also relate to citizens of the European Economic Area and Switzerland.

If you are an Irish citizen your rights are protected under the **Common Travel Area** and you do not need to apply for a frontier worker permit, but you can if you want to.

### Frontier worker permit

You can apply for a frontier worker permit on **GOV.UK**. Applications are free of charge.



There is no deadline to apply, but you will need to hold a valid frontier worker permit, as well as your valid passport or national identity card, to enter the UK as a frontier worker from 1 July 2021. Until then, you can continue entering the UK as a frontier worker using your passport or national identity card.

## Eligibility

You can apply for a frontier worker permit if you're from the EU and you:

- live outside the UK
- started working in the UK on or before 31 December 2020 and continue to work here

If you have periods of unemployment in the UK, or you are unemployed when you apply for a permit, this may affect your eligibility.

Your frontier worker permit will last for 5 years. You may be eligible for a 5 year permit if you're on maternity or paternity leave when you apply, and you will return to your previous employment, or find another job, at the end of this period.

## Applying with retained frontier worker status

In certain circumstances you may be eligible to apply with **'retained' frontier worker status** where your permit will last for 2 years. You may meet the requirements to retain your status if you've previously been a frontier worker in the UK and one of the following applies:

- you're temporarily unable to work because of an illness or accident, or due to COVID-19 travel restrictions
- you were working in the UK but are now involuntarily unemployed, and are looking for work in the UK
- you're in vocational training while involuntarily unemployed
- you're in vocational training while unemployed, and the training is related to the work you carried out in your previous work
- you're temporarily unable to work as a result of pregnancy or childbirth

If you've worked in the UK for less than one year before becoming involuntarily unemployed, you can only retain your worker status as someone who is looking for work, for 6 months.

**EU, EEA or Swiss citizens who want to begin frontier working in the UK after 31 December 2020 need to apply under the UK's points-based immigration system.**

## Requirements for living outside the UK

You must not be 'primarily' resident in the UK. How you meet this requirement depends on how much time you've spent here since 1 January 2020. You'll be eligible if you've spent less than 180 days in total in the UK over the course of this 12-month period.

If you've spent 180 days or more in the UK within any 12 months, you'll still be eligible if you returned to the country you live in at least either once every 6 months, or twice in that 12-month period.

You'll still be able to apply if there are exceptional reasons for you not travelling to your primary residence during this period, such as an illness or accident.

## Requirements for working in the UK

You must have:

- started working in the UK while living elsewhere on or before 31 December 2020, either as an employed or self-employed person
- continued to be an employed or self-employed person in the UK and have come to the UK to work at least once every 12 months since then, or meet the requirements to retain your worker or self-employed person status
- carried out 'genuine and effective' work in the UK



## How to apply

You can apply online at [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). Applications are free of charge.

There are three steps to the application process:

### 1. Confirm your identity and contact

The application form is accessible by computer, tablet or smartphone. You can use the [UK Immigration: ID Check app](#) to verify your identity. You will need to enter your contact preferences and scan your passport. You can use someone else's phone to prove your identity. If you are unable to use the app, you will need to attend a visa application centre to verify your identity. You may need to pay for this service where it is provided by a commercial partner.

### 2. Prepare your application

You will need to enter your personal details, including time spent in the UK, details about your work in the UK, and reasons for retaining your worker or self-employed person status (if relevant). You must also complete a criminality check.

### 3. Provide evidence and submit your application

You will need to include details of your employment or self-employment history in the UK, such as contracts, and payslips or invoices relating to work carried out in the UK. If you are applying as someone who has, or had, retained status, you will need to provide proof of your reason for not working in the UK, such as a letter from your GP or proof of enrolment on a training course.

You can [cancel your application](#) if required.



## Your frontier worker permit

If your application is successful and you verified your identity using the UK Immigration: ID check app, you'll be issued with a digital frontier worker permit.

If you did not verify your identity through the app, you will either:

- be sent a physical version of the permit if you applied inside the UK
- be sent an email explaining how you can come to the UK and collect your permit if you applied outside the UK

**If your application is unsuccessful, you'll get a decision notice explaining why your application was refused.**

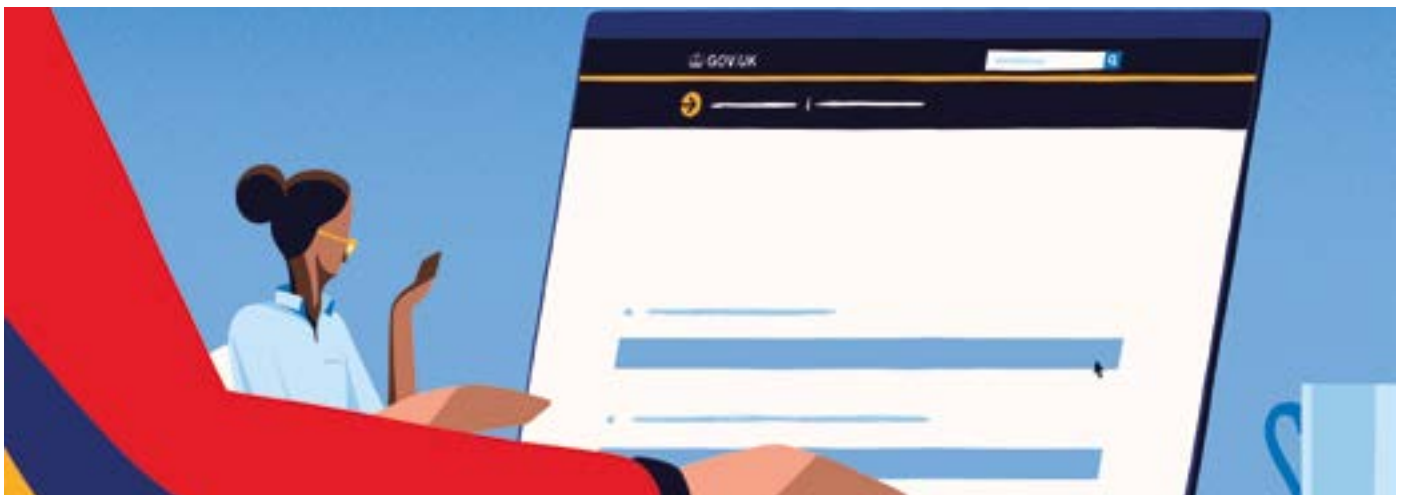
If your application is successful, you can continue to use your permit and come to the UK for work for as long as you continue to meet the definition of a frontier worker and your permit remains valid. You will also have the right to access benefits and services in the UK which you had access to before the UK left the EU provided you meet the relevant eligibility requirements.

You'll usually have to **pay tax on your UK income** and you may have to **pay UK National Insurance contributions in the UK**.

You can change jobs and move from being employed to self-employed in the UK without needing to tell the Home Office as long as you remain a frontier worker.

If you have periods of unemployment in the UK, or you are unemployed when you apply for a permit, this may affect your eligibility.

However, you need to tell the Home Office if you stop working in the UK and do not meet one of the **retained status criteria**.



## Renewing your permit

You will need to **renew your frontier worker permit** every 5 years, or every 2 years if you applied with a retained worker status. When you renew your permit, you'll need to show that you continued to meet the **eligibility and suitability requirements** over the period of time since you last applied.

## Apply now

**Apply now** for your frontier worker permit. You will need a frontier worker permit when entering the UK as a frontier worker from 1 July 2021.

