



UK Visas
& Immigration

Freedom of Information
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FOI Reference: 39561

24 May 2016

Dear Ms Michaelson

Thank you for your enquiry of 4 May, in which you requested information regarding how much it costs the Home Office to handle and process the registration application of a child under 10 years as a British citizen. Your request is being handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Enquiries

Please provide me with a clear breakdown of how much it costs the Home Office to handle and process the registration application of a child under 10 years as a British citizen?

Is the Home Office using child fees to subsidise the austerity program and government cuts to the Home Office budget?

The Cost of applying to register a child recently increased from about £749 to £936 as of March 2016, why is the cost going up by so much when the service delivered is inefficient and taking much longer with fee each increase?

How much money did the government make from MN1 applications in 2015?

Responses

Justification for the 2016-17 fee changes can be found in paragraphs 7.1 to 7.5 of the following published document:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2016/226/pdfs/ukxiem_20160226_en.pdf

The fee to which you refer is set out at 19.3.1 and 19.3.2 of Schedule 8 of the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) Regulations 2016

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2016/226/pdfs/ukxi_20160226_en.pdf.

The same fee applies for all ages of children applying to register for British Citizenship as the costs to process the application and benefits gained are the same irrespective of the age of the applicant.

A breakdown of costs for the consideration of applications for Registering a Child for British Nationality in 2016-17 is set out in the table below.

Application type	Estimated unit cost	Contribution towards benefits, entitlements and the wider costs of the BIC⁽¹⁾ System	Application fee
	(£)	(£)	(£)
Nationality (British Citizenship) Registration child	272	664	936

The unit cost is the estimated cost of processing each type of application, taking into account the total attributable direct and indirect costs. This includes overheads and other attributable costs incurred by us that are essential to the infrastructure required to deliver an overall immigration service. Unit costs are allocated out to each individual application route based on the forecasted volumes and the average time taken for processing all application routes. Unit costs may be influenced by changes in the way that applications in certain routes are processed from year to year, for example where additional checks are introduced or required. We periodically review unit cost calculations and publishing the figures in the way we do enables applicants to see which fees are set over or under cost and by how much.

Income from fees helps provide the resources necessary to operate the border, immigration and citizenship system, with the remainder provided through general taxation. When setting fee levels, careful consideration is given to the costs and the various benefits applicants may receive. The benefits of British Citizenship are considered to be amongst the most valuable offered by the Home Office and the fee for the registration of children remains 10% cheaper than the equivalent adult registration fee of £1,041. The Home Office is also working towards its objective, set out in the Spending Review, of a BIC system that is fully funded by those who use it by 2019-20.

How much money did the government make from MN1 applications in 2015?

With regard to the above enquiry, whilst we hold the information you have requested we have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified under section 12 (1) of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. We are therefore unable to comply with it. Information on how much money the government made from MN1 applications in 2015, is not centrally collated; as such it could only be obtained through an extensive manual search and review of our central database system. As we do not centrally collate the information requested, unfortunately we are also unable to obtain the data to comply with the other parts of your request.

The £600 limit is based on work being carried out at a rate of £25 per hour, which equates to 24 hours of work per request. The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting information and preparing the response can be included in the costs for these purposes. The costs do not include considering whether any information is exempt from disclosure, overheads such as heating or lighting, or items such as photocopying or postage.

Due to the time it would take to examine and ascertain the specific information that has been requested, we are not able to provide within the cost limit, your request for that data. If you were to resubmit a more specific request of narrower scope then, as stated, we would reconsider it, although we cannot guarantee that any information covered by a narrower request would be disclosed. Further information about resubmitting a more specific request can be found at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/refusing-a-request/>

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference **39561**. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
3rd Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
e-mail: info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

C. Walls
Customer Service Operations

We value your feedback, please use the link below to access a brief anonymous survey to help us improve our service to you:
<http://www.homeofficesurveys.homeoffice.gov.uk/s/108105TAZNG>