



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

*Dear Constance,*

**RE: SUPPORT FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS.**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of asylum seeker support and employment; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I recognise that this is a very important issue: the UK has a proud tradition of providing a place of safety for refugees. Each claim for asylum is carefully considered and where it is found that individuals are in need of protection, asylum is given, with the ultimate aim of helping them to return home if it is safe to do so.

Asylum seekers are allowed to work, in jobs on the Shortage Occupation List, if their claim has not been decided after 12 months through no fault of their own. The current policy aims to strike a balance between being equitable towards asylum seekers, while considering the rights and needs of our society as a whole, prioritising jobs for British citizens and those with leave to remain here, including refugees. The Government is considering recent calls to change the current policy and is reviewing the evidence available.

I should also mention that any asylum seeker who would otherwise be destitute is provided with free accommodation, utility bills and council tax are paid, and a weekly cash allowance is given, with extra money available for mothers and young children.

On the 15th June 2020, the cash allowance was raised from £37.75 to £39.60, representing a rise of around 5 percent. It is important to consider that this is significantly higher than general inflation, which data showed was 0.8 percent in the 12 months to April 2020. Indeed, food inflation over the same period was 1.4 percent.

I know you have concerns over this allowance figure. The methodology used for the cash allowance has been recognised by the Courts as rational and lawful. You may be interested to read about how this works, here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-on-review-of-cash-allowance-paid-to-asylum-seekers>.

It is also important to factor in that NHS healthcare and education for children is provided free of charge.

Going forward, I will continue to monitor closely the support available to asylum seekers to ensure sufficient support is provided.



Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**