

MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENT (MIR) INCREASE – Q&A

Q. What is the MIR?

A. Anyone applying for permission to enter, stay or settle in the UK as the partner or child of a British or settled person or member the Regular Armed Forces including the Brigade of Gurkhas, must, as part of their application, provide evidence that there is income of a sufficient level to support them without the need of public funds. This is called the Minimum Income Requirement (MIR). The MIR has applied to members of HM Armed Forces since December 2013.

Q. Does the MIR apply to members of HM Armed Forces?

A. Yes, any members of the Regular Armed Forces, including the Brigade of Gurkhas, service leavers or veterans who wish to sponsor a visa for an eligible partner and child(ren) to enter, stay or to settle in the UK must meet the MIR.

Q. What is the current MIR?

A. £18,600 for a partner, £3,800 for one child included in the application and a further £2,400 for each additional such child.

Q. Why aren't HM Armed Forces exempt from the MIR?

A. The MIR is to ensure family members are financially independent from the need for public funds and that they are able to integrate into British society. The MIR has applied to members of HM Armed Forces since December 2013.

Those who are in receipt of certain specified funds or benefits (including an Armed Forces Independence Payment or Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme; or War Disablement Pension under the War Pensions Scheme) are exempt from the MIR but must show they are able to adequately maintain themselves and any family members without recourse to public funds.

Q. When does the increase to the MIR come into effect?

A. 11 April 2024 for all new applications made under the Immigration Rules on or after that date.

Q. Will applications already submitted under the previous threshold of £18,600, be assessed against that rather than £23,496?

A. Transitional arrangements have been put in place to protect anyone who would be potentially disadvantaged by the new MIR introduced on 11 April 2024. This means they can continue to meet the MIR in place before then. This includes:

- Those who have, prior to 11 April 2024, already been granted permission to enter or stay (previously known as leave to enter or remain) as a partner (including as a fiancé(e) or proposed civil partner) or a child of a member of the Regular Armed Forces, including the Brigade of Gurkhas.

- Those who have, prior to 11 April 2024, applied for (and are being granted) permission to enter or stay (previously known as leave to enter or remain) as a partner (including as a fiancé(e) or proposed civil partner) or a child of a service leaver from Regular Armed Forces, including the Brigade of Gurkhas.

In such cases, the transitional arrangements will ensure that where applications involve one or more child(ren) the applicant will only need to provide evidence of meeting the new flat rate MIR of £23,496.

Q. What is the MIR for HM Armed Forces?

A. From 11 April 2024 it will be £23,496.

Q. How long will I need to serve before I earn £23,496?

A. After 26 weeks service or on completion of Initial Trade Training, whichever is sooner.

Q. Why is the MIR for HM Armed Forces under Appendix HM Armed Forces different to that for family of a sponsor applying under Appendix Family Members (FM) to the Immigration Rules?

A. The MIR under Appendix FM is aligned to the new general salary threshold for a skilled worker (currently £38,700), with an initial increase to £29,000 on 11 April. The HM Armed Forces MIR has instead been aligned to the HM Armed Forces salary threshold (currently £23,496 on completion of basic training for Other Ranks). This takes into account the unique nature of the service of a member of HM Armed Forces, the Armed Forces Covenant, and the retention and recruitment of Regular HM Armed Forces personnel to maintain national security.

Q. Does the £23,496 MIR apply to members of the Reserve Forces.

A. No. They are not eligible to sponsor family under Appendix HM Armed Forces, and if necessary, are required to sponsor a partner and child(ren) under Appendix FM to the Immigration Rules and meet the relevant MIR.

Q. Will there be future increases to the MIR for HM Armed Forces?

A. The MIR will be reviewed in line with the annual Armed Forces pay award for the salary threshold on completion of training.

Q. What will the future increases be?

A. That will be determined by annual Armed Forces pay award for the salary threshold on completion of training.

Q. When can I make an application?

A. You can apply any time under the Immigration Rules. Applications to start a route to settlement under the Rules made on or after 11 April 2024 will be required to meet the new MIR.

Q. Is there still a separate MIR for those sponsoring children to come to or stay in the UK?

A. No. As of 11 April 2024, for those who are not benefiting from transitional arrangements, there will no longer be an additional income requirement to sponsor a child.

Q. Is the MIR still based on gross salary alone or in combination with savings over £16,000?

A. Yes. The ways in which the MIR can be met remain unchanged. It can be met through gross annual salary of the sponsor, and the partner (and any child who has turned 18 and is still dependent on their parent) if they are in the UK with permission to work; or through cash savings over £16,000, as specified under the Immigration Rules in Appendix HM Armed Forces and Appendix Family Members - Specified Evidence (FM-SE).

Q. I have previously only earned enough to meet the MIR to bring my partner to the UK but not my children. Can I now apply to bring my children if I earn more than £23,496?

A. Yes. As of 11 April 2024, the new MIR of £23,496 is the same if you sponsor a partner on their own or with children, it does not increase per child.

Q. I recently applied to sponsor a visa for just my partner under the MIR in place before 11 April 2024. Can I withdraw that and re-submit under the new threshold and include my children?

A. Any application already submitted, or anyone who already has entry clearance or permission to stay will be considered under transitional arrangements. If the MIR to be met is below £23,496, you will benefit from the lower existing MIR. This will be the case for anyone applying for a partner on their own, or a partner with one child) who has already met the MIR. Otherwise, the new MIR will be applied of £23,496. This will ensure that no-one who has already met the MIR is disadvantaged by the increase.

Q. Will there be any change to the length of the Limited Leave to Enter visa granted to family members (up to five years or the Expended End Date of the Service Person's engagement) as a result of the new MIR?

A. No.

Q. I have applied to sponsor a visa for my partner and/or child(ren) but haven't yet had a decision. Which MIR applies to me?

A. Any application already submitted will be considered under transitional arrangements. If the MIR to be met is below £23,496, you will benefit from the lower existing MIR. This will be the case for anyone applying for a partner on their own, or a partner with one child) who has already met the MIR. Otherwise, the new MIR will be applied of £23,496. This will ensure that no-one who has already met the MIR is disadvantaged by the increase.

Q. Is the increased MIR also for Settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK, or Indefinite Leave to Enter the UK) applications for family members?

A. Yes – subject to transitional arrangements. Those who met the MIR under transitional arrangement for entry or permission to enter to stay, will benefit from the same MIR at the settlement stage, unless that would disadvantage them due to an additional child.

Q. What happens if the application is refused?

A. There are no changes to the way an application is decided and the other requirements to be met. Where an application is refused, any new application will be subject to the requirements in place at the date of the new application.

Q. Are there any changes to Home Office criteria for sponsoring an application?

A. No. Any application will still be subject to Home Office verification.

Q. Do family members still have to pass an English Language test to enter or to Settle in the UK if they are over 18?

A. Yes, unless an exemption applies, or they come from a majority English speaking country or if they have a degree or academic qualification that was taught or researched in English.

Q. Are there any exemptions to meeting the MIR?

A. Single parents with sole responsibility and those in receipt of certain specified benefits or funds (including an Armed Forces Independence Payment or Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme; or War Disablement Pension under the War Pensions Scheme), will continue to be exempt from the MIR and must instead show they are able to adequately maintain themselves and dependent family members without recourse to public funds.

Q. How long after joining HM Armed Forces will I earn enough to sponsor a visa for my partner and children to come to the UK?

A. Other Ranks earn £23,496 on completion of Basic Training or within six months, whichever is sooner.

Q. Will Officers also earn enough?

A. Yes, Officers currently earn £31,304 until completion of Initial Officer Training when their pay increases to £37,425.

Q. Does the MIR only apply to non-UK personnel?

A. No. Any Regular member of HM Armed Forces or service leavers/veterans who wishes to sponsor a visa for an eligible partner and child(ren) to enter, stay or to settle in the UK must meet the MIR.

Q. My partner/spouse in the UK as a Visitor but intends to stay, what should they do?

A. Appendix HM Armed Forces to the Immigration Rules sets out the requirements that need to be met for dependants of members of HM Armed Forces, to apply for entry clearance or leave to enter or remain (also known as permission to enter or permission to stay) in the UK.