

Your rights in the AIDS era. 10, Immigration / Immunity.

Contributors

Immunity (Charity)

Publication/Creation

1989.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/hwjhdx86>

License and attribution

Conditions of use: it is possible this item is protected by copyright and/or related rights. You are free to use this item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s).

**wellcome
collection**

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

immunity

Society for HIV Research and Education

**YOUR
RIGHTS
IN THE
AIDS
ERA**

ISSN 0954-8130

10. Immigration

This leaflet aims to give you an idea of what may happen if you want – or someone you love wants – to come to this country either temporarily or permanently. And what happens if either of you are already here and find yourself affected by HIV or AIDS.

The UK's immigration policy on HIV and AIDS is comparatively liberal. It compares favourably with the best policies of other countries.

But there is nothing in the Immigration Rules about HIV or AIDS – so what happens depends on policy decisions by the government. We hope these will not become more restrictive.

Does having HIV infection or AIDS – or any of the conditions associated with them – mean I can't join relatives in the UK?

Husbands, wives and children under 18 who are entering the UK to join a person settled here shouldn't be refused entry on medical grounds. Other relatives can be refused entry on medical grounds. But the present policy is that evidence of HIV infection or a diagnosis of AIDS do not alone constitute sufficient grounds for refusal.

When is a medical examination required?

If you intend to stay in the UK for longer than six months or if you mention health or medical treatment as a reason for your visit or if you appear unwell, you're likely to be referred to a medical officer for examination.

What happens if I have to have a medical examination?

If you're referred for a medical examination you shouldn't be tested for HIV antibodies. But if, in spite of that, you're found to have HIV infection or AIDS or an associated condition, the present policy still says that is not enough in itself to refuse you entry.

But the decision rests with the medical officer and if he or she decides there are medical reasons for not letting you into the country, the Immigration Officer must obey that decision unless there are strong compassionate reasons to decide otherwise or you're the husband, wife or child of someone settled here.

When will the medical examination take place?

Usually the medical examination will take place when you apply for permission to enter the UK.

But it can also be ordered when you enter this country, if either you don't already have permission to enter given in your own country or if you appear to be ill when you arrive here.

What if I am ill but I'm coming to join my husband, wife or parents?

You cannot be refused entry on medical grounds but you may be required to report to another medical officer for a further examination and any necessary treatment in this country.

What if I have lived in the UK before but I'm found to have HIV or AIDS or a condition associated with them?

Returning residents cannot be refused re-entry on health grounds but they may be told to report to a medical officer for examination and any necessary treatment.

What if I only want to visit the UK temporarily?

There shouldn't be any difficulty because, in your case too, the policy is that HIV, AIDS and the conditions associated with them are not in themselves a reason for keeping you out. Only if you're visibly ill is there any real chance of your being medically examined.

What if I am coming to the UK for medical treatment?

The rules allow entry into the UK for private medical treatment. You have to satisfy the immigration officer that you can pay for the treatment and that you have accommodation and won't be a danger to public health.

You may also be asked for evidence about the arrangements you have made for consultation and treatment.

Does every visitor have to pay for medical treatment?

This country has reciprocal agreements with a number of other countries whose citizens are entitled to free treatment whilst in the UK. They include European Community states and a number of other European countries, but few in the Commonwealth.

There are also many exceptions which apply to people who work or who come to the UK to take up permanent residence.

Immigration officers have orders to look out for people who may be trying to get into the UK for free health treatment.

Do I have to pay for all types of treatment?

No. Treatment at a genitourinary – or “special” – clinic for

sexually transmitted diseases is free. But, as far as HIV is concerned, that covers only an antibody test and any counselling connected with it.

What if I find I have HIV infection or AIDS while I'm in the UK?

Whether you can stay here depends on your immigration status. That should not be affected by your medical condition. You can always apply for an extension of your stay and if that's refused you have the right to appeal, so long as you make your application before your previous leave expired.

How will my application for an extension of leave be dealt with?

To get an extension of your stay you will need to fall into some category recognised by the Immigration Department, for instance as a visitor, student, married person and so on.

It is always advisable to get proper advice before you make any further application.

What if I don't fall into any of these categories but I'm ill?

You should get advice before approaching the Home Office. If there are exceptional compassionate circumstances or if you're likely to be persecuted if you go back to your own country the Home Office may allow you to stay.

But your case has to be special and it's always best to get advice in such a case.

What if I live in the UK and want to go abroad?

There are almost as many different policies on HIV infection and AIDS and the associated conditions as there are countries.

Those policies cover visitors, students, business people and people who want to settle. Many countries are particularly severe on students and insist on a test before agreeing to admit them.

A few, like Papua New Guinea, require an HIV certificate even for visitors. Iraq tests everyone wanting to stay for more than 5 days. The United States refuses admission for settlement to anyone who has HIV infection.

What do I need to do if I want to go abroad?

If you're going as a visitor most countries – especially the popular holiday destinations – have no restrictions. If you're in any doubt, phone the London embassy of the country concerned and ask.

LONDON AND NATIONAL GROUPS AND SERVICES

Afro Caribbean Helpline Service: Black advisers offering specialised advice and support, Fridays 6pm - 10pm, on the National AIDS Helpline (0800-567 123). Calls free

AIDS and Housing Project: Write: 16 - 18 Strutton Ground, London SW1P 2HP

AIDS Healthline: Information from the College of Health. Daily, 2pm - 10pm

Asian AIDS Helpline: Advice given in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi and English, Wednesdays 6pm - 10pm, on 0800-262 445. Calls free

Cantonese AIDS Helpline: Advice given in Cantonese, Tuesdays 6pm - 10pm, on 0800-262 445. Calls free

Body Positive: write PO Box 493 London W14 0TF. Mutual help and support group. Drop-in centre (from December, 1988) at 51b Philbeach Gardens, London SW5. Helpline: (7pm - 10pm) 01 - 373 9124

Body Positive Support Group: For newly diagnosed people with HIV infection and others with the infection who are anxious, plus the lovers, close friends and relatives of both groups. Meets Sundays at 12.15pm (for 12.30pm) on the second floor at the London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 69 Cowcross Street, London EC1

Care and Resources for People Affected by AIDS/HIV (CARA): write 40 Racton Road, London SW6. Phone 01 - 381 9666. Christian group offering support to Christians and non-Christians affected by HIV infection and by AIDS

Dentists who treat people with HIV infection: NHS Special Needs Dental Clinic, Alderney Street, London SW1. (Mondays, 3pm - 5pm, Tuesdays, Wednesdays 9am - 12pm) Phone: 01 - 630 8436 Or: advice on who to see from Mrs Satchell at City and Hackney Health Authority. Phone: 01 - 253 3020

Drug Users and Ex-Users with HIV Infection/AIDS/ARC: run by Terrence Higgins Trust. Meets Fridays 7pm - 9pm at Trust's offices (52 - 54 Grays Inn Road, WC1) Info: David Bickerton on 01 - 831 0330

Ealing AIDS Response: Local group. Write: PO Box 16, Isleworth, Middlesex, TW7 6AG. Phone: 01 - 993 8872

East London HIV Social Group: Meets Mondays 8.30pm upstairs at the London Apprentice, 33 Old Street, London EC1. Info: Nigel Harvey on 01 - 377 7458

Frontliners: Mutual help and support group for people who have AIDS. Write: c/o Terrence Higgins Trust, BM AIDS, London WC1N 3XX. Phone 01 - 831 0330

Haringey Health Authority Helpline: Counselling and advice on the phone on 01 - 801 1490/01808 - 1061, extension 212 (10am - 6pm)

Haemophilia Society: Information, advice and support for everyone who has haemophilia - and special representation of and support for people with haemophilia infected with HIV by using Factor 8. Write: 123 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1. Phone: 01 - 928 2020

Immunity: HIV research and health education charity. With full-time specialist legal centre for anyone with a legal problem connected with HIV infection, AIDS or an AIDS-related complex. Advice and court representation on offer. Also welfare rights advice. Open 10am - 6.30pm. Phone to fix an appointment. Charity and legal centre at 260A Kilburn Lane, London W10 4BA. Phone: 01 - 968 8909

Italian Drug Users and Ex-Users Group: run by Terrence Higgins Trust. Meets Wednesdays 6pm - 7.30pm at Basement, SCODA,

1 - 4 Hatton Place, London EC1 8TD. Info: David Bickerton on 01 - 831 0330 or Dr Massimo Riccio on 01 - 352 8161

The Landmark: Open July 1989. Day centre for people who have HIV infection and people who have AIDS. Will offer advice, recreational facilities, meals. Plus info for other people. 47 Tulse Hill, London SW2. Phone 01 - 671 7811/2

Lesbian Employment Rights: Non-AIDS specialist. Good on rights at work. Address: as LAGER Phone: 01 - 587 1636 (Mon-Thur 7pm - 10pm)

Lesbian & Gay Employment Rights (LAGER): Specialist in rights at work. Mainly men. Write: Room 203 Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London SE1 7SJ. Phone: 01 - 587 1643. (Mon-Fri, noon - 5pm)

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard: The original helpline. Not an AIDS specialist - but helpful. Write BM Switchboard, London WC1N 3XX. Phone: 01 - 837 7324 (24hrs)

London Lesbian Line: Information, support and advice for women. Phone 01 - 251 6911, Mondays and Fridays 2pm - 10pm, Tuesdays-Thursdays 7pm - 10pm

London Lighthouse: Hospice and drop-in centre. Offers counselling, health advice, support at home, breaks for carers and terminal care. 111 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QU. Phone 01 - 792 1200

Mainliners: Group for ex-drug users - and drug users who get their supplies on prescription - who have HIV infection or AIDS or a related condition. Write: PO Box 126, London SW2 8EP. Helpline: 01 - 736 7333. Mon-Fri, 10am - 6pm

National AIDS Helplines: Phone - free of charge for free leaflets (0800-565 777) or confidential advice (0800-567 123). 24 hours a day

North London Social and Support Group: Info: Joe on 01 - 482 4107

Nurses Support Group: Runs helpline for healthcare workers who need advice and help on HIV problems, Mondays and Wednesdays 7pm - 10pm, on 01 - 708 5606

Positively Women: Group of women who have HIV infection or have AIDS. Meets in central London. Info: 01 - 837 9705 (Mondays-Fridays, 10am - 5pm)

Project for Advice, Counselling and Education (PACE): One-to-one counselling and training in counselling. Meetings and write c/o London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 69 Cowcross Street, London EC1. Phone: 01 - 251 - 2889

South London Support and Social Group: Info: Rick, 01 - 675 3919

Standing Conference on Drug Abuse (SCODA): Information officer keeps up-to-date list of needle exchange schemes. 1 - 4 Hatton Place, London EC1. Phone: 01 - 430 2341/3

Terrence Higgins Trust: Information and counselling about HIV infection and AIDS. Plus support groups and trained volunteers to help people with HIV infection and people with AIDS. Write: BM AIDS, London WC1N 3XX. Phone: 01 - 831 0330 (admin only) 01 - 242 1010 (helpline, daily, 3pm - 10pm)

Women's Reproductive Rights Information Centre: Not an AIDS-specialist - helpful. Advice on all health issues affecting women, including HIV infection and AIDS. 52 - 54 Featherstone Street, London EC1. Phone: 01 - 351 6332

Women's Support Group: Run by Terrence Higgins Trust. Info: 01 - 831 0330

What's AIDS?

AIDS is short for the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. If you have AIDS your body's defence system against all sort of infections is weakened so much you catch diseases which people whose immune systems aren't affected can just shrug off. And, when you catch them, the diseases turn out to be much more serious than they are in people with healthy immune systems. Nobody knows for certain, but it look as if everyone who has AIDS dies of one of the diseases they catch, such as a fairly rare form of pneumonia. You can't catch AIDS. It develops in you for some reason. HIV probably causes that to happen.

What's HIV?

HIV is short for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It was first discovered in 1983. Since then it has been called LAV and HTLVIII. But since 1986 the proper name for it has been HIV. It may cause AIDS to develop in you. You can catch HIV infection by allowing your body fluids – blood, semen or vaginal fluids – to become mixed with the body fluids of some who's already infected. HIV isn't like most viruses because, when you're infected it lives inside blood cells which are part of your body's defence system.

What's Immunity?

Immunity is a charity started in 1985 to research into HIV. Its aim is to find some way of helping people who have HIV infection stay well longer. It also runs fitness classes and produces education leaflets and relaxation tapes. With funds from the London Boroughs Grants Scheme, Immunity runs a legal centre in London to give advice and assistance to people who have HIV infection and people who have AIDS. Phone first before visiting to fix a time to call. The address and phone number are at the bottom of this page.

© 1989 Immunity and Immunity's Legal Centre

immunity

Society for HIV Research and Education

260A KILBURN LANE, LONDON W10 4BA TELEPHONE 01-968 8909

immunity

Immunity's Legal Centre

260A KILBURN LANE, LONDON W10 4BA TELEPHONE 01-968 8909