



Press Release

9th July 2020

Prolonged enforced separation of families by the government causing mental health issues and household poverty for parents and children

'When people's love is divided by law, it is the law that needs to change'

David Cameron PM, 2014

A government policy, introduced eight years ago today, is causing mental health issues, one parent households and severe poverty for 10s of thousands of families dealing with long term separation because they don't earn enough. Depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and chronic stress levels are amongst some of the issues experienced by our parents who are also seeing emotional, mental and physiological changes in their children that could have long-lasting impact on their development. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused even more uncertainty and distress for families who will continue to be separated long after lockdown.

The recent months have shown us that families belong together so, today, on this 8th anniversary of the policy, we have written an [Open Letter](#) to Boris Johnson calling upon him to bring an end to it and the devastation it is causing loving couples and families.

In 2012, as part of the hostile environment, a minimum income requirement [MIR] of £18,600 was put in place for families with a non-EU parent that must be earned by the British spouse. A figure that is far higher than the minimum wage and a salary that 40% of people in this country do not earn. Many are putting their own lives and those of their family at risk just to meet the MIR,

"At the moment, I'm currently working as NHS Oncology clinic coordinator, my pay doesn't meet the MIR, so I have had to take on a second job to supplement my salary. I'm 5 months pregnant and have a 1 year old. I'm grateful for my job & enjoy it very much but I can't help worrying that I'm risking my life, my 1 year old and my newborn however I can't stop working as I need to meet the MIR"

Exorbitant visa fees and health surcharges are already crippling families struggling and with a recession looming, household poverty and mental health issues will devastate many more. For families already settled in the UK who fall on hard times because of Covid-19, the MIR could lead to more separations, homes being lost, and children forced out of schools and from their friends. As we look beyond Brexit too, there will be an exponential rise in family separation and all its impacts for British citizens married to Europeans. Family life is a basic right and we must protect it.

Reunite Families UK supports and campaigns for families affected by UK spouse visa rules because
families belong together

To read and add your name/organisation name to the letter please click [here](#)

For more information on the issue please visit [here](#)

For media requests please email: hello@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk

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