

POSTAL CLAIMS

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1. Introduction

Any applicant present in the United Kingdom who makes an 'initial' claim for asylum is required to attend the Asylum Screening Unit (ASU) for a screening interview before their claim is recorded and processed. This requirement became effective on 8 February 2003. In some exceptional circumstances the UK Border Agency may waive this requirement and arrange for the screening and recording of the application to occur locally to where the applicant is residing.

If a failed asylum seeker who is appeal right exhausted makes any representations by post after the 13 October 2009 they should be informed that further submissions are no longer accepted by post and they must submit them in person. See the Asylum Instruction on [Further Submissions](#).

If the postal application is from a dependant of an asylum applicant/failed asylum seeker, (a swap-over case'), then follow the Asylum Instruction [Handling Swap Over Claims](#).

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2. When is a postal claim valid

In order for a postal claim to be valid it **must** have been received on or before 8 February 2003. A valid postal claim for asylum received on or before 8 February 2003, or with a post mark date from Royal Mail of 7 February 2003 or before, should be treated in accordance with previous guidance.

Where the date of the postal claim precedes 8 February 2003 but was not postmarked by Royal Mail until on or after 8 February 2003, the new procedures should be followed.

2.01 Historical Information

All postal claims from any area were accepted prior to the 31st July 2000. Thereafter until 8 February 2003 **only** postal applications received from outside the London Boroughs were accepted. From that date **no** applications were accepted by post.

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3. Asylum Applications Received by Post

Since 08 February 2003 asylum applications have not been accepted by post and all individuals wishing to make an asylum claim have been required to attend for a screening interview before their claim is recorded and processed.

On 01 December 2007 the Immigration Rules changed. From this date claims for international protection should be construed to be an asylum application and the applicant required to attend the Asylum Screening Unit for a screening interview before the claim is recorded and processed. Where a stand alone article 3 protection related claim was received by post before 01 December 2007, the applicant should be invited to attend the Asylum Screening Unit for their application to be recorded and processed as an asylum claim.

Written correspondence received by the UK Border Agency from an individual wishing to claim asylum or who requests international protection should **not** be accepted and recorded as an asylum claim on CID and will not be counted for statistical purposes.

The original correspondence with any supporting documents should be returned to the 'would-be' applicant accompanied by a Rejection of Postal Claim letter (ASL.1036) to refuse the postal application. The applicant should be instructed to attend the Asylum Screening Unit (ASU) to lodge an application.

3.01 Asylum Screening Unit

A claim for asylum should be made at the screening unit where the claim can be registered and processed. The Asylum Screening Unit is located at:

Lunar House
40 Wellesley Road
Croydon
CR9 2BY

Also see the Asylum Instruction Registering an Asylum Application in the United Kingdom where information on booking an appointment in advance can be found.

Any general enquiries should be made to the Immigration Enquiry Bureau (IEB) on 0870 606 7766.

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3.1 Correspondence Received in the Document Management Centre (DMC)

Postal claims received in the Document Management Centre should be returned to the sender, along with any accompanying documents and an ASL.1036 – Rejection of Postal Claim letter.

At this stage, details of the correspondence or the applicant should **not** be recorded on CID and a Home Office asylum file should **not** be raised. The DMC will not keep copies of correspondence received.

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3.2 Further Correspondence Received by DMC

If a response to the rejection letter is received describing circumstances, why a 'would be' applicant is unable to attend the ASU, the correspondence should be forwarded to the Regional Asylum Team (Team 1) nearest to where the applicant resides. This should then be passed according to local practice to the nominated team. The case owner assigned the representations should then decide if the circumstances are exceptional. For further information on exceptional circumstances see [Applicants unable to travel to the Asylum Screening Unit](#).

If the Asylum Team considers that the circumstances are not exceptional, the correspondence along with any supporting documents should be returned to the sender by the Asylum Team, with an ASL.1036 – Rejection of Postal Claim letter, advising the applicant to attend the Asylum Screening Unit to register their claim.

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3.3 Correspondence Received in the Asylum Team

In the event that correspondence is received by an asylum team, indicating an applicant wishes to make an asylum claim, the correspondence along with any supporting documents should be returned to the sender by the asylum team, with an ASL.1036 – Rejection of Postal Claim letter.

Where the correspondence indicates circumstances which prohibit a 'would be' applicant from attending the Asylum Screening Unit in person to make a claim, the Asylum Team should request evidence (if this has not been provided). On receipt of the evidence, the Asylum Team should decide if the circumstances are exceptional, then liaise with the Local Enforcement Office (LEO) to make alternative screening arrangements. For further information see [Applicants Unable to Travel to the Asylum Screening Unit](#).

3.4 Correspondence Received from Detained or Imprisoned Applicants

Any postal asylum applications received from individuals who are detained or imprisoned should be sent to the Criminal Casework Directorate (CCD) for further action. At this stage, a Home Office asylum file should **not** be raised.

The Criminal Casework Directorate (CCD) will in some circumstances accept a postal application from prisoners. A postal application accepted by CCD will be recorded on CID.

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4. Applicants Unable to Travel to the Asylum Screening Unit

In some exceptional circumstances it may be possible for an applicant who is unable to travel to the Asylum Screening Unit to have their claim registered and processed at a local enforcement unit, with the agreement of the Local Enforcement Office (LEO). Examples of an exceptional circumstance could be where an applicant or one of their dependants has a disability or a serious illness or is otherwise physically incapable of travelling to the ASU in Croydon.

4.01 Cases where Exceptional Circumstances have been mentioned

Correspondence detailing serious or exceptional circumstances stating that an applicant has a disability or where other exceptional circumstances prevail, for example a severe illness, which prevents the individual from making a claim in person and where satisfactory evidence is provided, should be forwarded to Asylum Team 1 in the region the applicant resides in. The representations will be assigned to a case owner who will decide if exceptional circumstances apply and if so will liaise with the LEO and offer an alternative screening arrangement or location to the individual. Alternative screening may involve a visit to the applicant's home or hospital to record the asylum claim.

It should be noted that having insufficient funds or inconvenience is not an acceptable reason for a person not being able to make a claim in person.

It should also be noted that an asylum file should not be raised and the claim should not be recorded on CID until the individual is screened. Once the applicant has been screened, the claim should be recorded on CID.

The Asylum Team should keep records of the number of exceptional circumstances cases that have been accepted.

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5. Where Evidence exists that a Postal Claim was made Prior to 08 February 2003

If the applicant submits a copy of a postal claim and provides satisfactory recorded or registered delivery details, or an officer becomes aware of a letter or correspondence attached to a family member or associated persons file that has not been responded to dated prior to 8 February 2003 and it is considered that the postal application is valid then the Asylum Register of the NAM+ Programme should be contacted for further advice.

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6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
ASL.1036	Letter to be sent to applicant to applicant to refuse a postal application
ASU	Asylum Screening Unit
CID	Case Information Database
CCD	Criminal Casework Directorate
CRD	Case Resolution Directorate
DMC	Document Management Centre
FCU	File Creation Unit
LEO	Local Enforcement Offices

Document Control

Change Record

Version	Authors	Date	Change Reference
1.0	Unknown	08/02/03	
2.0	Unknown	00/01/05	
3.0	M-A. M	Feb 2008	Amendments to process
4.0	G Trimmer	30/10/08	Update branding and hyperlink change
5.0	M-A.M	09/10/09	Amendments following ASU Liverpool re-designation