

Home Affairs Committee

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From the Committee Chair

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
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21 April 2020

Dear Home Secretary,

You will be aware that the Home Affairs Committee has held a number of evidence sessions examining the Home Office's preparations for and reactions to the Covid-19 crisis across a range of areas. We have already written to you regarding extending the NHS visa arrangement to social care workers.

We intend to discuss issues which have arisen at our evidence sessions next week (Wednesday 29 April), but wanted to seek the earliest possible responses to some important questions that emerged in our evidence session today on the NHS visa extensions, where swift clarification would be helpful for healthcare workers.

- Could you confirm whether the offer of automatic fee-free visa extensions will apply to NHS staff on all kinds of visas or just to those on Tier 2 visas?
- Will the one-year visa extension apply to all NHS staff (including support staff such as porters and cleaners, and students who are now working in NHS frontline services)? Will it also include agency or 'bank' staff currently working for the NHS?
- Will the offers of visa extensions, to NHS staff and to those whose visas are expiring before the end of May, be confirmed by statutory instrument? If not, what will be the legal basis for these extensions?
- Will those to whom visa extensions apply be contacted directly by the Home Office or will they need to make applications?
- Will formal guidance on the visa extensions policies be published?

- What provisions are in place for non-UK family members of an NHS worker who dies of Covid-19? Will they be subject to further applications or fees to remain in the UK?

I would be grateful for your response at the earliest opportunity and by Tuesday 28 April.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvette Cooper', written in a cursive style.

Yvette Cooper MP