



The Home Office Removal Window Abolished

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The procedure which was used by the Home Office to set and serve *removal windows*, has now been suspended.

Under the removal window policy, migrants were given between 72 hours and 7 days' notice that they may be removed from the UK at any point during the following 3 months without being issued with any further notices or warnings. Mr Justice Walker found that there were grounds for real concern about the access to justice and suspended this policy along with granting permission for Judicial Review which is likely to be heard in June or July of this year.

The case, against the removal window policy, was brought by the charity, Medical Justice as they challenged the lawfulness of the policy used by the Home Office. The Judge granted interim relief and therefore the removal window policy has, *for now*, been suspended.

Medical Justice stated the following:

"A removal window notice can be given where arrangements for the person's removal has not yet been made. The Home Office's rationale is to prompt migrants to raise any human rights claims or other reasons for remaining in the UK. However, migrants are expected to do this within the very short notice periods which is almost impossible if they do not have a lawyer. Even if they do make those further submissions within the short notice period, there is no time limit on when the Home Office have to make a decision and almost invariably it is made during the removal window - when the migrant does not know when they will be removed. Decisions which could be challenged in the courts can then be given to migrants shortly before removal and even on the same day, making it impossible for the individual to challenge an unlawful removal."

This appears to be a major development as migrants often found that the notice period they were provided was unreasonable. Some could say that this policy created a hostile environment against these migrants.

It has been reported by BBC News that 69 removals, which were scheduled for the coming days, have been cancelled.

Now we all await the outcome of the legal proceedings which are to take place following this decision.



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