

Change to Absences

Important news for citizens with pre-settled status in the UK.

From 16 July 2025, the rules about how much time pre-settled status holders need to spend in the UK to maintain their status and qualify for settled status are changing.

Pre-settled status holders will be able to maintain their status and be eligible for settled status where they have been resident in the UK for at least 30 months in total in the most recent five-year period. This can be any 30 months within the five-year period.

For example: if you left the UK for an 18-month family visit in the most recent five-year period, and any other absences total less than 12 months during that five-year period, you could still qualify for settled status as long as you meet all other requirements.

The existing continuous residence requirements will remain as an alternative to the new rules. This means that a pre-settled status holder can also qualify for settled status where they have met the existing continuous residence requirements over a previous five-year period.

This change to permitted absences doesn't apply on your first application to the EU Settlement Scheme but will apply if you are subsequently granted pre-settled status.



FAQs: Absences

My first application to the EU Settlement Scheme is yet to be decided, how will the change affect me?

The change only applies to pre-settled status holders. It does not apply to first-time applicants to the scheme. If you are granted pre-settled status, it will apply to you in the same way as it does to all other pre-settled status holders when they apply or are automatically considered for settled status.

I have settled status, do the new rules affect me?

No, the change will only apply to pre-settled status holders. Settled status holders can be absent from the UK for up to 5 years in a row without losing status.

I am a crown servant, what if my overseas posting is longer than 30 months.

The change does not affect any of the existing circumstances in which an absence from the UK of more than 6 months in a 12-month period will be permitted.

Will the new rules apply when my case is considered under the automated process?

It depends on when your case is considered. The Home Office has told us that they will not be able to automatically grant status to pre-settled status holders who meet the new rules until later this year as they need to update systems to reflect the change.

Pre-settled status holders can make an application for settled status in the usual way, as soon as they are eligible for it. On or after 16 July, applications will be considered under the revised rules.

Report your concerns

- [Complaints portal](#)
- [Your story](#) page

Learn more about
[your rights](#).

FAQs: Absences

My application for settled status has been refused because I have broken my continuity of residence, but I think I would qualify under the new rules, what should I do?

If your pre-settled status has not lapsed, been cancelled, curtailed or been invalidated you can make a new application for settled status. applications made for settled status on or after 16 July will be considered under the revised rules. Alternatively, you can wait until your case is reviewed under the automated process.

I thought pre-settled status automatically lapsed after two years absence from the UK?

Whether your pre-settled status has automatically lapsed will depend on the dates of your absence. Prior to 21 May 2024, pre-settled status would automatically lapse if the holder spent more than two continuous years outside the UK. Changes were made to legislation to remove this provision, but it was not retrospective.

Pre-settled and settled status automatically lapse after a continuous absence of over five years, no matter when this absence occurred. Currently, the new rules do not apply to citizens whose pre-settled status has lapsed. This is something we are continuing to discuss with the Home Office.

Will I need to explain why I have been absent?

No, you will only need to show that you have not been absent for more than 30 months in the most recent five-year period.

If you have been absent for more than 30 months in the most recent five-year period and you think you're still eligible for settled status under the existing continuous residence requirements, you will need to provide evidence regarding the reasons for your absences to the Home Office.

Report your concerns

- [Complaints portal](#)
- [Your story](#) page

Learn more about
[your rights](#).