

**High Commission of India
(London)**

**Frequently Asked Questions
(As on 27th March 2020)**

High Commission of India in London has compiled these FAQs based on the queries we received on emails, emergency numbers and social media platforms covering a range of issues which have come up due to the extraordinary situation resulting from travel restrictions in view of COVID-19 challenge.

FAQs are divided into various sections. You may wish to go through the FAQs before writing an email or calling us on emergency numbers.

Assistance to stranded Indians for accommodation/food

(i) There are thousands of students, tourists and Indians on business visa who want to go back to India even if they are quarantined on reaching, when they can be taken from other places, why not from the UK?

We understand that thousands of Indian citizens including students, short term visa holder professionals, businesspersons and tourists, and many others are unable to go back to India due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions. As per the recent communication of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of India, scheduled international flights into India remain suspended up to 14 April 2020. Government of India has advised the citizens to avoid non-essential travel. The High Commission will update the Indian citizens if there are any changes in the travel advisory through our social media platforms and website. We request Indian citizens in the UK to stay connected with us for updates through social media platforms and website.

(ii) What help can HCI provide Indian students / nationals stranded in the UK without access to accommodation or food?

Indian citizens in the UK should adhere to the advice of the NHS and Public Health England for their safety and well-being.

These are trying times. The world is in uncharted waters. We can come out of this challenge only if we act responsibly and help each other.

Those who need emergency assistance may call our helplines: +44 7768765035 / +44 7739363521

Or email to us at

inf.london@mea.gov.in / info.london@mea.gov.in

In your correspondence please include your name, phone number, current address, passport and visa details, and Indian contact number.

Given that Indian citizens in need of accommodation and food are spread across the UK, the High Commission is constantly working with organizations, community support groups and individuals across UK so that we can reach out to stranded Indian citizens in a large number of areas to assist them.

The following organisations and establishments have come forward to help out stranded Indian nationals and Indian students currently in London, who may need food or accommodation.

1. Accommodation at subsidised rates:

a. Easy Hotel. 0207 8341379. 36 Belgrave RD London Sw1 Victoria

b. Heston Hyde Hotel 002085721818 c. Hounslow Park Grand 02031189600

2. Food at subsidised rates being provided by

a. 'Akshay Patra' contact Mr. Harendra Jodha +44 7932 336794

b. Mr Varinder Singh Khera +44 7931 570670

In addition, there are community associations which are providing assistance to stranded Indians. Details of such associations can be seen on our website or social media platforms.

These lists are being continuously updated. For updated lists please stay connected with our social media platforms and website.

The High Commission appreciates the generosity of these organizations, associations and individuals.

In case you want to help others

How do I volunteer to Help HCI/ Indian nationals stranded in UK?

Organisations/individuals willing to help stranded Indians may write to us at counsconsular.london@mea.gov.in or get in touch with the nearest Indian association in your area.

Cases where visas are expiring

What is HCI's advice for those who are running out of their visa?

The High Commission of India worked with the UK authorities concerned on this subject. Recently, the UK government has conveyed that visa will be extended in those cases where the visa is expiring by 31 May 2020. Such Indian nationals will have to write to the Coronavirus Immigration Team (CIT) on CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk to update their records if the visa is expiring.

They should provide:

- full name (include any middle names)
- date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)
- nationality
- visa reference number
- why they can't go back to their home country, for example if the border has closed.

They will get a response informing when the request is received and when the visa has been extended. A response may be expected within 5 working days.

They can also call the Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre.

Telephone: 0800 678 1767 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Detailed guidance can be accessed through the link below.

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents?utm_source=31202869-fd45-4fbc-bc79-e169265b1978&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Travel planning

(i) *Should people book tickets from 1st of April? Till when the ban will be in place? Or is a new advisory expected?*

As per the latest communication of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of India, scheduled international flights into India remain suspended up to 14 April 2020. In light of this, it is not advisable to plan travel to India before 14th April. Please stay in touch with the High Commission through its social media platforms or check our website for updates.

(ii) *What guidance is currently offered for OCI holders/ other country nationals wanting to visit India for emergency reasons?*

All visas and visa free travel to India for OCI card holders is suspended till 15 April 2020.

Exceptions are permitted for diplomats/officials/UN/employment/project/ airline crew etc. Detailed instructions may be seen on our website: <https://www.hcilondon.gov.in/docs/1584272758Travel%20Advisory.pdf>

For updates beyond 15 April 2020, please stay in touch with the High Commission through its social media platforms or check our website for updates.

High Commission's passport/OCI and other Consular Services

(i) *Can we avail passport renewal, visa, birth registration, Power of Attorney and other Consular Services from the High Commission during lockdown?*

The High Commission has suspended these services temporarily until further notice. We shall notify the resumption of these services on our website as well as on social media.

(ii) *I have filled online OCI, passport and other forms. What will happen to these forms? Will I be able to use them when the services resume?*

You may keep print outs of online application forms. These may be used when our services resume.

(iii) *I had taken an appointment for OCI/Passport or other services. Will I have to take a fresh appointment when the services resume?*

Fresh appointments will be needed wherever prior appointments were taken. However, the High Commission will endeavour to minimise inconvenience to all the applicants.

(iv) *What if my passport expires during the lockdown?*

You may submit your passport renewal application after the resumption of our services. Such cases will be handled on priority.
