



eVisas and NRPF: Issues & recommendations

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Introduction

[The Unity Project](#) assists with Change of Conditions (CoC) applications for access to public funds.

We are concerned that in the majority of recent cases, **eVisas are not being updated to reflect a successful Change of Conditions application**, and this issue is not being promptly addressed by the Home Office.

This briefing shares our experience on this issue and provides guidance about steps that you can take if you are seeing similar issues.



The problem: eVisas not being updated following a successful CoC application

We started tracking eVisa updates following successful CoC decisions consistently as of 1/11/24. eVisas were not updated following a successful CoC in the vast majority of cases (more than 25) over the following three months to February 2025.

Despite reporting the error to the Home Office in almost every case, we only received three direct responses to the error report form. These all came from BRPError@homeoffice.gov.uk stating: *'Please be advised that, due to a technical issue, your enquiry has been referred to our Technical Support Team for further investigation. We will contact you once we have received confirmation that this technical issue has been fixed. [...] We apologise for any inconvenience caused by this matter.'* The applicants in all cases received no further updates.

In some cases, the issues have been resolved after a number of days or weeks, while many are still awaiting resolution. In more than one instance, the lack of an updated eVisa has already led to the DWP or council refusing to process an application for access to public funds.

We have spoken to a number of other organisations across the UK who have seen similar issues in their casework. For example, the [Refugee and Migrant Centre \(RMC\)](#), working with clients from across the Black Country and Birmingham, reported that between September 2024 and February 2025, 6 out of 15 successful CoC applicants experienced problems where their evisa did not reflect the updated condition. In at least one of these cases, RMC sent the CoC decision letter alongside the benefits application and the benefits application was still refused due to the eVisa not confirming access to public funds.

What you can do if an eVisa is not updated following a successful CoC application

1. Apply for public funds without delay, using the CoC decision letter.
 - Change of Conditions (CoC) decision letters usually state something to the effect of: 'the no access to public funds condition has been removed with immediate effect.... You can apply for public funds (benefits and services).'
 - If you have another outstanding immigration application, they may say 'Please use this notice as evidence of your eligibility to apply for public funds... Attention for the Department of Work & Pensions: If you have any queries with regards to eligibility for public funds, then we can be contacted on the following e-mail - cocqueries@homeoffice.gov.uk to confirm this.'
 - You should therefore be able to use the CoC decision letter to prove your entitlement to public funds and apply for public funds.
 - If you are told otherwise, show the relevant authority this advice note and request that they confirm in writing on what basis you are being denied your entitlements so that you can be advised accordingly.
2. Report the eVisa error: <https://www.gov.uk/report-error-evisa>. If possible, retain evidence of the form submission.
3. If the issue is not resolved within 10 days of completing the error report form, you can make a referral to DPG for escalation using the referral form [here](#).

Please note that it might also be possible to make a referral to the Homelessness Escalations Service (HES) if applicable, and if your organisation is able to make these referrals. We are also aware that there is a specialist phone line for advisors, but we have not used this due to limited capacity and as we think the error report form should suffice to alert the Home Office to the issue. As of 9/6/25, some organisations have been given access to an eVisa escalation service for people in 'urgent, life-impacting situations'.

Home Office engagement

We raised this issue in the NRPF Forum meeting on 10/10/24 and asked for confirmation that eVisas will be updated immediately to reflect a successful Change of Conditions application. We were told: *'Yes, their eVisa (immigration status and conditions information) will react and update automatically to casework decisions. For 'Change of Conditions' specifically, the automation process may not happen for a small cohort of customers and work is being delivered to fix this as a priority. Customers with a query about their immigration status or conditions information can contact the Resolution Centre or via the telephone line provided within their UKVI account for this to be investigated and resolved.'* We were also provided with an email address for the eVisa Engagement Team for 'further discussion'.

We contacted the eVisa Engagement Team email address to raise the issues on 20/12/24 and again on 8/1/25. We have received no direct response other than clarification that: *'Our email is primarily used for engagement requests. If an individual or organisation representing that individual is have a problem, there are a number of avenue's available to get a resolution to a particular problem [sic].'*

We raised the issues again in the next NRPF Forum meeting on 6/2/25. The Home Office acknowledged the issues. They said that in the long term they want eVisas to update automatically to reflect a change of conditions but this requires 'technical elements to fall in place'; in the meantime they are looking at 'workarounds' and 'spot fixes'. They also stated that there is no way to escalate individual cases beyond the error report form.

We are aware that several organisations are part of the Home Office's Digital Status Services Stakeholder Forum (D3SF) and raising eVisa issues there, including the above. We also wrote to representatives of the D3SF on 1/5/25 to highlight the issue directly, and invited questions and/or updates about a resolution.

We note that the Home Secretary stated in December 2024 that they would be 'applying a Windrush test' to eVisa implementation; 'a test to say what is the risk that some people might end up with this not working, even if it works for most people? People who are unable

to verify their identity, do not have the right documents or who are vulnerable may get caught in the system.’ The Home Secretary also committed ‘to make sure that we can address any problems as we go. We will keep all of that under review. It is more a set of principles in our approach.’ They also noted ‘it is estimated that around 4 million people have biometric permits and need to switch to e-visas’.¹

Further issues²

Evidence

As far as we understand, there is nothing on an eVisa to show the date that it was updated, making it impossible to give an exact date as to when an update occurred (except perhaps via dated screenshots). This makes it difficult for applicants to prove for how long they have had the issue.

We also understand that it is often difficult to get written proof that the DWP or job centre has refused to process an application and the basis upon which they have refused to do so.

We are aware of one case where someone’s decision letter stated they had RPF, but the eVisa stated NRPF. They were then issued a new decision letter stating NRPF, but the eVisa was then updated to state RPF. It was not clear to them whether they could reasonably rely on the eVisas or the decision letters, given that they were contradictory.

Accessibility

In several cases, the issues are exacerbated for clients due to overlapping disabilities and vulnerabilities (such as literacy, or disabilities such as blindness).

¹ Home Affairs Committee, Oral evidence: The work of the Home Office, HC 505, Tuesday 17 December 2024: <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/22227/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>. The Home Secretary further explained: ‘the idea is that that is to be very much the champion for the values that were identified as part of the Williams review, whether that is about seeing the face behind the case, or about being able to swiftly respond when concerns are raised by the public, by people who are coming into contact with the Home Office, being able to have that swift response, identifying problems, and also being able to move quickly to tackle things rather than just getting stuck, as I think perhaps the Home Office had been in the past.’

² Several other organisations have gathered evidence on various other issues arising (e.g. see: <https://the3million.org.uk/digital-status-crisis>)