



Home Office

Handling MPs' and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

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About this guidance

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Correspondence response targets</p> <p>Receipt and allocation of correspondence</p> <p>Contributions to replies from case owners</p> <p>Effects on removals process</p> <p>Drafting a response</p> <p>Actions following a reponse from case owners</p> <p>Enquiries from family members or sponsors</p> <p>'In confidence' replies</p> <p>Cases without a case owner</p>	<p>This guidance tells criminal casework (CC) caseworkers how MPs' correspondence must be managed.</p> <p>The guidance also covers the 'treat as official' process for correspondence from other sources.</p> <p>A 'treat as official' letter comes from a member of the public to one of the following people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Queen• the Prime Minister• a minister• a member of the Home Office senior board. <p>Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.</p> <p>Contacts – This page tells you who to contact for help if your senior caseworker or line manager can't answer your question.</p> <p>Information owner – This page tells you about this version of the guidance and who owns it.</p> <p>Safeguard and promote child welfare – This page explains your duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and tells you where to find more information.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

Changes to this guidance

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Handling MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

Correspondence response targets

About this guidance	<p>This page tells you the deadlines for replies to correspondence received by criminal casework (CC) from MPs.</p> <p>MPs deal directly with the Home Secretary, ministers, or a director, to request information on individual CC cases or casework policy and processes.</p> <p>The Home Office uses the Cabinet Office target to deal with correspondence in 20 calendar days, and a drafting target of 12 days for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MPs' correspondence• Treat as official (TO) correspondence. <p>CC send the ministerial correspondence teams weekly 'league tables' to senior directors every month.</p>	
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Receipt and allocation of correspondence

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Correspondence response targets</p> <p>Receipt and allocation of correspondence</p> <p>Contributions to replies from case owners</p> <p>Effects on removals process</p> <p>Drafting a response</p> <p>Actions following a reponse from case owners</p> <p>Enquiries from family members or sponsors</p> <p>'In confidence' replies</p> <p>Cases without a case owner</p>	<p>This page tells you the step-by-step process for receiving and allocating MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence relating to criminal casework (CC) cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MP's letters are sent to the Home Office and tracked through the correspondence tracking system (CTS) to CC.• Treat as official correspondence is sent separately to the CC briefing and correspondence team (BCT).• The BCT manager decides if the letter is considered a barrier to removal. If it is, they update the CID record to reflect this.• The manager finds out if the case has a current owner and emails you and your team leader a copy of the letter to ask for information to allow BCT to draft a reply. You must complete the required actions to allow BCT to draft a response.• Team leaders are expected to action or allocate any cases to an alternative team member if you are absent. Assistant directors must make sure the team leader's role is covered in their absence.	
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Handling MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

Contributions to replies from case owners

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Correspondence response targets</p> <p>Receipt and allocation of correspondence</p> <p>Contributions to replies from case owners</p> <p>Effects on removals process</p> <p>Drafting a response</p> <p>Actions following a response from case owners</p> <p>Enquiries from family members or sponsors</p> <p>'In confidence' replies</p> <p>Cases without a case owner</p>	<p>This page tells the briefing and correspondence team (BCT) how to handle incoming correspondence relating to criminal casework (CC) cases.</p> <p>The BCT forward the letter to you by email, after checking CID, for a contribution to allow for a more informed response to the letter.</p> <p>You must provide full information to the BCT within four working days. These timescales must be met so CC can meet target deadlines and allow the following areas enough time to review responses before issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ministerial correspondence units• ministers and their private offices, or• Home Office directors. <p>If a decision or action is required, you must agree a reasonable deadline, and include it in the letter. Once you have agreed the deadline you must make sure you meet it. In these cases, the letter must be copied to the assistant director for information. BCT must include a diary entry to check the action or decision is taken by the agreed deadline.</p> <p>You must make sure contributions are accurate and a full response is provided to prevent any possible delays.</p> <p>A key task is to assess the information contained in the MP's enquiry, particularly if they are making representations. This will allow the BCT to include the following statements in the response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'These representations have now been taken into account', or• 'These representations have already been taken into account and refused in our letter'	
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of [DD/MM/YY].'

If the response to the MP gives details of a decision expected to be made in the future the MP must be informed when that decision is made. For CC 'a decision' is defined as:

- deportation
- asylum
- removal, or
- grant of leave.

BCT will contact the MP's office by telephone or email to notify the decision made.

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Effect on the removals process

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Correspondence response targets</p> <p>Receipt and allocation of correspondence</p> <p>Contributions to replies from case owners</p> <p>Effects on removals process</p> <p>Drafting a response</p> <p>Actions following a reponse from case owners</p> <p>Enquiries from family members or sponsors</p> <p>'In confidence' replies</p> <p>Cases without a case owner</p>	<p>This page tells you how correspondence from MPs or treat as official sources, affects the removals process for criminal casework (CC) cases.</p> <p>An MP's letter can be a barrier to removal and a reply must be sent to the MP by email or fax before the removal process continues.</p> <p>Briefing and correspondence team (BCT) staff make every effort to make sure a reply is sent quickly to allow a removal to go ahead, and private office arrange a ministerial signature if appropriate.</p> <p>In all cases if the letter constitutes a barrier to removal and CID shows removal directions (RDs) are set for that day, the correspondence manager must work with operational support and certification unit (OSCU). This is to negotiate further action in line with the service level agreement between OSCU and CC.</p> <p>Home Office policy is to encourage contact from MPs by email or telephone. If an MP sends an email or makes a telephone call to the MPs hotline, they must be directed to BCT and dealt with urgently.</p>	
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Handling MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

Drafting a response

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Correspondence response targets</p> <p>Receipt and allocation of correspondence</p> <p>Contributions to replies from case owners</p> <p>Effects on removals process</p> <p>Drafting a response</p> <p>Actions following a reponse from case owners</p> <p>Enquiries from family members or sponsors</p> <p>'In confidence' replies</p> <p>Cases without a case owner</p>	<p>This page tells you what information is required for replies in MPs' and treat as official correspondence relating to criminal casework (CC) cases.</p> <p>When they draft a reply, the briefing and correspondence team (BCT) will ask you for the information they require. You must pass the response to a senior caseworker to review before it is submitted to BCT if the query involves a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• contentious issue, or• a matter of policy or law.	
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Handling MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

Actions following a response from case owners

About this guidance	<p>This page tells the briefing and correspondence team (BCT) what actions to take after they request information from a criminal casework (CC) case owner.</p>	
Correspondence response targets	<p>It is the CC caseworker's responsibility to make sure the information is concise and accurate as BCT do not perform secondary checks.</p>	
Receipt and allocation of correspondence	<p>The BCT drafting officer produces a file minute and a response letter based on the information CC provide. If they require further information they will contact CC directly.</p>	
Contributions to replies from case owners	<p>The letter and file minute are passed to a BCT senior caseworker to quality assure. If approved, the letter is sent to the correspondent by the correspondence manager using the correspondence tracking system (CTS).</p>	
Effects on removals process	<p>Once the letter is answered, BCT send the CC caseworker a copy of the final reply for information. You must file the copy of the response, with a copy of the original letter, on the Home Office file.</p>	
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Enquiries from family members or sponsors

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	<p>If the briefing and correspondence team (BCT) decide the information must not be disclosed they will contact the MPs office and inform the MP they will receive a third party response and the reason why.</p> <p>For more information see related link: 04.0 - Disclosure of personal information to third parties.</p>	
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Handling MP's and 'treat as official' correspondence for CC cases

'In confidence' replies

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Cases without a case owner

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Contact

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Information owner

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