

The phased re-opening of UK visa application centres – What you need to know

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CATEGORY:
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From March of this year, immigration to the UK came to an abrupt halt when the Home Office made the unprecedented decision to close all UK visa application centres ('VACs') and globally suspend immigration services.

Phase 1 & Phase 2

On 1 June 2020, UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) introduced 'Phase 1' of resuming their services, thereby making the decision to re-open certain UK and overseas VACs. On 22 June 2020, UKVI transitioned into 'Phase 2', with the re-opening of additional overseas VACs, where local conditions allowed.

Phase 3 & Phase 4

As part of 'Phase 3', an additional wave of UK VACs (also known as Service Points in the UK) re-opened on 29 June 2020.

'Phase 4' continued with the opening of 8 brand-new UK VACs / Service Points on 13 July, and the resumption of services in certain Asian countries.

'Phase 4' continues with the much anticipated re-opening of VACs in both the USA and Canada, in addition to further VACs re-opening in the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia and the Pacific regions.

Phase 5

'Phase 5' bears witness to VACs re-opening for the first time in certain South American countries, including Bolivia, Brazil, and Mexico. Local Covid-19 regulations have seen VACs in the USA (on the east coast), Australia, and Papua New Guinea close again until further notice.

The 'fine print'

Application centres in the UK:

UK application centres are still not offering Priority or Super Priority services to process applications. VIP mobile appointments (where the biometrics team come to an applicant's location) have resumed, however appointments are not available until the end of September.

UK Visa & Citizenship Application Services (UKVCAS) have opened their booking system to those individuals who submitted their applications on or before 31 July 2020. Eligible applicants should have received an email from UKVCAS with a request and instructions on how to book an appointment.

The appointment booking service is currently displaying dates up to 13 September 2020. Please note that dates past this point are not being released as of yet.

In an attempt to deal with the demand for biometric appointments caused by the backlog of applications submitted prior to and during lockdown, UKVI has introduced a new system whereby certain eligible applicants who have provided their fingerprints (as part of a previous visa application) will not have to attend an appointment, and will instead be permitted to provide their biometric photograph digitally via email. If eligible, these applicants will be emailed by UKVCAS explaining the required next steps.

Application centres outside the UK:

Priority and Super Priority visa services have resumed in some overseas application centres. If available, applicants will be able to purchase these services when booking their appointment online.

Some application centres are only rebooking appointments for existing applicants, while others are booking appointments for new visa applications. We advise checking the latest information for the country where you are submitting your application; on the [TLS contact website](#) (for Europe, Africa, and parts of the Middle East) and the [VFS Global website](#) (for all other countries).

USA

UK visa applicants in the States have the option to book their biometric appointments at either a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) Application Support Center (ASC) or a VFS Global Premium Application Centre (PAC). A fee must be paid to book an appointment at a PAC.

VFS Global PACs initially re-opened on 13 July (with the exception of the Seattle PAC, which will be re-opening on 17 August) and USCIS ASCs across the States re-opened on 13 July, with additional PACs and ASCs continue to re-open in fortnightly waves (where local conditions allow).

Appointments for both PACs and ASCs are now available on the VFS Global online portal, which applicants are automatically taken to once their applications have been submitted and all relevant fees paid for. This applies both to those applicants who have already submitted their online applications (but have been unable to book their biometric appointments), and also to new applicants.

Canada

VFS Global re-opened the Canadian VACs on 17 July, and appointments are now available (to both new and existing applicants) on their online portal.

List of visa application centres in the UK and overseas

The following comprises a list of all in-country and overseas UK VACs that have re-opened or are due to re-open, arranged by region of the world.

Please continue to monitor this page and sign up to receive our email alerts to receive notifications of changes as and when they occur.

UK - Opening Dates

Aberdeen - w/c 31 August
Bath - new VAC - 3 August
Bedford - Autumn 2020
Belfast (core) - 22 June
Birmingham (Core) - 1 June
Birmingham (Her Majesty's Passport Office) - 3 August
Birmingham (Premium Lounge) - 1 June
Birmingham - Bull Street - new VAC - 27 July
Bournemouth - 3 August
Bristol (Bradley Stoke) - 28 September
Burnley - Autumn 2020
Cambridge - 14 September
Canterbury - Autumn 2020
Cardiff (Library) - 27 July
Cardiff Bay (Core) - 22 June
Chelmsford - 1 June
Coventry - 28 September
Eastbourne - Autumn 2020
Edinburgh - 22 June
Exeter - 1 June
Glasgow (Core) - 22 June
Gloucester - 24 August
Guildford - new VAC - 1 July
Hemel Hempstead (Library) - 28 September
Hull (Library) - 20 July
Ipswich (Library) - 6 July
Leeds - 1 June
Liverpool - Autumn 2020
Llandudno - w/c 31 August
London - Barbican - Autumn 2020
London - Belgrave Road - new VAC - 27 July
London - Croydon (Core) - 1 June
London - Croydon 2 - new VAC - 13 July
London - Edmonton Green (Library) - 20 July
London - Enfield (Library) - 20 July

London – Her Majesty’s Passport Office – 3 August
London – Lansdowne Road – new VAC – 13 July
London – (Premium Lounge) – 1 June
London – Mark Lane (ESP) – 1 June
London – Shoe Lane – Autumn 2020
London – Stratford – 24 August
London – Victoria – 1 June
Luton – new VAC – 13 July
Maidstone – New VAC – 1 July
Manchester (Library) – 20 July
Manchester (Core) – 22 June
Manchester Fountain Street (ESP) – 1 June
Newcastle (Library) – 20 July
Newport – Autumn 2020
Norwich – new VAC – 13 July
Norwich Library – Autumn 2020
Nottingham – new VAC – 1 July
Nottingham Library – 28 September
Peterborough – w/c 31 August
Preston – Autumn 2020
Reading – 11 August
Sheffield – 1 June
Southampton – 1 June
Stockport – Autumn 2020
Sunderland – new VAC – 13 July
Swindon (Library) – 20 July
Swinton (Yorkshire) – Autumn 2020
Taunton (Library) – 20 July
Wakefield – 14 September
Wolverhampton – 24 August

Europe and Central Asia – Opening Dates

Albania (Tirana) – 29 June
Armenia (Yerevan) – 29 June
Austria (Vienna) – 29 June
Azerbaijan (Baku) – 22 June
Belarus (Minsk) – 1 June
Belgium (Brussels) – 22 June
Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo) – 29 June
Bulgaria (Sofia) – 29 June
Croatia (Zagreb) – 27 July
Cyprus (Nicosia-South) – 29 June
Czech Republic (Prague) – 29 June
Denmark (Copenhagen) – 29 June
Estonia (Tallinn) – 3 August
Finland (Helsinki) – 3 August
France (Paris) – 22 June
Germany (Berlin) – 1 June
Germany (Dusseldorf) – 1 June
Germany (Munich) – 1 June
Georgia (Tbilisi) – 29 June
Greece (Athens) – 29 June
Hungary (Budapest) – 29 June
Iceland (Reykjavik) – 29 June
Ireland (Dublin) – 29 June
Italy (Rome) – 29 June
Kazakhstan (Almaty) – 29 June
Kazakhstan (Nur Sultan) – 29 June
Kosovo (Pristina) – 29 June
Latvia (Riga) – 3 August
Lithuania (Vilnius) – 3 August
Macedonia (Skopje) – 29 June
Malta (Valletta) – 27 July
Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar) – 27 July
Montenegro (Podgorica) – 29 June
Netherlands (Amsterdam) – 29 June
Norway (Oslo) – 29 June
Poland (Warsaw) – 29 June
Portugal (Lisbon) – 22 June
Romania (Bucharest) – 29 June
Russia (Ekaterinburg) – 29 June
Russia (Moscow) – 29 June
Russia (Novosibirsk) – 29 June
Russia (Rostov) – 29 June
Russia (St Petersburg) – 29 June

Serbia (Belgrade) – 22 June
Slovenia (Ljubljana) – 27 July
Spain (Barcelona) – 22 June
Spain (Madrid) – 22 June
Sweden (Stockholm) – 29 June
Switzerland (Geneva) – 22 June
Turkey (Adana) – 22 June
Turkey (Ankara) – 22 June
Turkey (Antalya) – 29 June
Turkey (Bursa) – 22 June
Turkey (Gaziantep) – 22 June
Turkey (Istanbul) – 22 June
Turkey (Izmir) – 22 June
Ukraine (Kiev) – 1 June

Canada - Opening Dates

Toronto – 17 July
Edmonton – 17 July
Ottawa – 17 July
Vancouver – 17 July
Halifax – 17 July – appointments to become available in August
St. John's – 17 July – appointments to become available in August

USA - VFS PACs - Opening Dates

New York – 13 July
Atlanta – 13 July
Boston – 13 July
Chicago – 13 July
Houston – 13 July
Los Angeles – now closed until further notice
Miami – 13 July
San Francisco – now closed until further notice
Seattle – re-opening again on 17 August
Washington DC – 13 July

USA - USCIS ASCs - Opening Dates

Alabama
Birmingham – 27 July

Alaska
Anchorage – 27 July

Arizona
Phoenix – 20 July
Tucson – 27 July
Yuma – 27 July

Arkansas
Fort Smith – 27 July

California
Bakersfield – 27 July
Bellflower – 27 July
Buena Park – 27 July
El Monte – 20 July
Fresno – 27 July
Gardena – 27 July
Imperial – 27 July
La Brea – 27 July
Los Angeles – 20 July
Modesto – 27 July
Oxnard – 27 July
Pomona – 27 July
Riverside – 20 July
Sacramento – 20 July
Salinas – 27 July
Santa Rosa – 27 July
San Diego – 27 July
San Fernando – 20 July
San Francisco – 20 July
San Marcos – 27 July
Tustin – 20 July

Colorado
Denver - 20 July
Grand Junction - 27 July - will be permanently closing on 28 August

Connecticut
Hartford - 27 July

Delaware
Dover - 27 July

Florida
Central Miami (formerly Hialeah) - 20 July
Ft. Lauderdale - 20 July
Fort Myers - 27 July
Jacksonville - 20 July
Kendall - 20 July
Tampa - 20 July
West Palm Beach - 20 July

Guam
Guam - 27 July

Hawaii
Honolulu - 27 July

Idaho
Boise - 27 July
Idaho Falls (1 week per month) - 27 July

Illinois
Chicago - South - 27 July
Naperville - 20 July
Norridge - 20 July
Waukegan - 27 July

Indiana
Indianapolis - 20 July
Michigan City - 27 July

Iowa
Des Moines - 27 July

Kansas
Wichita - 27 July

Kentucky
Louisville - 27 July

Louisiana
New Orleans - 20 July

Maine
Portland - 27 July

Maryland
Baltimore - 20 July
Salisbury - 27 July
Wheaton - 20 July

Massachusetts
Lawrence - 27 July

Michigan
Detroit - 20 July
Grand Rapids - 27 July

Minnesota
Duluth (1 week per month) - 11 August
St. Paul - 20 July

Mississippi
Jackson - 27 July

Missouri
Kansas City – 27 July
St. Louis – 27 July

Montana
Helena – 27 July

Nebraska
Omaha – 27 July

Nevada
Las Vegas – 20 July
Nevada – 27 July

New Hampshire
Manchester – 27 July

New Jersey
Hackensack – 20 July

New Mexico
Albuquerque – 27 July

New York
Albany – 27 July
Bronx – 20 July
Buffalo – 27 July
Happauge – 20 July
Jamaica/Queens – 20 July
Long Island – 20 July
Manhattan – 20 July
Port Chester – 20 July
Syracuse – 27 July

North Dakota
Fargo – 27 July

North Carolina
Charlotte – 20 July
Raleigh – 20 July

Northern Mariana Islands
Saipan – 25 August

Ohio
Cincinnati – 27 July
Cleveland – 27 July
Columbus – 20 July

Oklahoma
Oklahoma City – 27 July

Oregon
Portland – 20 July

Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh – 27 July
York – 27 July

Puerto Rico
San Juan – 5 August

Rhode Island
Providence – 27 July

South Carolina
Charleston – 27 July
Greer – 27 July

South Dakota
Rapid City – 27 July
Sioux Falls – 27 July

Tennessee
Memphis – 27 July
Nashville – 20 July

Texas
Austin – 20 July
Dallas South – 27 July
El Paso – 27 July
Fort Worth – 20 July
Harlingen – 27 July
Houston Northwest – 20 July
Houston Southeast – 20 July
Laredo – 27 July
Lubbock – 27 July
McAllen – 5 August
San Antonio – 27 July

U.S. Virgin Islands
St. Croix (1 week per month) – 25 August
St. Thomas – 27 July

Utah
Salt Lake City – 20 July

Vermont
St. Albans – 27 July

Virginia
Norfolk – 27 July

Washington
Spokane – 27 July
Yakima – 27 July

West Virginia
Charleston – 27 July

Wisconsin
Milwaukee – 27 July

Wyoming
Casper (1 week per month) – 18 August

South America – Opening Dates

Bolivia (La Paz) – 27 July
Brazil (Rio de Janeiro) – 27 July
Brazil (Sao Paulo) – 27 July
Guyana (Georgetown) – 28 July
Mexico (Mexico City) – 27 July

Caribbean Sea – Opening Dates

Jamaica (Kingston) – 27 July
Trinidad & Tobago (Port of Spain) – 28 July

Africa – Opening Dates

Angola (Luanda) – 29 June
Botswana (Gaborone) – 29 June
Cameroon (Yaoundé) – 13 July
Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa) – 27 July
Ethiopia (Addis Ababa) – 29 June
Gambia (Banjul) – 22 June
Ghana (Accra) – 5 August
Kenya (Mombasa) – 29 June
Kenya (Nairobi) – 29 June
Madagascar (Antananarivo)* – 29 June
Malawi (Lilongwe) – 29 June
Mauritius (Port Louis) – 27 July
Mozambique (Maputo) – 29 June
Namibia (Windhoek) – 29 June
Nigeria (Abuja) – 27 July
Nigeria (Ikeja) – 27 July
Nigeria (Victoria Island) – 27 July
Rwanda (Kigali) – 29 June
Senegal (Dakar) – 13 July
Sierra Leone (Freetown) – 13 July

South Africa (Cape Town) – 13 July
South Africa (Durban) – 13 July
South Africa (Johannesburg) – 13 July
South Africa (Port Elizabeth) – 13 July
Tanzania (Dar es Salaam) – 29 June
Uganda (Kampala) – 29 June
Zambia (Lusaka) – 29 June
Zimbabwe (Harare) – 29 June

- The Antananarivo VAC will be closing again on 9 July 2020 until further notice due to a local rise in Covid-19 cases

East Asia and Pacific – Opening Dates

Australia (Brisbane) – 1 June
Australia (Canberra) – 1 June
Australia (Melbourne)** – 1 June
Australia (Perth) – 1 June
Australia (Sydney) – 1 June
Brunei (Bandar Seri Begawan) – 22 June
Cambodia (Phnom Penh) – 22 June
China (Beijing) – 1 June
China (Changsha) – 22 June
China (Chengdu) – 22 June
China (Chongqing) – 1 June
China (Fuzhou) – 22 June
China (Guangzhou) – 1 June
China (Jinan) – 22 June
China (Kunming) – 22 June
China (Hangzhou) – 22 June
China (Nanjing) – 22 June
China (Shanghai) – 1 June
China (Shenyang) – 22 June
China (Shenzhen) – 22 June
China (Wuhan) – 22 June
China (Xi'an) – 22 June
China SAR (Hong Kong) – 1 June
Fiji (Suva) – 1 June
Indonesia (Bali) – 6 July
Indonesia (Jakarta) – 6 July
Indonesia (Surabaya) – 6 July
Japan (Osaka) – 22 June
Japan (Tokyo) – 22 June
Laos (Vientiane) – 10 July
Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur) – 1 June
Malaysia (Sabah) – 30 July
Myanmar (Yangon) – 6 July
New Zealand (Auckland) – 22 June
Papua New Guinea (Port Moresby)*** – 9 July
Philippines (Manila) – 22 June
Singapore – 29 June
South Korea (Seoul) – 22 June
Thailand (Bangkok) – 1 June
Thailand (Chiang Mai) – 22 June
Taiwan (Taipei) – 1 June
Vietnam (Danang) – 22 June
Vietnam (Hanoi) – 22 June
Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City) – 22 June

- The Melbourne VAC closed temporarily on 6 August 2020 until further notice due to local Covid-19 regulations.
 - The Papua New Guinea VAC closed temporarily on 30 July 2020 until further notice in accordance with local Covid-19 regulations.

Middle East and North Africa – Opening Dates

Algeria (Algiers) – 13 July
Algeria (Oran) – 13 July
Bahrain (Manama) – 28 June
Egypt (Alexandria) – 22 June
Egypt (Cairo) – 22 June
Iran (Tehran) – 26 July
Iraq (Baghdad) – 13 July
Iraq (Basra) – 13 July
Iraq (Erbil) – 13 July
Israel (Tel Aviv) – 29 June
Jordan (Amman) – 22 June
Kuwait (Kuwait City) – 28 June

Lebanon (Beirut) – now closed until further notice
Morocco (Rabat) – 29 June
Occupied Palestinian Territory (Jerusalem) – 29 June
Qatar (Doha) – 5 July
Saudi Arabia (Al Khobar) – 28 June
Saudi Arabia (Jeddah) – 28 June
Saudi Arabia (Riyadh) – 28 June
Tunisia (Tunis) – 22 June
United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi) – 28 June
United Arab Emirates (Dubai) – 28 June

South Asia – Opening Dates

Bangladesh (Dhaka) – 13 July
Bangladesh (Sylhet) – 13 July
Bhutan (Thimphu) – 27 July
India (Ahmedabad) – 6 July
India (Bengaluru – Global Tech Park) – closed until further notice
India (Chandigarh) – 6 July
India (Chennai) – 6 July
India (Jalandhar) – 6 July
India (Kochi/Cochin) – 6 July
India (Hyderabad) – 6 July
India (Kolkata) – 6 July
India (Mumbai South) – 6 July
India (New Delhi – Shivaji Metro Stadium) – 6 July
India (Pune) – 6 July
Pakistan (Islamabad) – 27 July
Pakistan (Karachi) – 27 July
Pakistan (Lahore) – 27 July
Sri Lanka (Colombo) – 6 July


The Home Office are making changes on a daily basis. It is therefore important to ensure that decisions made are based on up-to-date guidance. Please do not hesitate to contact the [Withers UK Immigration Team](#) with any queries or concerns you may have.

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