



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

27th October 2020

Jean Confortant,

RE: SUSPENSION OF THE MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENT (EDM 880).

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns regarding the minimum income requirement for those with spouse and partner visas, with specific reference to Early Day Motion (EDM) 880.

Notwithstanding the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to sign EDMs, in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs. With that in mind, I have spoken to Ministers directly about your concerns.

This is of course an unprecedented and worrying time for many and I know that the Home Office is working hard to ensure people are not unfairly affected by circumstances beyond their control as a result of the ongoing pandemic. You may be pleased to know that the Government is keeping family immigration requirements under constant review and this includes the minimum income requirement.

Indeed, the Home Office has proactively established a range of measures to support those affected by the COVID-19 outbreak and Ministers have assured me that they will continue to make adjustments where necessary and take exceptional circumstances into account.

To ensure spouses or partners applying for entry clearance, leave to remain, or indefinite leave, are not unduly affected by circumstances beyond their control, for the purpose of the minimum income requirement, the following measures apply:

1. A temporary loss of employment income between the 1st March and the 31 July 2020 owing to COVID-19 will be disregarded, provided the requirement was met for at least six months up to March 2020.
2. An applicant or sponsor furloughed under the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will be deemed as earning 100% of their salary.
3. A temporary loss of annual income owing to COVID-19 between the 1st March 2020 and the 31st July 2020 will generally be disregarded for self-employment income, along with the impact on employment income from



the same period for future applications. Income received via the Coronavirus Self-Employment Income Support Scheme will also be taken into account.

4. Evidential flexibility may be applied where an applicant or sponsor experiences difficulty accessing specified evidence owing to COVID-19 restrictions.

Further guidance is available on the UK Government website which can be accessed, here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/chapter-8-appendix-fm-family-members

This also sets out the ways in which the minimum income requirement can be met using other sources of income instead of, or along with, income from employment or self-employment. For example, income from the couple's investments, property rental, or pension may also be taken into account, together with their cash savings.

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 PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**