

ISD announces initiatives to facilitate customers travel at Christmas

In March 2020, the Minister for Justice extended immigration permissions for all non-nationals who were legally in the State at time the COVID-19 pandemic erupted. A further 7 extension of permissions were provided and the last of those extensions will expire on January 15, 2022.

To facilitate customers in the State who are required to renew their current permission and who wish to travel during the Christmas period, the Minister is now extending all Irish Residence Permits (IRP Cards) that were valid in March 2020 to January 15, 2022.

The Minister is also suspending the re-entry visa programme for minors under 16 to facilitate families making travel plans during the same period.

Customers in the State who are required to apply for a new IRP card may use their current expired card to enable them to travel in confidence over Christmas until 15 January 2022. The Department will continue to process applications for online renewals.

Applications for re-entry visas for children already submitted will be returned. Customers should not submit an application for a re-entry on behalf of a minor for travel up to and including January 15 2022, as minors would not require a re-entry visa until after that date.

The Department will place a guidance notice on the ISD website, www.irishimmigration.ie, and on www.gov.ie, and advise all airlines and foreign missions of the initiatives in place.

Customers should download and print this notice and present it, along with their expired IRP card, to immigration authorities and airlines if requested to do so.

Draft FAQ

Q1. What happens if I want to remain abroad beyond January 15 2022?

A. Your IRP card will expire on January 15 2022. If you wish to remain abroad beyond January 15 2022 you will need to renew your IRP card before you travel. If you are a visa required national and have been unable to renew your IRP card before your travel date, then, on an exceptional basis, you can apply for a visa to re-enter the State at your destination. This application should be made on-line on AVATS when at your destination and you will then be instructed to submit the application to the local mission or visa office, who will do their best to expedite your case. The contact details for the Mission to which you send your application will be on the AVATS summary sheet. If you are a visa required national, you can apply for a visa [here](#)

Q2. What happens if my child is visa required and travelling with us but we are returning to Ireland after January 15 2022?

A. If you intend to stay abroad beyond the 15 January 2022 you must apply for a re-entry visa for your child in Ireland before departure or to a visa office overseas before returning. You can find details on re-entry visas [here](#).

Q3. What happens if I want to travel after January 15 2022?

A. Non-nationals who wish to travel outside Ireland after January 15 2022 must be in possession of a valid IRP card and/or an appropriate visa if required to re-enter the State.

Q4. What happens if I am waiting for a letter of permission before applying for an IRP card?

A. If you are in possession of or waiting for a letter of permission from ISD, and you wish to travel during this period, you should contact the section dealing with your application directly at one of the contact points [here](#).

Q5. I have applied for EU Treaty Rights but still do not have a letter of temporary permission to allow me to apply for an IRP card. What can I do?

A. Applicants who consider they may have an entitlement to temporary permission and are planning to travel should email eutreatyrights@justice.ie as soon as possible and provide documentary evidence of their Christmas travel plans. We will make every effort to prioritise the request. If you are travelling with children please provide their names, dates of birth and document numbers so we can include them.

Q6. I have been in Ireland for a number of weeks but have been unable to get an appointment in Dublin to register my permission. What can I do?

A. We are working hard to give every applicant an appointment as soon as possible. If you have urgent travel plans please contact immigrationsupport@justice.ie with a copy of your airline ticket and your flight details, including outward and return journey details, and using the subject line 'Flights booked for travel' so we can assist you if possible.

If you are a visa required national and you entered the State on a multi-entry visa in recent months, that visa may still be valid for re-entry. You should check the validity dates on the visa sticker. However, if you were issued with a single entry visa and have not registered, you will need to apply for a re-entry visa from an overseas visa office before you return. On an exceptional basis, you can apply for a visa to re-enter the State at your destination. This application should be made on-line on AVATS when at your destination and you will then be instructed to submit the application to the local mission or visa office, who will do their best to expedite your case. The contact details for the Mission to which you send your application will be on the AVATS summary sheet. If you are a visa required national, you can apply for a visa [here](#)

It is best to apply for a multi-entry visa, which will be valid for a further six months from date of issue.

Q7. My current IRP card expired in May 2020. Does this initiative apply to me?

A. If your card was valid on March 20 2020 when the Minister announced the first extension of immigration permissions, you are free to travel using your expired IRP card and the guidance note available on the ISD website until January 15 2022.

Q8. What happens if I am unable to return by this deadline because of COVID-19 restrictions or flight problems?

A. In that case, if visa required, you can apply for a visa on-line and submit the application at your local overseas mission and the mission will do their best to expedite your case. The contact details for the mission to which you submit your application will be on your on-line AVATS summary sheet.

Q9. I have applied online for a new IRP card. If it arrives at my Irish address while I am travelling, can I use a soft copy to return to Ireland after January 15?

A. Non-nationals who wish to travel outside Ireland after January 15 2022 must be in possession of a physical valid IRP card to re-enter the State. A soft copy of your IRP card is not acceptable for travel. If you stay beyond this date, and do not have a new, physical card, you will need a visa. If you are a visa required national, you can apply for a visa [here](#) . When selecting reason for travel on the online visa form you should select 'other' and Long Stay (D) should be selected for visa type.

Q10. What documents and proof will be required to show my children are resident in Ireland?

A. Children under 16 travelling with a parent or guardian in possession of a legal permission to reside in the State, who can prove they are the legal parent or guardian of the child in question, will be permitted to re-enter the country without a re-entry visa until January 15 2022. Documents needed to prove the relationship between the parent or guardian and the child can be found [here](#)

Q11. My child is applying for residency under EU Treaty Rights. If they do not have an IRP card, what proof will be required to show they are legally resident in Ireland?

A. We will require the child to have a valid passport, and be able to prove their identity and relationship to the adult travelling with them through other relevant documentation such as a PPS number or birth certificate.

Q12. What if I have to travel through a third country to return to Ireland?

A. ISD will communicate with the airlines and immigration authorities to inform them of the changes in place until January 15 2022. You should also download and print the guidance document available on www.irishimmigration.ie and www.gov.ie and present it when questioned, along with your expired IRP card. This will address any concerns immigration authorities may have.

Q13. I am a diplomat who wishes to remain outside Ireland beyond January 15 2022. What should I do?

A. Diplomats with valid credentials from the Department of Foreign Affairs may enter the country using those credentials in place of a re-entry visa. Please direct all queries to the Protocol Office, Department of Foreign Affairs. Click [here](#) for contact details.