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Overview

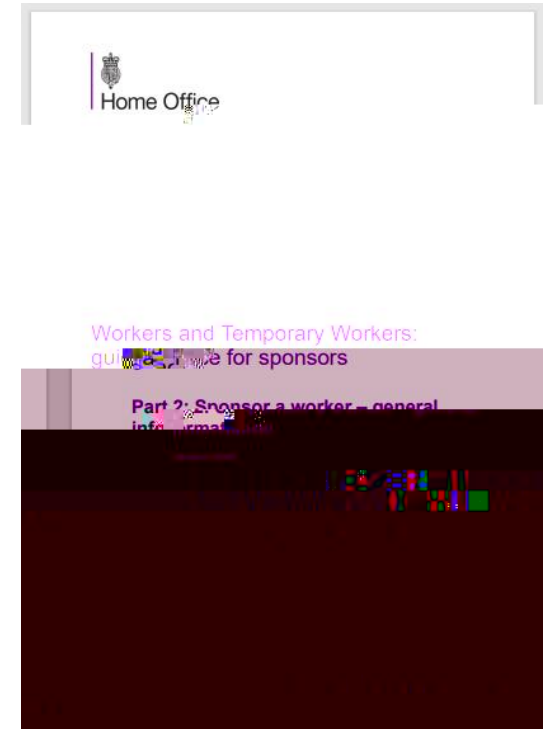
This Help Sheet is to support Adult Social Care providers who are applying for Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) to

Types of CoS

Before a worker can make a successful immigration application, you must assign them a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). A CoS is not a paper certificate or document, but a database record which confirms details of the worker you intend to sponsor and the job they will do.

1. **Defined (DcoS)** – for applicants applying for a visa from outside the UK.
2. **Undefined (UcoS)**– for applicants applying from inside the UK, and for applicants on all other visas switching to a Skilled Worker visa (including the Health and Care Worker visa).

Further information on the types of CoS can be found in Part 2 - [Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors part 2: Sponsor a Worker - general information](#)



Applying for a CoS

To apply for a CoS, you must already hold a sponsor licence. If you do not have a sponsor licence, you must first apply for one by registering and setting up an online account using the following link: [Sponsor Application Online \(homeoffice.gov.uk\)](https://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/sponsor-application-online). When making a licence application you will be asked how to estimate how many UCos you need if a licence is granted (further guidance can be found on page 4 [Becoming a Visa Sponsor - Help Sheet for ASC Providers \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/help-sheet-for-asc-providers))

When applying for CoS, you must justify the request and may be required to provide evidence to UKVI to demonstrate that you have a genuine vacancy.

A genuine vacancy, as defined by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) (which can be found in the [Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612343/workers-and-temporary-workers-guidance-for-sponsors-part-3-sponsor-duties-and-compliance)), is one which:

- Requires the jobholder to perform the specific duties and responsibilities for the job and meets all the requirements of the relevant route
- Does not include dissimilar and/or predominantly lower-skilled duties
- Is appropriate to the business in light of its business model plan and scale

After you have received your Undefined CoS allocation/Defined CoS you must assign a CoS, via the Sponsor Management System, to each foreign worker you employ. Each CoS has a unique number, which will be assigned to a worker who will use this to apply for a visa. The worker must use the certificate to apply for their visa within 3 months of it being assigned, it is important to note that they cannot apply for their visa more than 3 months before the start date of the role, as listed on the CoS.

There is no restriction on the number of CoS that can be granted – however it should be proportionate to your business size and need and UKVI may limit the number of CoS granted where they are not satisfied that the number requested is proportionate.

Documentation that may support CoS applications

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Applying for a CoS

Documentation that in isolation does not demonstrate a genuine vacancy for a CoS application

Local Authority (framework) contracts that do not show evidence that you are currently delivering care packages will not be accepted as evidence to prove a vacancy is genuine. You must be able to show that you currently have enough work to sponsor international staff and that you will be able to meet the minimum salary requirements. Contracts that only demonstrate prospective work will therefore not be considered as evidence. However, Local Authority contracts that do clearly show you are delivering specific care packages will be useful evidence.

UKVI will also not accept evidence of your business currently bidding for contracts, your business must already be in a position where it will have sufficient work to employ sponsored workers on a full-time basis. Any contract provided must confirm the hours/volume of work you will receive, and UKVI cannot accept Spot Purchase/Dynamic Framework agreements alone as these documents cannot be considered as a guarantee that care contracts will be offered.

Additional support

UKVI cannot give advice on individual applications, however, there are several resources available to support you:

- Toolkit for International Recruitment for Adult Social Care Providers – [International recruitment toolkit - March 2024 \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)
- Becoming a Visa Sponsor - [Becoming a Visa Sponsor - Help Sheet for ASC Providers \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)
- Sponsor Guidance - [Sponsorship: guidance for employers and educators - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

