

Droitwich Man Kept from Family by Visa Rules

August 3, 2025

– Categories: Human Rights



Download IPFS

A father from Droitwich says he has been forced to live apart from his family due to changes in UK visa policy. Leighton Allen, who works in Worcestershire, says current income thresholds mean his fiancée and two young sons remain stuck in Tanzania, unable to join him in Britain.

Speaking to *Worcester News*, Mr Allen said: “My children are growing up without their father. My fiancée and I are forced to live apart simply because I don’t earn quite enough.”

Under Home Office rules introduced in 2024, a British citizen must earn at least £29,000 to sponsor a foreign partner, a significant increase from the former £18,600 threshold. A further proposed rise to £38,700 is currently under review.

Mr Allen said his income falls short of the threshold. He added that even tourist visas have been denied to his family. “They can’t even visit. My fiancée isn’t allowed to meet my relatives or see the life I’ve built here.”

He and his partner, Sophie, met three years ago while he was in Tanzania. The couple had planned for their second son, Myles, to be born in the UK, but the cost of non-resident maternity care made it unaffordable.

In June 2025, Mr Allen joined other families outside Downing Street to raise awareness of the issue. He also contacted his local MP, Nigel Huddleston, but says he received no support. Mr Huddleston’s office declined to comment, saying it does not discuss individual cases.

Mr Allen estimates the total cost of reuniting his family would exceed £10,000, including visa applications, NHS charges, legal fees, and travel costs.

Despite the restrictions, he keeps in regular contact with his sons through daily video calls and travels to Tanzania once or twice a year, usually for their birthdays.

Responding to criticism, the Home Office defended the policy, stating:

“The minimum income requirement is in place to ensure families are self-sufficient and to promote integration. It is right that those who bring dependents to the UK can financially provide for them.”

Immigration policy has come under renewed scrutiny since the Labour government took office, with ministers pushing for more control over migration figures. But families like Mr Allen’s say the rules don’t reflect the realities faced by many working Britons.

While some campaigners argue for greater flexibility in assessing applications, particularly for British nationals with family abroad, the government has not indicated plans to ease the current system.

Mr Allen insists he isn't asking for exemptions, only a fair route to bring his family home. Until then, his situation remains unchanged, separated by income bands, paperwork, and government policy.