



Rwanda removals plan: what you need to know

At the end of April 2024, the Guardian newspaper published reports that the Home Office is planning to immediately detain and raid people in order to put in detention before deporting to Rwanda:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/apr/28/home-office-to-detain-asylum-seekers-across-uk-in-shock-rwanda-operation>

We recognise that this news is very scary for thousands of people across Scotland. This document will set out some basic information around this plan and practical steps to take. We will link to places where you can find more information and support.



It is important to remember that not everyone that has claimed asylum in the UK can be removed to Rwanda.

What is the Rwanda Act?

The UK government has been trying for a long time to remove people seeking asylum in the UK to Rwanda. In November 2023 the top court in the UK, the Supreme Court, said this could not be done, as Rwanda could not be classed as a safe country for asylum seekers.

In response to this decision by the court, the UK government passed a new law on 25 April 2024 - the Rwanda Act. Its full name is Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Act 2024.

This law says that Rwanda is as a safe country, going against the decision of the court. It means that the UK Government will now try and remove some people to Rwanda. You can read more information about this on the Right to Remain website.

What does this mean for people seeking asylum in Scotland?

Following this law passing, the Government have started to put their plan into action: to put people into detention with the goal of sending them to Rwanda.

It is important to remember that not everyone that has claimed asylum in the UK can be removed to Rwanda.

Who is at risk of detention and removal?

Not all those seeking asylum in Scotland are at risk of detention and removal to Rwanda. The Home Office has said that certain groups of people will be targeted for detention. You may be at risk of detention/removal to Rwanda if:

- If you arrived in the UK after **1 January 2022** and claimed asylum
- You are **over 18** and are not in the UK with your family
- If you received a **decision** under the inadmissibility rules. You can read more about what this means here: <https://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit/the-inadmissibility-rules/#decision>
- If you received a **removal decision**
- If you received **removal directions** which specifically mentions Rwanda

On 13 May 2024, the Home Office also confirmed that they can remove people to Rwanda if they are **appeal rights exhausted** – this means that a person has been refused asylum in the UK and they have finished their court appeal processes. According to the Home Office guidance, this applies even if you arrived before 1 January 2022.

You should ask your lawyer if you think you are at risk of removal to Rwanda. You can read more information about this on the [Right to Remain website](#).

If you think these apply to you and do not have a lawyer, it is important to try to get a lawyer as soon as possible.



Can I legally challenge removal to Rwanda?

Yes. There are ways to challenge removals to Rwanda. This can be because of your health, your age, your nationality, whether you are a victim of trafficking, or another circumstance. You should make sure that you speak to your lawyer **as soon as possible** if you receive any letter from the Home Office about going to Rwanda. You and your lawyer can then gather the information you need to challenge the Home Office's decision to remove.



Finding a Lawyer:

If you do not currently have a lawyer it is important that you try to get one as soon as possible.

You can find immigration solicitors through the Law Society of Scotland's website:

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/find-a-solicitor/> and choosing "immigration and asylum" from the drop down menu.

The Scottish Refugee Council have also created lists of immigration lawyers in:

- Glasgow: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QJ2y3AvWI_FWPoV2P-j7A_6BzPbQl2_0JcPssSNiqPQ/edit
- Edinburgh: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z2jwq0riWQj-vMPOiOuO0fcBcu7g8OSjM7r1OMz4JKk/edit>

Being Prepared

Not everyone currently seeking asylum in the UK can or will be detained. However, it is important to make sure you are prepared and know what to do if you are detained.

The Home Office has said it plans to detain people whilst reporting at the Home Office's premises, and that they also plan to do some immigration raids (picking people up from their accommodation or elsewhere)

Some practical steps you can take is:

- Making sure you keep a list of **emergency contacts**, and give a copy of this list to someone that you trust. This should include your lawyer's number.
- Making sure you tell **someone you trust** when you go to report at the Home Office. You can ask them to contact your lawyer if you do not get in touch to say you have reported safely.
- Taking any **medication** you need with you when you report.

You can read more tips on being prepared here:

<https://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit/detention/#howtoprepare>



Immigration Raids

The Home Office has said that they plan to start immigration raids immediately.

Many organisations are working across Scotland to organise a response to these raids. It is important that if you see a Home Office or Immigration van that you contact the charity groups that you're in contact with.

You can also let the No Evictions network know you can phone them on:
07438318003

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