



THE JOINT COUNCIL  
*for* THE WELFARE  
OF IMMIGRANTS

# GETTING LEGAL HELP FOR AN IMMIGRATION ISSUE

A practical guide to getting  
justice through the law

2023



# Introduction

This guide is aimed at people who are having problems because of their immigration status in the UK.

This is a step-by-step guide to working with immigration lawyers to help you get justice. It covers:

- what to expect from a lawyer
- what a lawyer expects from you
- developing or improving relationships with lawyers
- what to do if you are not happy with a lawyer.

**“People should feel protected knowing that someone who has the knowledge can navigate the legal process and offer effective legal representation”**

**- JCWI CLIENT**

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## What is a Legal Issue?

A legal issue is a problem that can be solved using the law. You may need help from a lawyer to sort out the issue. Some key types of legal issue include:

- **Immigration** – if you have problems getting, keeping or proving your status in the UK
- **Crime** – if you are accused of committing a crime
- **Housing** – if you are having problems with your housing, you might need a lawyer to help you sort them out
- **Employment** – if you have problems with your employment, for example if you are discriminated against at work, a lawyer could help you get justice.

## What do solicitors and immigration advisors do?

A solicitor or immigration advisor does various different things. There is no limited list, but mainly they can:

- **Take instructions from clients** – this means listening to your problem and taking a note of them
- **Advise you** about potential actions
- **Deal with all communications and documents** to do with your case
- **Gather relevant evidence and prepare your case for court** if necessary. However, if your case goes to court you might also need somebody called a barrister (see page 4).

## Types of advisor

### Solicitors

A **solicitor** is a professional who provides legal services. Solicitors can specialise in different areas of law – if you have any of the problems described above, a solicitor may be able to help you. Only people approved by the **Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)** can call themselves solicitors. They must be qualified, behave ethically and follow the SRA's rules.

Solicitors can work in legal firms, for charities or for a local authority.

All solicitors have to be registered with the SRA. If you are working with someone who says they are a solicitor, you can check by entering their name in the SRA register: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register>. All registered solicitors also have a unique registration number – you can ask them to share this with you, so you can check their qualifications.

### Immigration advisors

Not all legal problems need a solicitor – you might be able to get support from an **immigration advisor**. This is someone who is qualified to give immigration advice, but is not a solicitor. However, you should be careful to check that the person giving you immigration advice has the right qualifications.

**It is illegal for someone to provide immigration advice without being officially registered, even if they are providing advice for free.** Anyone providing asylum, immigration, or nationality advice in the UK must either be qualified as a solicitor or barrister, or be registered with the **Office of**

the **Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)** or the **Institute of Legal Executives**.

If someone says they can provide you with immigration advice, you can check whether they are qualified by entering the name of their organisation on the OISC website: [https://home.oisc.gov.uk/register\\_of\\_regulated\\_immigration\\_advisers/register.aspx](https://home.oisc.gov.uk/register_of_regulated_immigration_advisers/register.aspx)

## Private Solicitors

Many people have to pay to get legal advice if they are not able to get **Legal Aid** (see page 5). To get legal advice, they have to take on a private solicitor.

Taking on a private solicitor is a big decision, not only because it can be expensive, but also because it can have legal consequences.

Some law firms have something called a fixed-fee agreement, which means you pay them a fixed amount for them to work on an agreed application or part of your case. With some firms, you can pay in instalments, while others operate on a 'no win, no fee' basis.

Again, it's important to make sure you are working with a real and reputable legal firm or organisation. You can research the advisor's experience and qualifications online. You should contact them directly to discuss potential prices and the services they offer, and you can compare their prices with the prices advertised by other companies online. They should provide clear information about what is included in the price, and any other fees you might end up paying.

If you cannot afford a private solicitor and cannot find a pro bono solicitor (see the

next section), there are still some options you could explore. You could contact a local charity, and they may be able to help you raise money to pay for legal fees. You could also ask for help from family or friends, or approach your local community or local place of worship.

## Pro Bono Solicitors

Something called '**pro bono**' is another option for getting legal help. A pro bono solicitor can work or represent you free of charge for the entire case. However, finding a pro bono solicitor can be very difficult due to lack of capacity. You can search large law firms in your local area and look on their website to see whether they work on immigration cases pro bono.

## Barristers

A **barrister** provides specialist legal advice and represents individuals or organisations in court and tribunals. You might hear people calling barristers 'counsel' – this is just another word for barrister. They represent their clients in court, examine witnesses and speak to the judge. In summary, the lawyer who does background work on your case is a *solicitor*, and the lawyer who represents you in court is a *barrister or counsel*.

## Legal Advice and Legal Support

There is a difference between **legal advice** and **legal support**. Legal advice means applying the relevant law, regulations and principles, and proposing a course of action<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Legal Advice Right to Remain*: <https://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit/yourlegalcase>

You don't need to be a solicitor to provide immigration advice, but you must have the relevant qualifications from the OISC, or be registered with the SRA. Remember that receiving informal advice from someone who is not qualified could be worse than not receiving advice at all.

If you are not able to get legal advice, you might still be able to get something called legal support instead. Legal support is not so strictly regulated, and is more general. Offering legal support can include, for example:

- Pointing people to organisations or charities so that they can get more specific advice
- Sharing guides, like toolkits from reliable organisations that can teach you basic information about your kind of case
- Giving people information about advice centres. The Law Centres Network is a good place to start: <https://www.lawcentres.org.uk>
- Helping someone to contact Citizens Advice for free, confidential, and impartial advice
- Providing information about Advocate: <https://weareadvocate.org.uk> which helps with free legal advice and representation in court and tribunal cases from volunteer barristers
- Contacting local authorities or getting letters from your GP, social worker or schools.
- Accompanying someone to asylum interviews or appointments with the Home Office - this emotional support also counts as legal support
- Offering general information that may be relevant to your case.

As above, there are several ways you can get support. A charity, organisation, local authority, or law firm can signpost you, which just means pointing you in the direction of somewhere you can get support.

Making a referral is a slightly different process. People like solicitors, social workers, support workers, or another person who is supporting, you can refer you. This means they pass your information onto another organisation. You could be referred to another law firm, local authority, doctor, mental health team, or any other organisation or government agency as necessary. The person who is referring you should tell you that you are being referred, and they must make sure that you give consent for this to happen.

## Legal Aid

### What is Legal Aid?

**Legal Aid** is a system for getting free legal representation, done by independent lawyers but paid for by the government. Legal Aid means that people who meet the requirements can get legal advice for free. Legal Aid is provided by the **Legal Aid Agency (LAA)**.

To get Legal Aid, you will usually need to prove that:

- **Your case is eligible**
- **The problem is serious**
- **You cannot afford to pay for legal costs yourself**

Not all law firms offer Legal Aid. Legal Aid providers must have a contract with the Legal Aid Agency to be allowed to offer Legal Aid. Legal aid providers are completely independent from the



government and other powerful interests. This means that even though they get funding from the government, their work is completely separate from it – they work to represent you.

People who do not have immigration status in the UK can get Legal Aid as long as their case meets the requirements. Legal aid is also not considered a public fund, so you can still get legal aid if you have No Recourse to Public Funds.

It's important to do your research before you sign up with a legal aid advisor, and make sure they have the right qualifications.

A lawyer should never ask you to pay for a legal aid application, an **Exceptional Case Funding** application, or a fee waiver application.

## What kinds of cases does Legal Aid cover?

Legal Aid is only automatically available for people making the following types of application:

- **Asylum**
- **Humanitarian protection**
- **Leave to remain (a visa)** because returning to your country of origin would breach your right to life (Article 2) or right not to suffer torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 3)
- **Immigration bail** when you are detained in an immigration removal centre and want to be released
- **Indefinite leave to remain as a victim of domestic violence**
- **A visa as a lone child** wanting to remain in the UK

- **A visa when you are a victim of human trafficking and modern slavery**

## What are the other requirements?

If your case is eligible for Legal Aid, you still have to meet two other requirements in order to get free representation. It is up to the legal representative to decide if you meet these tests.

The first is called a **means test** – this is where the Legal Aid Agency decides if you need free legal advice. They will need to look at evidence about your financial situation (income, wages, benefits, savings, properties).

To pass the means test, you have to show that your income (or the amount of capital you have access to) is not higher than the threshold set by the Legal Aid Agency.

At the time of writing this guide, you can pass the Means Test if you earn less than £2657 per month, and not have more than £733 left per month after paying tax, national insurance, rent, employment expenses and money spent on family members who depend on you. Your legal advisor should be able to explain the means test in detail.

The second test is called a **merit test** – this is where the Legal Aid Agency decides if your case is strong enough and has a good chance of success. If you pass the means test, then your lawyer must also decide if you pass the merits test. This means your lawyer will speak to you and decide how likely it is that you will win your case, and how much you would benefit from winning your case.

## Claiming Legal Aid

Once you have found a Legal Aid advisor, they will apply for you. You will need to provide them all the relevant information about your income, savings, whether you are receiving any benefits, and your spending. You should provide payslips and bank statements if you have them). They may also need your National Insurance Number, as well as your birth certificate and your marriage certificate. If your financial circumstances change, you must update your legal advisor as soon as possible.

Depending on your case and circumstances, these are the forms your advisor will need to fill in when applying for legal aid:

**CW1:** This form determines the financial eligibility of Legal Aid clients

**CW2 (IMM):** Controlled Legal Representation

**Civ ECF 1:** Application for Exceptional Case Funding (see below) – this form must include the reason for applying for Exceptional Case Funding

## Exceptional Case Funding

Even if you are not making one of the applications listed above, it might still be possible to get free legal representation. This is called **Exceptional Case Funding (ECF)**. For example, if you are applying based on your right to a family or private life (sometimes called an **Article 8 application**), you would not automatically have the right to legal aid, but might be able to apply for ECF.

The following cases can get ECF:

- Application for leave to remain as a partner

- Application for leave to remain as a parent
- Application for leave to remain because you have lived in the UK for 20 years
- There are other types of cases that can be eligible for exceptional case funding, but this may depend on your individual circumstances.

## Eligibility for Exceptional Case Funding

To be eligible for ECF, you must show that your human rights would be violated if you did not get free legal help.

If you are granted ECF, you should be able to receive free legal services and possibly representation.

## Applying for ECF

You or your legal advisor can apply for ECF by completing form **Civ ECF 1**.

To apply, you must show that:

- Legal aid is not usually available for your legal problem
- You are financially eligible for legal aid - you will be eligible if you have a low income, you have little or no savings or valuable properties, or you receive certain benefits
- Your case is likely enough to succeed
- You are not able to do the application without a lawyer, and without legal aid it would be very difficult to bring your case (or you couldn't present your case effectively). For example, you can argue that you are illiterate or have problems with writing or reading. You can also argue that you have poor IT skills, English is not your first language



and you don't understand it, or you don't understand complex issues or complex legal procedures.

- Without legal aid, your human rights would be violated.

## Checking that a legal representative is qualified

There are lots of ways to search for a legal representative. Some people start by searching on the Internet for advisors in their local area. Others might get a recommendation from family and friends.

However you start your search, it's important to keep the following questions in mind, and do your research before committing.

1. Does their website give details of the services they provide?
2. Are they registered with the Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA) or the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)?
3. Do they detail their price list and information about Legal Aid (if they provide it)?
4. Do they have any of the below logos on their website?



## Finding a legal representative

Below is a list of places where you can go to search for a qualified legal representative. Remember that, no matter how you come into contact with a legal advisor, it's important to check that they have the right qualifications to offer you advice.

- **Law Centres:** Law Centres offer legal advice, casework and representation to individuals and groups. All Law Centres are independent and operate on a not-for-profit basis. They are also accountable to their communities, with local people acting on their management committees. Their website provides details of local law centres and the areas of law they cover. Not all law centres are able to provide immigration advice.

<https://www.lawcentres.org.uk/about-law-centres/law-centres-on-google-maps/alphabetically>

- **Find a Solicitor:** Find a Solicitor is a free service from the Law Society. It provides information about organisations or people in England and Wales that are regulated by the SRA. You can search by what issue you are facing, or by location.

<https://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk>

- **Find Legal Aid Adviser:** Here, you can search for a legal adviser with a Legal Aid contract in England and Wales. You will need to filter by category (immigration and asylum, housing, welfare benefits, modern slavery) and enter the postcode, town, or city.

<https://find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk>

- **Directory of Providers:** Information about Legal Aid providers by category of law. The directory covers community care, discrimination, family, housing, immigration and asylum, modern slavery, public law, welfare benefits, mental health, crime, and prison law. The directory is updated monthly.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/directory-of-legal-aid-providers>

- **Find an Adviser:** This tool allows you to search for sources of information and advice on benefits, housing, jobs, legal issues, and other practical help.

<https://advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk>

## Your first contact with your solicitor

Once you have found a solicitor, you will then have your first contact with them. This can be through an email, call, video call, or a meeting in person. The most important thing during this first contact is to explain your case in as much detail as possible, and show all the evidence you have. This can include letters or documents from the Home Office, letters from doctors, family, local authorities and other government agencies, etc. If you do not have evidence like this, it does not mean that your case will not be looked at. However, it will be much easier for the solicitor if you have some supporting documents.

Your solicitor should explain things like what a solicitor is, and what they can and cannot do.

Even though this is a very early stage in the process, the solicitor can still provide some legal advice or legal information.

The solicitor should explain what it means for them represent you legally, and ask you to sign a **client authority form**. This means you are giving them permission to represent you officially. The solicitor should explain clearly and honestly how strong they think your chances of success are, and any deadlines that might come up in your case.

Just because you have had some initial advice from a solicitor does not mean that they are officially representing you. You should ask the solicitor to be clear with you about whether they are representing you. If they are not, you will have to look for another person to represent you.

You should make sure before you meet with a solicitor if the consultation is free, or you will have to pay for the meeting.

The solicitor may decide after speaking to you whether they will take on your case. This normally depends on things like whether your case is likely to succeed, and whether the solicitor has enough knowledge about the relevant area of law.

Sometimes they will decide that your case is not likely to succeed, or there are no options for you. If they decide this, the solicitor should put this in writing and give you reasons for their decision

The solicitor might not be able to make a decision during your initial meeting. They might need time to look over your evidence and make a decision. When they do make a decision, they should give it to you in writing.

Sometimes they might need extra information, or they might need time to look at your documents and evidence. Once they have done this, they can give advice to you in writing.

# Your relationship with your solicitor

Once your solicitor has agreed to take on your case, you will be given a lot of information, and need to agree on a number of things. Take the time to make sure you understand the information given to you, and ask questions if you are not sure.

It is important for you and your solicitor to establish a trusting, professional relationship. You may have to share information about yourself or your past that is difficult to talk about. You may have to describe traumatic and uncomfortable experiences, and your solicitor should work to make sure you are able to do this in a comfortable and safe environment.

You and your legal representative are a team - you have to work together to achieve the best outcome for your case. It's a two-way relationship, with rights and obligations for both parties.

## Client Authority Letter

Your solicitor will ask you to sign something called a **client authority letter**. This means the solicitor is allowed to represent you and speak to the Home Office or other bodies on your behalf. Once you have signed this, the solicitor is officially representing you.

## Client Care Letter

Your solicitor should send you a **Client Care Letter** to confirm that they are opening the file for you. 'Opening a file' means officially becoming your solicitor and taking your case on. It is important that your solicitor sends you a Client Care Letter within two weeks of opening a file.

The Client Care Letter must contain:

- ✓ Your client Reference Number
- ✓ Details about your immigration matter
- ✓ Details of the person who is handling your case, including their qualifications and accreditations
- ✓ Your instructions – your instructions are what you have told your solicitor about your situation
- ✓ A summary of the advice you have been given so far
- ✓ Information about funding for the case – the Client Care Letter should mention whether the case is eligible for Legal Aid provided by the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), or Exceptional Case Funding (also provided by the LAA)
- ✓ What steps the solicitor will take next in your case. These can include:
  - Making a Subject Access Request (SAR) to the Home Office – This is a way to request all the information that the Home Office holds about you
  - Making a request to previous solicitors for information about your case
  - Making referrals
  - Requesting medical records from your GP / doctor
- ✓ Your responsibilities as a client. These can include:
  - Informing them if your circumstances change in any way
  - Giving them information and evidence about your financial circumstances, as needed

- Trying to get letters of support from friends, support workers, or social workers as needed
  - Providing information and documents that are relevant to your case, including information about your family, children etc
- ✓ Chances of success: This is to help you understand how likely it is that your case will succeed
- ✓ Timescale: This gives an insight into processing times. However, please remember that it can be difficult to estimate how long it will take for a case to be finished
- ✓ Information about who is supervising your case, and what can you do if you are not happy with the service your solicitor is providing.

The letter must be on the solicitor's official headed paper. It should be clear, concise, and include specific information.

If a solicitor believes your case is not likely to succeed, or there is no way under the law for your case to win, they may write this in a client care letter. They should only decide this after looking at your case in detail.

## Working with solicitors

### What can you expect from a solicitor?

- **Transparency:** This means the legal representative should always be clear with you about every part of the service they offer.
- **Clarity:** They should avoid using technical legal language, and should

make sure that you understand what they are telling you.

- **Accessibility:** They should update you regularly about how the process works, and what is happening with your case.
- **Openness:** You should feel comfortable speaking honestly with your solicitor. If you disagree with their actions, or you do not understand something, you should feel free to say so. You have the right to ask questions and understand the process.
- **Accommodating:** Solicitors should make sure all their clients are able to take part in the process. Some people have disabilities that impact their lives, and not all disabilities can be seen. Legal representatives should understand your needs and current circumstances, and make an effort to accommodate you.
- **Trustworthiness:** Everyone should feel able to trust their solicitor.

Your solicitor should explain any deadlines or important dates to you. Even if they cannot do anything to help, they should make sure you are aware of what next steps you could take.

Not all evidence has to come from you. Lawyers can help prepare some evidence, for example getting expert evidence from a doctor about a medical condition, or evidence from a person who is an expert in the situation in your home country.

### What will the solicitor expect from you?

- **Honesty:** Legal representatives expect you to be able to explain your circumstances honestly – for example,

by telling them about your financial circumstances, your physical and mental health, any disabilities etc. This way, the legal representative can advise you fully. If the solicitor doesn't know the real situation, then this will impact the advice you get and the actions the solicitor can take on your behalf.

- **Engagement:** You will need to engage with the process. This means attending appointments, answering your phone, providing documents and so on.
- **Cooperation:** Legal representatives are often working to tight deadlines, and will need you to cooperate so they are able to submit documents on time. Sometimes they will need you to give them information, sign documents, or provide evidence at short notice. They need your help to be able to help you.

Different people may be involved in your case, but the key information must come mainly from you. Solicitors cannot assume anything or take instructions from anyone else.

## The client-solicitor relationship – general guidelines

1. You have the right to seek different opinions. However, you should be honest and not use different solicitors to make different applications at the same time. This is time-consuming and can **seriously affect the progress of your case**.
2. Solicitors might suggest ways that you could try to collect evidence. It might be difficult to do this (for example, accessing an old email or contacting

someone you are not in touch with anymore), but you should do your best to get all the evidence your solicitor needs.

3. The role of an interpreter is only to translate - **they cannot provide legal advice**. They should translate what you are saying to the legal representative word for word, and translate what the legal representative says to you word for word.
4. The solicitor is there to guide and advise you, and tell you which immigration rules the Home Office should be applying to your case. They cannot tell you what to say to the Home Office.
5. It is best to manage all communication with the Home Office through your legal representative.
6. Each person is unique, so each case will be different. Home Office rules sometimes apply differently to different cases, depending on the specific circumstances of the person. That's why you should try not to compare your case to other people's, as this can generate unnecessary anxiety and stress.

## What to do if you are not happy with your legal representative

If you are not satisfied with the service your legal representative has provided, you may be able to complain. A few examples of issues you can complain about are:

- **Severe lack of communication:** for example, if you have been trying to contact your legal representative for a long time (many weeks or even months) without getting a response.
- The legal representative has **not told you** about what they have or have not done.
- Your legal representative has **acted against your wishes**.
- They have **charged you more** than agreed without any explanation.
- Your case has been **delayed for a long time** because your legal representative has not done what they said they would.
- They have **lost your documents**.
- They gave you **poor quality advice** – for example, they told you something that you found out was not correct.

If you want to complain about your legal representative, you must complain to them first before you can get support from an independent organisation. If you have concerns about your case, you should first talk directly to your legal representative, to see if they can resolve your concerns. If this does not help, you can ask to be referred to your legal representative's supervisor. The supervisor's name should be on the client care letter you were given at the start of the process.

Alternatively, you can raise your concerns with the person within the organisation who deals with complaints. Their name should also be on the client care letter. The organisation should give you a response in writing to address your concerns.

You usually have to complain to the advisor directly before seeking help from external organisations. If you are not satisfied with how the legal representative or their organisation have handled your complaint, you can ask the **Legal Ombudsman**:  
<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk>

The Legal Ombudsman is an independent body that deals with poor service. It can order the firm to apologise, refund or reduce your legal fees, or order the firm to pay you compensation. The Legal Ombudsman is independent and impartial.

You will need to provide evidence about the service you received. They can investigate complaints about solicitors, barristers, costs lawyers, legal executives etc. Their website has examples of the complaints they investigate and the support they provide:

<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/information-centre/case-studies>

To make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, go to their website and go to the Make a Complaint page:  
<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/make-a-complaint>



## Support organisations and centres

| ORGANISATION  | SERVICES   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Africa Refugee Community</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London Boroughs of Barnet and Camden</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 8368 9070 / 0795 656 6573</p> <p><b>Email:</b><br/>africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://www.africanrefugeecommunity.co.uk">https://www.africanrefugeecommunity.co.uk</a></p> | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice and information for French, Lingala, Kikongo and Swahili speaking refugees and asylum seekers. Issues covered include immigration, housing, welfare benefits, health, education, well-being and employment. Help with CV preparation.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> French, Lingala, Kikongo and Swahili speaking refugees and people seeking asylum from Africa.</p>  |
| <p><b>Asylum Aid (Part of the Helen Bamber Foundation Group)</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7354 9631</p> <p><b>Email:</b> advice@asylumaid.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://asylumaid.org.uk">https://asylumaid.org.uk</a></p>   | <p><b>Service Offered:</b> Legal representation for people seeking asylum in the UK; children, survivors of trafficking, and stateless people.</p>   |
| <p><b>Bail for Immigration Detainees</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> England, Scotland and Wales</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7456 9750</p> <p><b>Email:</b> enquiries@biduk.org</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.biduk.org">https://www.biduk.org</a></p>  | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Legal advice and information on bail and deportation for immigrants held under immigration powers in detention or in prison. Limited representation of bail applications for the most vulnerable detainees. Covers detention centres and prisons across the UK.</p> <p><b>Target group:</b> Anyone subject to immigration control in the UK and detained under immigration powers in detention centres and prisons.</p> |
| <p><b>British Red Cross-London Refugee Support Team</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7704 5670</p>  | <p><b>Service Offered:</b> Advice and casework support on social welfare entitlements for asylum seekers and refugees, including asylum support, welfare benefits, housing, and community care.</p>  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.redcross.org.uk">https://www.redcross.org.uk</a></p>  | <p>Access to immigration advice and counselling services.</p>  |
| <p><b>Cardinal Hume Centre</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7227 1673</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk">info@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk">https://www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk</a></p>  | <p><b>Service Offered:</b> Immigration advice, welfare benefits &amp; housing, employment &amp; adult learning</p>   |
| <p><b>Community Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (CARAS)</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> South East London</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 8767 5378</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@caras.org.uk">info@caras.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://caras.org.uk/contact">https://caras.org.uk/contact</a></p>   | <p><b>Service offered:</b> They have a range of group activities that support people of all ages to develop their English skills, access services and opportunities, build supportive social networks and to feel welcomed. They work with individuals to make sure that people get the specific support that matches their situation no matter how complex.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugees and asylum seekers</p> |
| <p><b>Community Advice Programme Ealing</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London Borough of Ealing</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 8231 2575 / 020 8231 2576 / 020 8231 2550 / 0208 231 2574</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.wlec.net/cap">https://www.wlec.net/cap</a></p>   | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice and information for the local community on housing, welfare benefits, employment, immigration, debt, and consumer issues. Referrals to specialist advice where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Local community.</p>   |
| <p><b>Detention Action</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> England &amp; Wales</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 0800 587 2096 (detainee freephone) / 020 7226 3114 (office)</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:casework@detentionaction.org.uk">casework@detentionaction.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://detentionaction.org.uk">https://detentionaction.org.uk</a></p> | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Practical and emotional support to people detained at the Colnbrook and Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centres or detained under immigration powers in prisons.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> People detained under immigration powers in detention centres and prisons.</p>   |

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| <p><b>Eritrean Community in the UK</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> For all Eritreans in the UK - mainly operates in Islington, Haringey, Camden and Hackney</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7700 7995 / 0795 116 4558 / 0794 737 3266</p> <p><b>Email:</b> office@ericomuk.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.ericomuk.org.uk">http://www.ericomuk.org.uk</a></p> | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice and information for the Eritrean community, including refugees and people seeking asylum. Subjects include benefits, immigration, housing, social services, training, family issues and education, business set-up. Support groups for women and older people. Supplementary schools, mother tongue classes, cultural and social activities.</p> <p><b>Target group:</b> The Eritrean community, including refugees and people seeking asylum.</p> |
| <p><b>Hackney Migrant Centre</b></p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk">https://hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk</a></p>  | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Free, weekly advice and support service for vulnerable migrants on immigration, housing, welfare, and access to health. Hackney Migrant Centre are OISC accredited. They also offer a cooked meal to all visitors.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> All migrants, regardless of immigration status, nationality, or current place of residence.</p>  |
| <p><b>Haringey Migrant Support Centre</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 4566 7412 / 020 4566 7445</p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@haringeymsc.org</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://haringeymsc.org">http://haringeymsc.org</a></p>  | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Weekly service for migrants offering free immigration advice from legal professionals, and advice, limited casework and signposting services on welfare (e.g., Section 17 and Adult Social Care) and housing issues. Also offers health advice, help in accessing NHS services and a hot meal.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Migrants, including refugees and people seeking asylum</p>   |
| <p><b>IMECE Women's Centre</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> All London</p> <p><b>Public phone:</b> 020 7354 1359 / 020 3227 3592</p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@imece.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.imece.org.uk">http://www.imece.org.uk</a></p>   | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice and support services around immigration, domestic violence, housing, benefits, health and education. Health seminars and some social events. Mental health project (counselling) and crisis intervention. Outreach. Domestic violence capacity building. Telephone advice.</p>   |

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|   | <p><b>Target group:</b> Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot Turkish women and other Turkish speaking women.</p>   |
| <p><b>Indoamerican Refugee and Migrant Organisation (IRMO)</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London (all boroughs).</p> <p><b>Email:</b> mail@irmo.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b> http://irmo.org.uk</p>  | <p><b>Service Provided:</b> They offer a holistic approach spanning four key areas: advice and wellbeing; education, training and employment; children, young people and community. We offer advice in immigration, EU Settlement Scheme support and advice in welfare, housing and taxes. English classes for adults, construction training courses (CSCS card) and employment support and mentoring for adults.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Latin American (and Spanish and Portuguese speaking) migrants</p>  |
| <p><b>Islington Refugee Forum</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London Borough of Islington</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7832 5847</p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@islingtonrefugeeforum.org</p> <p><b>Website:</b> http://islingtonrefugeeforum.org/contact-islington-refugee-forum</p> | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Refugee-led forum aiming to improve the quality of life for refugees in Islington by bringing together refugee community organisations, refugee services, mainstream organisations providing services for refugees, and individual specialists working with refugees.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugee community organisations and other agencies and individuals working with and for refugees.</p>   |
| <p><b>Jesuit Refugee Service</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7488 7310</p> <p><b>Email:</b> uk@jrs.net</p> <p><b>Website:</b> https://www.jrsuk.net</p>  | <p><b>Service offered:</b> JRS UK offers outreach and social visiting to people in Heathrow and Colnbrook Detention Centres, as well as a peer support group for people who have experienced detention. JRS UK provides wrap-around holistic support for destitute asylum seekers registered with our services, including advice and casework, practical support, creative and therapeutic activities, a small hosting scheme, and a specialist legal advice service.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> People seeking asylum who are in detention, formerly detained, and destitute asylum seekers.</p> |

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| <p><b>Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 8694 0323</p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@lrmn.org.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.lrmn.org.uk">https://www.lrmn.org.uk</a></p>  | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice and information for refugees and asylum seekers and migrants. They provide advice on immigration, housing and welfare benefits and gender-based violence. They also provide one-to-one counselling and offer advice on employment and training, advice and support for children and young people as well as a team of advisers supporting Lewisham residents with mental health issues.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugees, people seeking asylum and other migrants, especially those who have experienced trauma due to gender-based violence.</p> |
| <p><b>Migrants Organise</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 8964 4815</p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@migrantsorganise.org</p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://www.migrantsorganise.org/community-programme">https://www.migrantsorganise.org/community-programme</a></p>    | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Their Community Programme is a combination of advice, advocacy, training, mentoring and group activities that create a safe and welcoming environment. They provide advice on immigration, asylum support, welfare benefits, housing and community care.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugees, people seeking asylum and other migrants.</p>  |
| <p><b>Notre Dame Refugee Centre</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London</p> <p><b>Email:</b> info@notredamerc.org.uk</p> <p><b>Public Phone:</b> 020 7388 8198</p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://www.notredamerc.org.uk">https://www.notredamerc.org.uk</a></p> | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice on immigration and asylum applications, housing, benefits and accessing social services is provided on the telephone advice line.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugees and people seeking asylum.</p>  |
| <p><b>Praxis</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7729 7985</p> <p><b>Fax:</b> 020 7729 0134</p> <p>To speak with an adviser, you can call 020 7749 7608 or 020 7749 7605</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.praxis.org.uk">https://www.praxis.org.uk</a></p>          | <p><b>Service Offered:</b> They provide expert support to migrants and refugees in the UK. Immigration and housing advice. Support for migrants facing homelessness, as well, as survivors of trafficking and domestic violence, young people, EU citizens and long-term residents struggling to find the support they need.</p>   |

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| <p><b>Rainbow Migration</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 3752 5801</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:hello@rainbowmigration.org.uk">hello@rainbowmigration.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://www.rainbowmigration.org.uk">https://www.rainbowmigration.org.uk</a></p>   | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Practical and emotional support to improve self-esteem and confidence, reduce isolation, and help access health services and housing. Specialist legal information and advice to LGBTQI+ people who are seeking asylum or making partnership applications to live in the UK with their partners. They have partnerships with several law firms to refer people for quality legal representation.</p> <p><b>Target group:</b> LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum.</p> |
| <p><b>Renewal Programme Ltd.'s Refugee and Migrant Project (RAMP)</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 8471 6954</p> <p><b>Website:</b><br/><a href="https://www.renewalprogramme.org.uk">https://www.renewalprogramme.org.uk</a></p>   | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice and support for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants on benefits and housing. Support for people with no recourse to public funds, including food parcels and second-hand clothes.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugees, people seeking asylum, and other migrants.</p>   |
| <p><b>Rights of Women</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> England &amp; Wales</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 020 7251 6577 (Family Law Advice Line)</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:casework@detentionaction.org.uk">casework@detentionaction.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://rightsofwomen.org.uk">https://rightsofwomen.org.uk</a></p> | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Advice lines all open at different times – Family Law advice on 2 different phone lines, Criminal Advice on another, Immigration and asylum advice (Main Immigration Line, EU Settlement Scheme, Professionals' Advice Line) and Sexual Harassment at work.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Women.</p>  |
| <p><b>Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers</b></p> <p><b>Area served:</b> London - Southwark</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:office@sdcas.org.uk">office@sdcas.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Public Phone:</b> 020 7732 0505</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.sdcas.org.uk">https://www.sdcas.org.uk</a></p>                            | <p><b>Service offered:</b> Through general advice and help we hope to facilitate access to a range of mainstream services, with particular emphasis on health, housing, employment, training, education and asylum issues.</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Refugees and people seeking asylum in the London Borough of Southwark.</p>  |





**THE JOINT COUNCIL**  
*for* **THE WELFARE**  
**OF IMMIGRANTS**

JCWI is an independent charity campaigning for justice and fairness in immigration, nationality and asylum policy since 1967

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