

REFUGEE

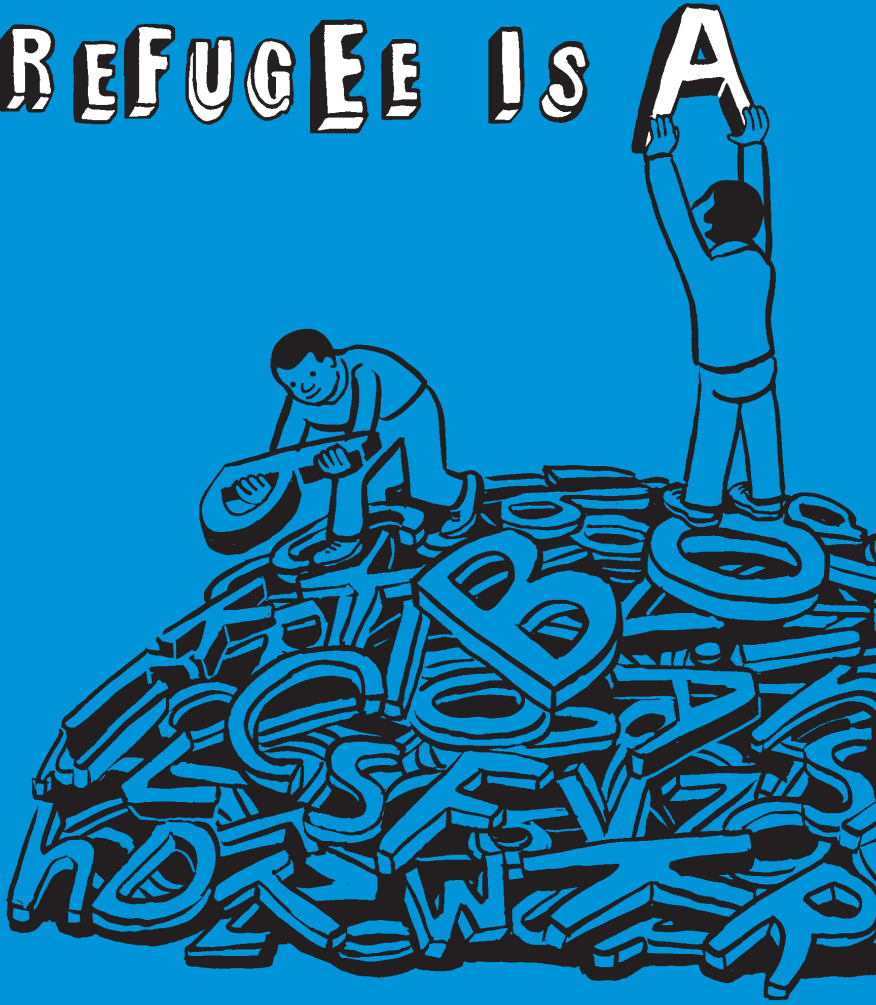


Information Guide 2009



Lawyers for Human Rights

A REFUGEE IS A



How to use this guide

The Guide is divided into two parts:

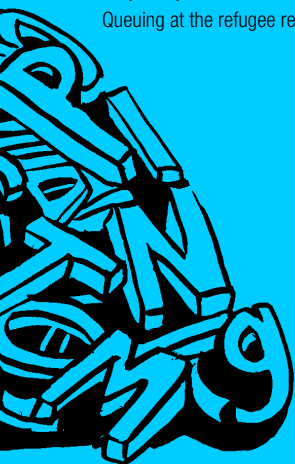
The first part provides important information on how to apply for asylum and seek legal assistance, where to find material assistance, how to access social assistance such as health, education, employment, trauma- and psychological support both from government and non-governmental sources. It also provides general information about South Africa.

The second part consists of a detailed directory of the relevant government departments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based and religious organisations offering assistance to the refugee community in South Africa.

Please note that the South African government's policies and practices may change. Please check the Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) website, www.lhr.org.za, for the most up-to-date information.

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Acronyms and definitions

Acronyms

- DHA → Department of Home Affairs
ICRC → International Committee for the Red Cross
RRO → Refugee reception officer

Definitions

- **Asylum seeker:** A person who has lodged an asylum application with the Department of Home Affairs and who is waiting for a decision on refugee status
- **Department of Home Affairs (DHA):** The South African government department responsible for the administration of asylum applications and refugee matters
- **Durable solution:** Long-term solutions to problems experienced by refugees, generally involving movement back to home country or third country of asylum or integration locally
- **Eligibility determination form (form BI-1590):** The form you have to fill out the first time you report to any of the five refugee reception offices in the country
- **Family reunification:** The bringing together of members of the same nuclear family with the help of the UNHCR and/or the ICRC after approval by the DHA
- **Family tracing:** The attempt to locate and link up members of the same nuclear family (father, mother, brother and sister) with or without the help of the UNHCR and/or the ICRC
- **Immigration Act:** The new law that has replaced the Aliens Control Act. This law regulates who may enter South Africa and how and also covers deportations
- **Non-refoulement:** The fundamental principle that prohibits states from returning asylum seekers or refugees to countries where their lives and freedoms may be threatened
- **Permanent resident:** A person who has been given permission to live in South Africa on a permanent basis.
- **Persecution:** Severe violation of human rights for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group
- **Prohibited person:** A person without any legal documents allowing him or her to stay in South Africa lawfully. It can also cover people who are not allowed in SA such as deportees or people with infectious diseases. The above definition is more of an “illegal foreigner”
- **Recognised refugee:** A person who has been granted refugee status in terms of section 24 of the Refugees Act
- **Refugees Act No.130 of 1998:** Law passed by the parliament of South Africa that governs the treatment of refugees in the country
- **Refugee:** A person who is forced to flee his/her country due to a well-founded fear of persecution or disasters of human origin such as armed conflicts, civil upheavals and generalised violence
- **Relocation:** An internal transfer of a refugee or asylum seeker from one part of South Africa to another, with the help of the UNHCR
- **Resettlement:** The relocation of a refugee from South Africa to a second country of asylum with the approval of the UNHCR and the country of resettlement
- **Section 22 permit:** Temporary, renewable permit, described in Section 22 of the Refugees Act, which is issued to asylum seekers while they await a decision on their asylum application and allows the bearer to reside in South Africa and to work and study
- **Section 24 permit:** Renewable permit, issued in terms of Section 24 of the Refugees Act, which grants refugee status to the bearer and allows him/her to reside in South Africa for a period of two years
- **Temporary resident:** Person with a legal permit that allows him or her to stay in the country for a limited period of time. Tourists, foreign students and business people would typically apply for temporary resident permits
- **The Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs:** Committee that reviews any refugee applications that have been rejected on the basis of being manifestly unfounded and that provides certification that a refugee will remain a refugee indefinitely for the purposes of applying for permanent residence. Note that the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs has been repealed by the Refugee Amendment Act
- **Unaccompanied minor:** A child under the age of 18 who is in South Africa without the company of his/her parents or guardians
- **Undocumented migrant:** A person who is not in possession of the requisite visa or residence permit that is required to be in the country legally
- **UNHCR:** The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is an international organisation mandated to provide international protection to refugees and to promote durable solutions to their problems
- **Voluntary repatriation:** Voluntary return of refugee from country of asylum to country of origin

- RSDO → Refugee status determination officer
LHR → Lawyers for Human Rights
UNHCR → United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Who is a refugee?

A refugee is someone:

- *who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, political opinion, gender or membership of a particular social group*
- *whose life, physical safety or freedom would be threatened on account of external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or other events seriously disturbing or disrupting public order in either part or the whole of his or her country of origin*
- *who is a dependant of anyone who falls into the above categories*



Definitions of refugees

The Refugees Act recognises two definitions of refugees:

→ **People with a well-founded fear of persecution:** The first definition is taken from the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. It provides protection to persons fleeing their country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution by their government or by other non-state actors that the government is unable to stop.

The term “well-founded fear of persecution” refers to your particular experiences and circumstances instead of the general situation in your country of origin. Your very personal response to the prospect of return to your country of origin will be assessed together with available information on the conditions in your country of origin to determine whether you will be subject to danger if you are forced to return.

→ **People who fled their country of origin due to threats to the public order:** The second definition is adopted from the OAU Refugee Convention and provides protection to persons who were forced to flee because of violence, war and civil disturbances in their country of origin.

The spouse of a recognised refugee is also entitled to refugee status, even if his or her individual claim was rejected.

Who is *not* a refugee?

You cannot apply for refugee status if you are just looking for a job, trying to further your education, visiting friends or family, or seeking to run a business in South Africa. In these cases, you should apply for either a work permit or a study or visitor's visa.

Who could be disqualified from becoming a refugee?

You are excluded from refugee status if you:

- have committed a crime against humanity, a war crime or a crime against peace;
- have committed a serious non-political crime outside of South Africa; or
- are currently enjoying the protection of another country (eg if you have refugee status in another country).

Who could lose refugee status?

You could lose your refugee status if you:

- voluntarily obtain the protection or nationality of your country of origin,
- obtain the nationality of a new country or
- voluntarily return to the country you left in fear and take up residence there with the intention of settling permanently.

You could also lose your refugee status because of events in your country of origin, such as:

- when there is no longer a threat to you in your country of origin or
- if you take on the protection of your country of origin because the circumstances in that country have changed.

Circumstances in your country of origin must have changed to such an extent that the causes of persecution and thus the risk of persecution no longer exist. The changes must be of a fundamental nature and solutions must be effective and durable.

The asylum application process

As an asylum seeker:

- You have the right to have your asylum application processed and decided upon in a fair and transparent way
- You have the right not to be deported to your country of origin while your asylum application is pending
- You may not be prosecuted for unlawful entry or your presence in the country while your asylum application is pending

Who qualifies as an asylum seeker?

An asylum seeker is a person who has lodged an asylum application with the DHA and who is awaiting a decision on his or her asylum claim that will either grant or deny refugee status.

Who can apply for asylum?

According to the Refugees Act, no person may be denied the opportunity to apply for asylum. A person who has applied for asylum is allowed to stay in South Africa until there has been a final decision on the application. A final decision is one given after all possible appeals and reviews of a negative decision have been exhausted.

When should an asylum application be lodged?

You should apply for asylum as soon as possible after your entry into South Africa. It is important that you go to a refugee reception office at your first opportunity after arriving in South Africa. If you come into contact with a police or immigration officer before you have applied for asylum, you should express your intention to apply.

Remember that many people experience great difficulties accessing the refugee offices and sometimes have to queue for weeks before they are attended to for the first time. The DHA does not provide proof that you have been queuing outside the refugee reception office. So until you have obtained your Section 22 permit, even if you are attempting to follow the law, you could still be arrested by the police or immigration officials.

Where should I apply for asylum?

Report to the nearest refugee reception office as soon as possible. Because of the long queues at these offices, you may have to go several times before you are able to enter to apply.



There are currently seven refugee reception offices in South Africa:

- Pretoria (Marabastad)
- Johannesburg (Crown Mines)
- Cape Town (Nyanga)
- Durban (Moore Street)
- Port Elizabeth
- Musina

For SADC nationals:

A new office for Southern African Development Community (SADC) nationals opened at the Pretoria Showgrounds in April 2009. SADC nationals in Gauteng should check the latest information to determine which office to attend. SADC includes the following countries: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

(See regional sections in the directory for contact details)



The asylum application process

- 1 You will fill out an eligibility form and get fingerprinted
- 2 You will receive a Section 22 (asylum seeker) permit
- 3 You will undergo a status determination interview
- 4 You will receive a decision
- 5 If your asylum claim is rejected, you can file an appeal
- 6 Your appeal will be heard by the Refugee Appeal Board, and they will make a final decision about your claim

All of these steps are free.

You should not have to pay any money

Step 1: Fill out an eligibility form and get fingerprinted

Once you access the refugee reception office, you will be asked to complete the Eligibility Determination Form, which includes a lot of questions about your background and reasons for coming to this country. A refugee reception officer (RRO) should assist you in completing this form.

It is important that you answer these questions honestly as your answers will be used to determine whether or not you qualify for refugee status in South Africa. The status determination officer will refer back to the eligibility form when assessing your application for asylum and might refuse your application if you have not been consistent in telling your story.

It is important that you bring any documents or evidence that verifies who you are and where you are from to the interview. It is preferable to bring the original copies. HOWEVER, remember that the DHA may only keep COPIES of your documents. You must keep your originals.

Once you complete the application form with the RRO, your fingerprints will be taken. A file will be created for you, with a case number and a file number. It is very important that you write down these numbers in case you lose your permit papers.

If you are applying together as husband and wife, make sure that BOTH of you are interviewed. Depending on the circumstances, it is possible that the wife of a family will have a stronger asylum claim than the husband.

If you have a spouse and children in another country, they must also be declared at this time or they will not be included on your file.

If you do not understand English, it's best to take an interpreter with you during your first visit to the refugee reception office. In some cases, the DHA does provide interpreters, but it is best not to rely on these professionals as they might be understaffed on the day of your interview, or the interpreter for your language of choice might not be available. Should you find yourself without an interpreter during your first visit, you need to explain your language problem to the RRO, who must provide another appointment to allow you to get an interpreter and return with him/her to the office for an interview. Be sure to agree on any fees that you might need to pay the interpreter for translation services in advance (see more under interpretation in this section).

The entire asylum application process is free of charge. Never give money to a security guard, RRO or any staff member at the refugee reception office

If anyone (for example interpreters, DHA officials, "agents", "brokers" or legal counsellors) wants money from you to carry out the interview, to issue you with the relevant documents or to renew them, be aware that such person/s are acting outside of the law. You should report them to the head of the refugee reception office and/or the nearest police station (see more under "Corruption" on pXX).

Step 2: Receive a Section 22 (asylum seeker) permit

Once you have filled out the application form and had your fingerprints taken, you will be issued with a Section 22 permit, which is also known as an asylum seeker permit. You should receive this permit on the same day that you filled out your eligibility form. This permit does not recognise you as a refugee. It is only a document of acknowledgement by the government of South Africa that you have applied for asylum.

Make sure that you understand the conditions on the permit. If you do not, ask the RRO to explain them to you – this is one of his or her duties!

Key things about your asylum seeker permit:

- Make sure that you sign your Section 22 asylum seeker permit
- The permit allows you to work and study in South Africa
- You must, by law, keep your permit on you at all times
- Make a copy of your permit and keep it in a safe place
- You must renew your permit before its expiry date

Section 22 permits are often valid for one or three months at a time. This means that you have to regularly renew your permit until your asylum claim has been finalised. It may take several months, even years, before you receive a final decision.

Always renew your Section 22 (asylum seeker) permit BEFORE it expires. If you walk around with an expired permit, you could be arrested and detained

Step 3: Undergo a status determination interview

After you receive your Section 22 permit, you will have a status determination hearing, which is conducted by someone called a refugee status determination officer (RSDO). This interview may take place on the same day that you fill out your application form and receive your Section 22 permit.

During this interview the RSDO will assess your asylum claim, consider the eligibility form that you filled in and possibly ask you additional questions related to your application. The RSDO may ask questions to verify your identity and your country of origin. You need to answer the questions clearly and correctly. You may be asked about specific events, locations, languages, cultures, political leaders, historical events and so forth.

At this interview, you have the right to be accompanied by a legal representative and an interpreter of your choice. However, the representative is not allowed to intervene in the interview; he or she can only observe. You are also allowed to bring witnesses, affidavits from witnesses or any other evidence that might be important to your case.

The RSDO will either ask you to wait for your decision or tell you to come back the following day for your decision. If you are not sure whether to wait for your decision, ask the RSDO.

Should the status determination interview take place on a later date than when your asylum seeker permit was issued, make sure to have it renewed and stamped.

Step 4: Receiving a decision

Once a decision has been made with regards to your refugee application, you will be told one of two things:

1 Your asylum application has been approved

You will then become recognised as a refugee and given a Section 24 permit, also known as a refugee status permit, which officially recognises you as a refugee in South Africa. This permit is valid for two years. You must renew this permit three months before it expires. To renew your permit, you must write a letter to the DHA informing them of your request to renew the permit.

Once you have been declared or recognised as a refugee, you are entitled to apply for a refugee identity document and a travel document.

Refugee identity document

Once you have applied for a refugee identity document (also known as the maroon ID or smart card), the DHA will issue you with a receipt. You will be asked to return to the refugee reception office to pick up your refugee identity document once it has been processed. Keep in mind that it may take a long time.

Travel documents

As a refugee you are entitled to a travel document. This document is officially issued by the South African government's DHA but takes the form of the United Nations Convention Travel Document. With the exception of emergency situations, you can only apply for a travel document if you have been issued with a refugee identity document. To apply for a travel document, you must undergo an interview with a representative from the UNHCR either in Pretoria or in one of the other cities when a UNHCR representative visits those cities.

If you use the travel document to travel back to your country of origin, this will be interpreted to imply that you are willing to avail yourself of the protection of your country of origin and you stand to lose your refugee status in South Africa.

If you have not yet been issued with a refugee ID and you are faced with an emergency situation that requires you to travel outside of the country, you will need to contact a legal counsellor or the UNHCR in Pretoria directly.

2 Your asylum application has been rejected

If your asylum application is rejected, it means that you do not qualify for refugee status and that the DHA does not recognise you as a refugee. You will receive a letter stating that you must

leave the country or file an appeal within 30 days. Depending on the reasons for the rejection of your application, you will need to appeal either to the Refugee Appeal Board or to the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs.

If your decision is rejected as being manifestly unfounded, abusive or fraudulent, it will automatically be reviewed by the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs. You will not be able to appear in person in front of this committee; however, you can provide a written statement or comments saying why you disagree with the negative decision. This needs to be submitted to the refugee reception office that issued the rejection letter or to the Standing Committee directly, within 10 days of receiving the decision. You can get a legal counsellor to help you with this step if you wish.

If your application is rejected for other reasons (unfounded), then you will have to appeal to the Refugee Appeal Board. This process is described below.

An amended version of the Refugees Act is set to take effect sometime in 2009.

Under this amended version, the Standing Committee will no longer exist and all appeals will go through the Refugee Appeals Authority.

Check the LHR website for the latest information.

Step 5: Filing an appeal with the Refugee Appeal Board

The Refugee Appeal Board is an independent tribunal that offers asylum seekers who have their applications rejected a second chance to prove their refugee claims.

If you wish to appeal your decision, submit your appeal request to the refugee reception office that issued your letter of rejection; you must do so within 30 days of receiving the decision. This request can be in the form of a letter stating that you do not agree with the decision of the RSDO and very briefly stating the reasons that you do not agree. The refugee reception office will hand over the case to the Refugee Appeal Board. If you require assistance, you should approach an NGO that can assist you in requesting an appeal.

Step 6: The appeal hearing before the Refugee Appeal Board

The Refugee Appeal Board will call you for an oral hearing where you will again be given the opportunity to present your case and reasons for applying for asylum. The refugee reception office will issue you with a hearing date, and the hearing will take place at the refugee reception office. Note that you have to receive your date in person; the date will not be issued over the phone.

It is important to seek legal assistance in preparing for your appeal. There are a number of NGOs that offer free legal assistance to asylum seekers with their appeals. See the list of service providers in the directory section of this guide.

In theory, the Refugee Appeal Board must make a decision within 90 days of the appeal hearing. Unfortunately, in practice it takes much longer to finalise appeals. In the meantime, you must continue to renew your asylum seeker permit and ensure that it remains valid.

Language assistance/interpretation

Many asylum seekers cannot understand or speak English or any of South Africa's other official languages well enough to convincingly make their case in front of officials. The DHA offers limited interpretation services in some but not all languages spoken by asylum seekers. If the DHA does not provide you with an interpreter, you are responsible for getting one yourself.

It is in your interest to get an honest and credible interpreter whom you can trust. The function of the interpreter is to provide literal translation "word for word" of what both parties are saying. If the interpreter tries to make your story sound better, makes up things or tells his or her own version of your reasons for fleeing your country, this might have a negative impact on your claim and your application might be rejected.

Remember:

- Speak slowly so that the interpreter understands exactly what you are saying. Also allow time for interpreting.
- * You have the right to have your statements – whether they were interpreted or not – read back to you. If you would like to make any changes to your statement, ask the DHA official to make the changes in writing before you sign the application form.
- Avoid interpreters who demand money from you for anything other than interpretation services. Some interpreters may offer to create stories that they believe will convince the RSDOs to grant you refugee status.

There are some people who may not serve as interpreters.

The following individuals may NOT interpret for you:

- your legal representative,
- a witness to your claim testifying on your behalf, or
- a representative of the country in which you fear persecution.

Asylum applications from children



International and South African law recognises that child refugees have different requirements from adult refugees. Refugee children are vulnerable both as children and as refugees. They obtain legal protection as children generally and as refugees specifically.

If a child enters the country in the care of a relative other than a parent or a biological grandparent, that caregiver should apply to the Children's Court to be appointed as the child's legal guardian. This will entitle the caregiver to apply for a foster-care grant, which is a monthly payment from the Department of Social Development to assist foster parents in caring for foster children. See pXX for details.

A child asylum seeker is unaccompanied if no person can be found who takes primary responsibility for the care of that child, either by law or custom. This includes a child who is separated from his or her parents either before or during flight from the country of origin.

Unaccompanied asylum seeker and refugee children possess all the rights of other asylum seeker and refugee children. However, because they are not in the care of parents or guardians, they require special protection.

The legal responsibility for unaccompanied or separated asylum seeker and refugee children lies with the South African government. It is the duty of the Department of Social Development to ensure that unaccompanied or separated asylum seeker and refugee children receive the protection, shelter, basic nutrition and social services that they require.

Accompanied children

The asylum application of a child who is accompanied by his or her parents or guardians is normally included in the application of the parent, biological grandparent or legal guardian.

Refugee status is granted to children and other dependants when the principal applicant's (head of the family/household) application is approved.

In some cases it is advisable for a child to submit an independent asylum application, especially if the case for asylum for the child is stronger than his or her parents' claims. In many cases children are persecuted because they are children, especially in countries where child soldiers and female circumcision are common. A legal representative or a parent/legal guardian must always accompany a child asylum seeker to his or her interviews.

Unaccompanied/separated children

- All unaccompanied children must identify themselves as being on their own to the DHA, who will make special arrangements for their applications.
- NO unaccompanied child should include his or her asylum application with that of an unknown person as this might jeopardise the asylum application and the chances of family reunification.
- The Refugees Act defines a child as a person under the age of 18.

Unaccompanied or separated children must submit an independent asylum application. An unaccompanied or separated child should approach a DHA representative at any of the refugee reception offices, state that he or she is an unaccompanied or separated child and request assistance with the application process. The DHA representative has a duty to contact a social worker from the Department of Social Development to further assist the child. However, if any problems are experienced, an unaccompanied or separated child can also approach the offices of any of the NGO legal counsellors listed in this guide for assistance.

An amended version of the Refugees Act is set to take effect sometime in 2009.

The amended version places a positive duty on the DHA and the DSD to assist unaccompanied minors. Check the provisions of the law for more information.

Check the LHR website for the latest information regarding the amended Act.

Legal advice

If you wish to apply for asylum in South Africa or if you experience any problems, you may wish to seek legal advice. A lawyer may be able to give you advice on the application procedures, your rights and your responsibilities while in South Africa.



Free legal advice

A number of university law clinics and human rights organisations offer free legal advice to asylum seekers and refugees. The UNHCR sponsors legal counsellors in five cities in South Africa; all these counsellors are specialists in refugee law. See contact details for these legal clinics and organisations in the directory section of this guide.

Legal counsellors will advise you on your asylum application and may assist with your appeal should your application for asylum be rejected.

Counsellors will only assist you with legal advice. They do not provide any social services such as accommodation or food. For more information about social services offered to asylum seekers and refugees, see the Social Services section (11) of this guide.

The legal profession

You can also obtain assistance with your asylum application by approaching an attorney in private practice. A private attorney may assist you with your asylum application, appeal or review

by the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs. The attorney may also support a court application if necessary. However, in most cases, private attorneys charge fees.

Remember to always ask about fees before you accept private legal services.

There are few attorneys in South Africa who specialise in refugee law. You can contact the Law Society of South Africa for advice on attorneys with experience in refugee law. You can also apply to the Legal Aid Board of South Africa, who may assist you with a free attorney.

Unqualified lawyers and refugee agents

In some instances, individuals may falsely present themselves as qualified lawyers. These individuals try and take money without providing real legal advice. Always make sure you are dealing with a qualified lawyer. If you have any doubts about the standing of your lawyer/s, contact the Law Society of South Africa to verify their legal standing.

Permits



Renewal of permits

You must apply for renewal of your Section 22 asylum permit at one of the refugee reception offices before it expires. In most refugee reception offices there is a separate queue for people who want to renew their asylum permits. At some offices, a DHA official may collect all the permits that need to be renewed and ask you to return to the office a few hours later to collect your renewed permit.

The DHA issues Section 24 refugee status permits for the duration of two years. You must apply for the renewal of your refugee status permit three months before it expires at the refugee reception office. The DHA will reassess your refugee status in South Africa based on the situation in your country of origin.

Ask whether there is a separate queue for renewal of permits. Remember to bring your original documentation when renewing your permit.

The DHA recently started issuing fines to asylum seekers who do not renew their permits before they expire. The fine must be paid in order to have your asylum seeker permit renewed. The letter will be issued by an officer at the refugee reception office, who will then direct you to a specific police station or magistrate's court to pay the fines. The fines range from R500 to R3 000. It is unclear whether this procedure is lawful. You do have a right to contest this fine if you think that it was unjustly issued to you. You should speak to a lawyer if you are concerned about a fine that you have been given.

Asylum seekers and refugees enjoy the right to freedom of movement in South Africa. This means that you can live wherever you want. You may renew your permit at any of the five refugee reception offices in the country. A refugee reception office should never refuse to renew your permit because you first applied for asylum at a different reception office.

It is very important that you renew your permits before they expire. Permits are not renewed automatically. If you are stopped by a police or immigration officer and you are in possession of an expired permit, you could be arrested.

Lost permits

It is not easy to replace lost permits. Make as many certified copies of your permit as possible and distribute them among friends and relatives or keep them in a safe place. Remember the file number and the case number on your permit.

If you lose your permit, you must report the loss to the nearest police station and get a statement or affidavit from them. You should bring the police statement/affidavit together with a copy of your permit (if you have one) to a refugee reception office, and you will be issued with a new permit.

Permanent residency

As a recognised refugee, you have the right to apply for a permanent residence permit after five years of continuous residence in South Africa from the date that you were granted refugee status. You should consult the Immigration Act for the specific requirements that must be fulfilled to apply for permanent residence.

One of the key requirements for permanent residence is certification that you will remain a refugee indefinitely. You must obtain this certification from the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs.

To apply, write a letter to the Standing Committee stating that you intend to apply for permanent residency in South Africa and that you want the Standing Committee to issue you with certification of your refugee status. You can also ask a legal counsellor to help you with this application.

Once you have obtained this certification and compiled the other required documents as stipulated in the Immigration Act of 2002, you should submit your application for permanent residency to a regional DHA office (not one of the refugee reception offices).

There are two requirements under the Immigration Act that have been waived for refugees. First, although the Act states that payment is required to apply for permanent residence, refugees do not have to pay to lodge an application for permanent residence. Secondly, the Act requires that an individual applying for permanent residence obtain a security clearance from his or her country of origin.

As a refugee, you do not have to get this security clearance certificate from your country of origin. You must, however, provide an affidavit stating whether you have ever had a criminal record in your country of origin. You also must obtain a security clearance certificate from the police for the time that you lived in South Africa.

Refugees do NOT have to pay to apply for permanent residence.

Refugees do NOT have to provide a security clearance certificate from their country of origin. They must, however, obtain a police affidavit and a security clearance certificate from the South African police.

Durable solutions

There are occasions when the UNHCR, sometimes with the help of other international organisations, co-ordinates and sponsors the movement of refugees from one place to another. These situations are grouped under the following categories: resettlement, internal relocation, voluntary repatriation and family reunification.

These movements are not a part of the asylum process. They happen when there is a need for protection and when the UNHCR cannot identify local solutions.

Only recognised refugees will be considered for these relocation options with the UNHCR. A separate status determination process will be conducted by the UNHCR that may not always have the same outcome as the DHA process.

Resettlement

Resettlement is the assisted movement of a refugee, including his or her nuclear family (spouses and children) to a different country than the one that first granted refugee status. It is only available in exceptional cases for refugees who cannot find local solutions and whose protection cannot be guaranteed by the country that first granted them asylum.

General problems in South Africa, such as xenophobia and a lack of employment opportunities, do not satisfy the requirements for resettlement. The UNHCR first seeks to establish a durable environment for you and your family here in South Africa before they consider resettlement.

Resettlement is only possible in exceptional cases.

The processing of resettlement often takes more than a year

Because of the limited number of refugees resettlement countries will accept, and the fact that the criteria set by these countries are difficult to meet, resettlement is not an option for many refugees who obtained were granted refugee status by South Africa.

Criteria for resettlement

The UNHCR has set out the following criteria for resettlement:

Lack of legal protection: Exceptional circumstances where refugees who are of concern to the UNHCR are, for instance, refused entry to South Africa or have had their asylum application rejected.



Lack of physical protection: Circumstances where there is a direct threat to the life and/or personal safety of a refugee. The refugee may be threatened by the government of his or her country of origin or by other hostile groups in a way that renders the South African government unable to offer adequate protection.

Survivors of violence and torture may be resettled if South African medical and psychological services do not meet the requirements of the refugee.

Persons with specific medical and disability needs may be resettled if South Africa cannot provide the required medical care.

Women at risk may be resettled if their particular protection problems cannot be adequately addressed in South Africa.

Unaccompanied children may be resettled when the child is considered especially vulnerable.

Elderly refugees may be resettled if they cannot obtain adequate protection in South Africa.

Applying for resettlement

- 1 If you qualify according to any of categories listed above, you should approach a legal counsellor or other service providers to recommend possible solutions and provide assistance. If these individuals are unable to assist, you can also approach the UNHCR for further advice.
- 2 The UNHCR have consultation days on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You should approach their offices on Mondays to make an appointment.
- 3 If, during the consultation with the UNHCR, it is found that there are no prospects for solving your problem in South Africa, the UNHCR may look into prospects for resettlement.
- 4 The UNHCR Protection Unit will conduct its own investigation and make a decision based on the credibility of the information you provided.
- 5 If the decision is negative, the case will be closed and you will be informed in writing. This decision is final.
- 6 If the UNHCR Protection Unit decides that resettlement is necessary, they will ask a third country to review your application. The country will examine the case, and if this country is satisfied, your entry visa will be prepared.
- 7 You must complete a mandatory medical examination as part of your application for resettlement.
- 8 In some cases, members of the immigration department of the receiving country could interview you again.
- 9 The International Organisation of Migration is responsible for preparing the travel documents for refugees to be resettled.
- 10 The whole process can take between one and two years.

Internal relocation

Internal relocation is the official movement of a refugee/asylum seeker (including nuclear family – spouses and children) within South Africa, for protection purposes. In exceptional circumstances, persons may be relocated to gain greater access to the UNHCR. The conditions and procedures for internal relocation are very similar to those for resettlement. You are not permitted to apply for internal relocation if you have general transportation needs within South Africa.

Applying for internal relocation

- 1 If the UNHCR Protection Unit is convinced that you need to be internally relocated, they will consider safer locations within South Africa for you to reside.
- 2 If the UNHCR has implementing partners in an area they have earmarked for relocation, these partners will be contacted to organise temporary accommodation and provide other necessary services.
- 3 The UNHCR will either arrange transportation or provide the funds for transport, and you will be instructed to contact the relevant service provider on arrival.

Voluntary repatriation

Voluntary repatriation occurs when refugees freely decide to return to their countries of origin. When conditions change and the safe return of refugees to their countries is possible, it is often promoted by UNHCR as the best solution.

Applying for voluntary repatriation

- 1 You have to fill in a voluntary repatriation application form. This form asks for information about the place you intend returning to and allows the legal counsellor to establish whether you are of concern to the UNHCR.
- 2 The legal counsellor will do an in-depth interview with you to confirm that the issues raised in the form are comprehensible, accurate and reflect what has happened.
- 3 The legal counsellor will send the application form, together with a recommendation for voluntary repatriation to the UNHCR.
- 4 The final decision rests with the UNHCR, and they will also organise the practicalities for your voluntary repatriation.

It is important to establish whether it is safe for you to return to your country.

You lose your refugee status the moment you leave South Africa through the process of voluntary repatriation.

Family reunification

A refugee who lost a family member during the flight or movement between countries can either request that the family member join him or her in South Africa or request to be reunited with the family member in another country.

Applications for family reunification must be made to the DHA at the refugee reception office.

Note that the DHA only considers family reunification for refugees.

Under exceptional circumstances the UNHCR can assist with transportation to and from South Africa for purposes of family reunification.

Applying for family reunification

Contact the University of Cape Town Law Clinic, the LHR office in Johannesburg, Pretoria or Durban, or the Jesuit Refugee Services offices in Johannesburg or Pretoria for assistance with filling in the application forms and processing the information. The DHA will make a decision on your application.

Tracing

The process of family reunification might sometimes require the tracing of lost family members.

The South African Red Cross Society, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, provides a service that aims at restoring family links. This service includes the exchange of Red Cross messages, tracing of separated families and reunification. The Red Cross works closely with the UNHCR and other agencies, particularly in dealing with child protection issues during the reunification process. The Red Cross can facilitate family reunification in cases including unaccompanied and separated children of up to 18 years of age and also in cases involving the elderly or vulnerable people.

The Red Cross message system can also be used to re-establish contact between family members who were separated or had their normal channels of communication disrupted as a result of armed conflicts or natural disasters. The Red Cross message system needs both the identity and full addresses of the sender and receiver of a message.

If you are trying to trace someone, through the Red Cross system or otherwise, make sure to provide as much information as possible about the missing family member – include as much detail as you can about the person's identity, the cause of the separation, the last date and place where you had contact with each other, whom the missing person was seen with, the last news you received about the missing person and any additional information that may facilitate the search.

If the missing person has been resettled, the person making the inquiry can consult the international communication network of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

Tracing normally takes time, and the chances of success depend on the accessibility of the area and the relevance and sufficiency of the information supplied.

Note that tracing activities may be suspended in areas that are inaccessible due to armed conflicts or natural disasters.

Helpful tips



Duties of asylum seekers and refugees

Asylum seekers and refugees are protected by the Bill of Rights contained in Chapter 2 of South Africa's constitution.

You are obliged to respect and recognise a number of duties that include:

- presenting yourself to the immigration authorities upon arrival in South Africa,
- telling the truth about why you are applying for asylum in South Africa,
- respecting and following the laws and regulations of South Africa, as well as any measures taken for the maintenance of public order and
- abstaining from any subversive activities, such as armed attacks, against your country of origin.

Asylum seekers and refugees are not above the law of the host country, and if you engage in illegal activities or commit criminal offences you will be prosecuted like any other South African, according to the applicable South African laws.

South Africa takes any involvement by asylum seekers or refugees in subversive activities against their country of origin very seriously. Be aware that if you use the territory of South Africa to organise military recruitment or armed attacks against your country of origin, your refugee status may be revoked and you could be criminally prosecuted.

Queuing at the refugee reception office

Waiting in the queue at a refugee reception office can take a long time. Follow our advice to make your queuing time as short as possible:

- **Go early:** The office only sees a certain number of people per day. To ensure you get a place you might have to begin queuing early. Some people begin queuing as early as 3am.
- **Go equipped:** Take along warm clothes, food and water. You can also take along some money to buy food.

→ **Seek advice:** Before you go to the refugee office, seek advice from refugees who have already gone through the process. These people can provide useful advice, especially about the different queues for different things (new arrivals, renewals, identity documents, etc). If you have one, be sure to check in with your community representative as these representatives are advised to check with the refugee office for relevant information to pass on to you.

→ **Follow the process:** Don't vie for special treatment at the refugee office. This could hurt your case.

→ **Keep your appointments:** By doing so, you will reduce your and everybody else's waiting time and help avoid backlogs.

→ **Be aware:** Look out for notices posted at the refugee office. There could be important information that concerns you.

→ **Go local:** Look in the directory section of this guide for contact details of the various refugee reception offices. Pick the one closest to where you live.

Fighting corruption

- **The entire status determination process is free of charge**
- **It is a criminal offence to pay a bribe to any government officials**

If you are approached by a DHA official to pay a bribe, make sure that you get his or her name, that you take note of his or her physical features and any identifying marks and that you write down the date and time when this happened.

The DHA has a toll-free hotline that you can call to report corruption. All reports made to this telephone number will remain anonymous.

**DHA complaints/client service toll-free number:
0800 601 190**

Arrest and detention



If you are a refugee or asylum seeker with a valid permit, you are protected against arrest and detention. A police officer or immigration official may only arrest you in exceptional circumstances or for a criminal offence.

As a foreign national you may be arrested and detained by the police or an immigration officer if you are suspected, on reasonable grounds, to be an undocumented migrant or illegal foreigner. The burden is on you to prove that you are entitled to be in the country. Remember that the Refugees Act requires you to have a valid permit and to carry it with you at all times. Having your permit on you is also the easiest way to prove that you have the right to stay in South Africa.

Individuals who are in possession of a permit are sometimes arrested on the suspicion of carrying false documents. In addition, individuals may be arrested before they have had the opportunity to apply for asylum or as a result of having been unable to access refugee offices to renew their permits before they expire. For this reason, it is important to try to renew your permit before it expires.

What to do if you are arrested

It is a criminal offence to bribe any police or immigration officer in order to avoid being arrested or to be released from detention

In most cases of arrest, it is a police officer who is likely to stop and arrest you. A police officer will probably take you to a nearby police station and keep you there for some time. He or she must get in contact with the DHA's immigration inspectorate in order to verify your identity.

Often there is a legal way out of your arrest, but it might take some time and effort from your side. The actions you must take to secure your release, and your chances of being released from detention, depend on the reasons why you were detained in the first place.

If you are in possession of a valid Section 22 or Section 24 permit: If you are arrested despite having a valid permit, contact your friends or your family so that they can provide the DHA with copies of your valid documents. Sometimes you might need to get confirmation of your permit from the refugee reception office in order to be released.

If your Section 22 or Section 24 permit has expired: The Refugees Act clearly states that you must renew your Section 22 permit before it expires and your Section 24 permit three months before it expires. This information is also printed on your permit. Without renewing your permit, arresting police officers have no information to back up your claim that you are legally in the country. The DHA may detain you while your asylum claim is being decided. However, the DHA cannot send you back to your country of origin before a decision has been made with regards to your asylum application and you have had the opportunity to appeal.

If you have not yet applied for asylum: The success of your release from detention if you have been arrested before you have had the opportunity to apply for asylum depends on how long you have been in South Africa. The Refugees Act states that you must apply for asylum as soon as possible after you have entered the country (usually within 14 days of coming into the country). It is important that you clearly express to the arresting officer that you wish to apply for asylum in South Africa. You should also try to explain why you have not been able to apply for asylum until now. The DHA can NOT send you back to your country of origin before your asylum application has been finally decided upon, but they may detain you pending the finalisation of your claim.

If you have committed a crime: If you are arrested under suspicion of having committed a crime in South Africa, you will be treated according to the Criminal Procedures Act just like any other South African. You might risk having your asylum application turned down because of the crime that you have committed, and you may be sent back to your country of origin either before or after you have served your sentence.

If you are unable to secure your release from detention in any of these situations, contact your closest legal advice office for free legal assistance.

If you are brought before a Magistrate's Court, you have the right to request "legal aid". The court will then give you an opportunity to speak to a lawyer free of charge in private.

Conditions of arrest and detention

If you are suspected of being in the country illegally and are arrested and subsequently detained, there are specific requirements that the arresting officer must abide by:

- The officer must verify that you are in the country illegally within 48 hours of your arrest. If you are not declared to be an illegal foreigner within 48 hours, you must be released. Although the burden of proof is on you, the officer must assist in providing you with information. **You have the right to make at least one free phone call to locate copies of your permit.** The officer must also attempt to confirm your status with the DHA.
- You have the right to make written representations against the decision to detain and deport you to the minister of home affairs.
- You may not be detained for more than 30 days unless a Magistrate's Court reviews your detention. You have the right to make a written statement to the magistrate (judge). You must also receive a written decision from the court.
- **If you are taken to Lindela (the deportation centre), you may contact a lawyer (including LHR) who visits the centre every week and seek legal advice.**

In cases of doubt, you will be released and issued with a Section 23 (or transit) permit, which gives you time to provide the necessary documents yourself and to report to the refugee reception office within a certain date with your documentation.

If you fail to prove that you have a right to be in the country you will be declared an "illegal foreigner", detained and eventually deported to your country of origin.

Social services

As asylum seekers and refugees you are required to provide for your own social and economic needs. Due to financial constraints, the South African government, UNHCR and NGOs can only provide assistance in exceptional cases, such as those concerning asylum seekers with disabilities or children requiring support.

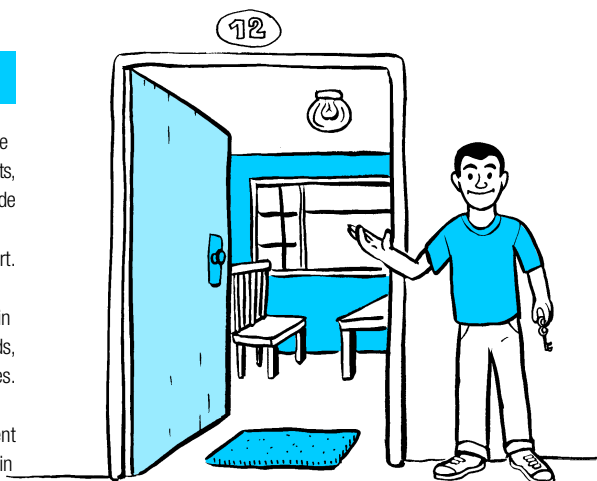
It has occurred in the past that asylum seekers who arrive in South Africa assume that the UNHCR will provide for their needs, as they usually do in camp-based situations in other countries. However, the role and mandate of the UNHCR in an urban, non-camp situation, such as in South Africa, is quite different and much more limited. This is because, unlike the situation in many other countries where the UNHCR is active, the responsibility for meeting the needs of asylum seekers and refugees rests with the South African government.

The UNHCR's limited assistance is usually executed through a number of implementing partners, most of them NGOs, working in cities where refugee offices are located. This emergency assistance is time-limited and intended for the most vulnerable amongst newly arrived asylum seekers. It is targeted mainly at vulnerable persons, such as mothers and children who have been in the country for less than two months, people with very serious illnesses and disabilities, and newly arrived single men with special needs. This assistance may include food and basic accommodation for a period of up to three months.

Beyond this limited social assistance, refugee communities can often provide important support for newly arrived asylum seekers, both as a link to their home country and as a source of useful advice on life in South Africa. Many of these refugee communities are struggling themselves, however, and often have very little to offer in the way of material assistance.

In terms of health and education, asylum seekers and refugees are allowed to access public services provided by the South African government.

This chapter will give you a description of available services, both general services and services that are specifically for refugees. You will also find useful advice on surviving in South Africa on your own.



Food and accommodation

- Everyone has the right to access to sufficient food and water
- Everyone has the right to access to adequate housing

There are various service organisations that help vulnerable asylum seekers and some refugees with their basic needs. These services can only be provided for a short time, however, after which asylum seekers and refugees are expected to support themselves.

A number of churches and other religious institutions, especially in urban areas, run soup kitchens that assist asylum seekers, refugees and other persons in need. Others hand out food that individuals can prepare on their own. Besides the soup kitchens, some churches also have programmes that provide assistance to their followers. You will find more detailed information about these organisations and institutions in the directory section of this guide.

Finding accommodation and paying rent

Some implementing partners and other NGOs can assist with places to stay in the short term. This accommodation will often be in a shelter or a place for homeless people (for more information about shelters, see the directory section of this guide).

Asylum seekers and refugees often find available accommodation via friends who have been in the country for some time or through community contacts. You will also find advertisements for available places to stay in local newspapers and through estate agencies. These agents might charge a small fee for providing this information.

Rent is usually paid at the beginning of the month, and in many cases you will be asked to pay a deposit equivalent to a month's rent before you are allowed to move into the building. Make sure that, whenever possible, you sign a contract with your landlord. Also clarify what is expected of you as a tenant and what you can expect from the landlord.

Evictions

The law protects everyone, including refugees and asylum seekers, from unlawful evictions. The following points are important to remember:

- A landlord may only evict a person who has been unlawfully occupying the property by obtaining a court order. In other words, only a court can force you to leave.
- You must be informed about the time, date and place of the court hearing before the court order is issued.
- A landlord may not use threats or force to remove you from the property.
- If a dispute arises between you and yourself and your landlord, or you feel you've been unfairly treated, you may approach the Rental Housing Tribunal to lay a complaint.

Banks and bank accounts

You might experience problems opening a bank account in South Africa. This is because many banks insist on seeing a green South African identity document before opening a bank account for a prospective client. Banks are not always familiar with the DHA documents for asylum seekers and refugees, and they often refuse to open bank accounts based on these documents.

Three banks – First National Bank, Standard Bank and Nedbank – have agreed to accept both asylum seekers and refugees as clients. Hopefully, more banks will soon follow this trend. Speak to other refugees and find out which bank in the area works well with refugees.

Below is a list of *legal requirements* for opening a new bank account. The person applying for a bank account must:

- be 16 years or older,
- have a valid asylum seeker permit, refugee permit or refugee identity document,
- provide proof residence (rental contract, telephone or utility bill in person's name),
- provide proof of source of income (pay slip, or affidavit if informally employed) and

- have a small amount of money for an initial deposit into the bank account.

If you meet all these requirements, it does not necessarily mean the bank will agree to open an account for you. This decision rests with each individual bank and branch. You can always contact a legal counsellor to assist you with opening a bank account.

You can also approach savings and credit co-operatives; these institutions are often willing to open up bank accounts for refugees. Savings and credit co-operatives operate as credit unions – groups of people who save together and lend money to each other – not as ordinary banks.

Social assistance grants

Refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa are expected to provide for their own material needs. However, the government will provide social assistance under certain circumstances. There are three kinds of social assistance grants available to refugees and asylum seekers. They are:

Disability grants

Recognised refugees who are not able to work because of a mental or physical disability may be eligible for a disability grant that is paid monthly. These grants are either temporary or permanent, depending on the nature of your disability. Recognised refugees who are the foster parents of a child (under the age of 18) who requires permanent care because of a disability may apply for a care dependency grant.

Foster care grants

Recognised refugees who are found to be suitable foster parents and confirmed as such by a court order can apply to the Department of Social Development to access a foster child grant to take care of the child/children placed with them. These grants are generally given for a two-year period.

Social relief of distress grant

Although technically limited to South African citizens, the government has on several occasions given this grant, often in the form of food vouchers, to non-citizens who require emergency assistance.

More information on these grants can be found on the Black Sash website (www.blacksash.org.za).

Education



Everyone has the right to a basic education, including basic adult education

Various levels of education

Crèche

Crèche is a pre-school for children, and it usually takes the form of a day-care facility for babies and toddlers between the ages of one and six years. Crèche is not government subsidised, and parents have to pay the fees. You are often able to negotiate with the crèche and offer to do volunteer work in exchange for discounted crèche fees.

Primary school

Primary school education is obligatory in South Africa. This means that the South African government is obliged to provide adequate primary schooling for all children, including refugees and asylum seekers.

South Africa's primary education starts from the age of seven and extends to the age of 13. It runs from Grade 1 to Grade 7.

Secondary school

Children from the ages of 13 to 19 years old should attend secondary school, which spans from Grade 8 to Grade 12.

From Grade 10, children choose their own subjects, such as a maths/science or business stream. Secondary schools programmes can be either academic or technical.

Please note that these age groups are flexible. Some asylum seeker and refugee children may be older than their school friends, as they might have missed opportunities for education. In most government schools, however, the child cannot be more than two years older than the age group for that grade.

University studies

University studies, either to further your education or to convert your education from your home country to a South African degree, is often a good way to get access to the South African job market. There are no general guidelines for asylum seekers and refugees on how to apply for university studies. Each university and technikon (a term used for a university of technology, which generally provides hands-on, practical training and education) applies its own criteria. Contact the international student office at your university or technikon of choice and ask for their particular criteria.

Below are some general guidelines for studying at a tertiary institution if you are an asylum seeker or a refugee:

You must be legal: You must either have a valid asylum seeker or refugee status permit.

Remember the international registration fee: Refugees and asylum seekers usually pay the local tuition fee plus an international registration fee.

Have your academic records evaluated: South African universities and technikons require students to have their academic records from foreign universities certified or evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). To do this, you must fill in a specific form that you send to SAQA together with certified copies of your academic records and degrees. You can have copies of your academic records certified at any police station for free. The SAQA process can take up to three months.

Polish your English: In general the South African tertiary institutions require students to be proficient in English before they are allowed to register. You can either complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or the Placement Test in English for Educational Purposes (PTEEP) to prove your English proficiency.

Here's where to apply for funding: Most universities and technikons limit their bursaries or scholarships to South African nationals. You should, however, scour books listing scholarships provided by the universities and technikons; these are usually available at the information/registration desks at the institutions themselves or on the Internet. The UNHCR offers the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund (or Dafi) Scholarship Programme to a small number of candidates in November each year. This programme does not cover post-graduate studies. It is meant for recognised refugees who have successfully completed secondary education, have no other means of support for tertiary studies and who are not older than 28 years of age at the beginning of their studies. For further information and requirements, contact either the UNHCR directly or one of the NGOs that deals with education issues listed in the directory section of this guide.

Adult education

A small number of NGOs offer adult education to refugees and asylum seekers. Adult education focuses on education and skills training in order to empower and encourage integration into South African society.

Most adult education training institutes offer English language courses. Some training institutes also offer self help programmes, vocational skills training programmes, crafts and arts classes. These programmes are designed to provide you with additional skills that might be essential to find a job or to set up your own business.

Most of the adult education programmes are free of charge and are operated by either South African NGOs or refugee communities.

Placement in schools

All asylum seeker and refugee children have a right to primary education and are entitled to the same access to schooling as any South African child.

Normally, as a parent, caregiver or guardian, you have to register your children for primary education at the school closest to where you live. If you do not understand or speak English or any of the other local languages well, take along a friend or someone else who can translate for you.

Rules to remember when registering your child

- The parent or legal guardian of the child must register the child
- You must provide the school with contact details of the family including your physical and postal address, and telephone numbers
- You must take a certified copy of the child's permit and/or of the parent's permit (a Section 22 asylum seeker permit or Section 24 refugee permit)
- You must provide the school with an inoculation certificate (if you do not have this, you have three months to get it from a local municipal clinic)

Make sure that you apply well in advance (from July onwards) for entry into school for the following school year since schools get full quickly. If the closest school is already full by the time you try to register your child, the registry at that school should direct you to another school in your area that can accommodate your child. If that school is also full, then return to the original school and ask them to refer you to the Department of Education, which has an obligation to find a school for the child.

If you have any problems in obtaining access to primary school education for your child at a particular school, inform the principal at the school of your child's right to primary education.

Parents have the right to ask for a letter on the school letterhead signed by the principal if a school refuses admission. This letter can be taken to the Department of Education, which should assist you in finding a suitable school for your child. Please remember to make an appointment with the Department of Education in advance. Should you not succeed with any of these steps, contact the social service providers that deal with education (see directory section of this guide for further information).

School fees

Many parents, both South Africans and foreign nationals, are struggling to pay school fees. Although the school fee is obligatory, you can request exemption. A school might grant you a partial or full exemption. Request an exemption form from the school. When filling out this form, you will need to show proof of income, describe the expenses and responsibilities that the family has and state whether the parents or guardians are employed.

To qualify for an exemption from paying school fees, you need to provide proof of income in the exemption form.

This can be in the form of:

- a pay or salary slip,
- an affidavit or
- a letter of support.

Remember that the application for exemption must be filled in by the beginning of each school term. It is important that you keep all your correspondence and appointments with the school. Parents who ignore any correspondence (letters, notices) from the school run the risk of receiving a lawyer's letter demanding payment.

Parents and guardians should play an active role in their children's education and are advised to stay in contact with the schools as much as possible, even if you are unable to pay any fees. Your ability to get an exemption may improve if you show a willingness to do part time work at the school in lieu of payment or to pay small amounts to show that you are taking your child's educational needs seriously.

If you have a good relationship with the school, the school will often make an effort to help. Schools will often not assist parents or guardians with whom they have a bad or non-existing relationship. So make sure that as a parent or guardian you:

- attend school meetings,
- meet your child's school teacher,
- attend school activities and events,
- attend sport days to which parents are invited,
- help your children with their school work and
- support your children in both academic and sports activities.

If you need help in completing the exemption form, contact one of the local NGO service providers listed in the directory section of this guide. Some of these organisations might also contribute limited material assistance towards your children's education.

No registration fee is required for a child to register at school. Schools are not allowed to ask for school fees in advance to secure a child's placement at school. In addition, your child cannot be asked to leave a public school if you as a parent or guardian cannot pay the school fees.

Besides school fees, you are also likely to have to deal with the costs of school uniforms and learning materials. Some schools prefer children to have school uniforms, but if you cannot afford the uniform, this is not a reason not to send your children to the school. You should send your children to school in their ordinary clothes for a while rather than let them fall behind in their education. We recommend that your child wear an outfit that resembles the school uniform as closely as possible. In this way he or she will not attract unnecessary attention while trying to adapt to a new school.

If you cannot afford a new uniform, you can try shopping at the school's second-hand store if they have one; alumni often donate their old uniforms to these stores, which are usually found on the school grounds. You can also ask the principal to advertise in the school bulletin asking a parent to donate their children's old uniforms.

Stationery requirements (pencil, notebooks, books etc) may be offered in a pack bought from the school, or you might be asked to buy these things individually.

Children with special needs

Children with special learning needs may be placed in a special education school. This includes children with psychological or other needs. Contact the Department of Education and ask about special schools in your area. Remember that to place a child in a special education school is a long process and may take up to one year. It is important to put your child on a waiting list as early as possible (from July onwards) for the following year.

Employment

All asylum seekers and refugees are authorised to work while they are in South Africa

You have a right to work

Refugees and asylum seekers are allowed to work. The right to work is specifically endorsed on both the asylum seeker and refugee permits. The following laws protect you from discrimination in the workplace and require employees to treat you fairly:

- The **Employment Equity Act** ensures that no employer can discriminate against you on account of your immigration status.
- The **Labour Relations Act** protects you from unfair labour practices and dismissals.
- The **Basic Conditions of Employment Act** specifies the minimum working standards, which include leave arrangements, hours of work etc.

Unfair discrimination?

If you feel that you have been unfairly discriminated against or that an employer has violated your rights under the law, you can lodge a grievance in writing with your employer. If the grievance cannot be resolved, the matter can be referred to the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) within six months. The CCMA is a dispute resolution body, established in terms of the Labour Relations Act, which attempts to resolve disputes through conciliation and arbitration. If the CCMA is not able to resolve the dispute through conciliation, your case can be referred for arbitration (if both parties agree) or to the Labour Court for adjudication. For more information, contact LHR or visit www.ccma.org.za

Getting a job

South Africa has a high unemployment rate, and finding a permanent job in South Africa is a problem for many South Africans. Asylum seekers and refugees may face even greater difficulties in getting formal, permanent employment because the permits and documents issued by the DHA are frequently not recognised by employers.

Employers often require students to have their academic records from foreign universities certified by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) – see the previous section for details. SAQA may request that you complement your foreign degree with some specific courses before they allow you to practise your profession in South Africa. Because it is very difficult for even those asylum seekers and refugees with valuable skills to get formal employment, many depend on the informal sector for survival.



Many refugees and asylum seekers have found employment in the following sectors:

Street trading

A number of asylum seekers and refugees have taken up street trading to earn a living. This is a means of informal trading out of sidewalk stalls. In recent years, municipalities have developed a number of laws and regulations about street trading. These vary from city to city, and you should make sure to learn about the specific laws and regulations that apply in your location. In most instances, you will need a street trading licence or permit, which you can get from your local council or municipality. Very often, street trading has to be conducted in a designated area.

If you trade or sell goods without a valid licence or in an area that is not designated as a trading area, be aware that you run the risk of being fined and having your goods taken away by the police

Security and car guarding

Another popular way for asylum seekers and refugees to earn money is to take up employment in the security sector or watch parked cars for money. These two occupations used to be easily accessible to asylum seekers and refugees, as they require no specific South African experience. Currently, however, the South African government has restricted access to the security industry. The law states that any person who works in the security sector – car guards, security guards in shopping malls or wherever – must register with the Security Industry Regulatory Authority (SIRA); to date SIRA has unfortunately not allowed asylum seekers or refugees registration. If you are not registered with SIRA and you work in the security sector, you face the risk of being arrested.

Nursing

Before you may register with the South African Nursing Council, a foreign nurse must have his or her qualifications certified by SAQA. To apply for registration as a nurse with the South African Nursing Council, you must fill out an application form and send it to the council together with the following documents: proof of payment of the application fee (approximately R400), your curriculum vitae, a certified copy of your refugee permit,

a certified copy of your nursing qualification and registration with the nursing regulatory authority of your country of origin, SAQA document certifying your qualification, English-language proficiency certificate and a letter from the Department of Health.

After submitting the application, the council will evaluate your qualifications and experience and decide on the appropriate nursing category. If the council decides that you meet the education requirements, you must submit an application for a theoretical and clinical assessment. After successful completion of these assessments, the Nursing Council will provide you with a registration certificate as a nurse in the relevant category. You will then be required to contact the Department of Health's foreign workforce management programme to apply for a position at a government health institution.

Medicine

If you are a qualified medical doctor with refugee status, you may apply for registration as a medical practitioner in South Africa. Due to the shortage of medical practitioners in this country, the Department of Health regularly appoints foreign doctors who have the necessary qualifications and experience to work in government hospitals. To be registered, you need to contact the Department of Health's foreign workforce management programme in Pretoria who will provide you with detailed information about the registration process. In short, to be registered, you need to obtain an offer of employment from one of the provincial government hospitals or health departments. Once you have a job offer, you need to apply for a formal endorsement from the foreign workforce management programme. Once you've obtained the endorsement, you must then apply for registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa. Their contact number is 012 338 9350.

Health services



Everyone has the right to health-care services, including reproductive-health care. No-one may be refused emergency medical treatment.

South Africa's health-care system consists of a private and a government-managed system. Asylum seekers and refugees often find private health care expensive. Health care provided by the government is generally offered at minimal cost. It is sometimes difficult to access public-health services as hospital workers do not always know the rights of refugees and asylum seekers; these staff members might also fail to recognise asylum seeker and refugee permits as valid forms of documentation.

Whenever you have a health problem, first go to the nearest local clinic for examination, except in emergency cases. If the

clinic is unable to treat you or you need care that the clinic cannot provide, the clinic will give you a referral letter for a specific government hospital.

- Except in emergency cases, you must always first go to the clinic closest to where you live before you go to a hospital. If necessary, the clinic will give you a referral letter to go to a hospital.
- Only in emergency cases can you go directly to a hospital for assistance.

Local clinics

Local clinics provide primary health-care services for children and adults. The government runs these clinics, and, for the most part, all consultations and treatment offered at clinics are free of charge. You need to locate the clinic closest to the place where you live. You need to make an appointment for all consultations, except for emergency cases. Even if you have made an appointment, you should be prepared to wait for a while before your consultation.

When you go to a clinic, you have to take your valid Section 22 asylum seeker permit or Section 24 refugee permit. If you have not received your Section 22 or Section 24 permit, go to one of the NGO service providers listed in this directory to get a letter to give to the clinic.

After the examination, the clinic will provide you with any necessary medicines, which are free of charge. If you need further medical attention or treatment that the clinic cannot provide, you will be given a referral letter to go to a nearby hospital.

Hospitals

Except in an emergency, you will need a referral letter from a local clinic to access a government hospital. You must also take your Section 22 or Section 24 permit with you. At the hospital, you will be asked to pay a fee upfront.

If you do not have the money needed to pay for medical attention at the public hospital, you will either need to get an affidavit from the nearest police station stating why you are unable to pay or get help from one of the NGO service providers listed in this directory. These service providers can ask the hospital in writing to waive the fees. You will need to take the affidavit or the letter back to the hospital.

If you decide to get medical attention from a private doctor or a private hospital, you will be responsible for the payment of any fees.

Trauma assistance

Individuals who have suffered a traumatic event – such as a natural disaster, abuse or a violent incident – may be in need of professional assistance, especially if they suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. This disorder could develop in individuals who are exposed to severe trauma.

There is a wide range of common reactions to traumatic incidents; these reactions are known as post-traumatic stress responses and can include difficulty in sleeping, nightmares, health problems such as headaches, difficulty in concentrating, flashbacks, anxiety and feelings of helplessness or fear. They are normal responses to an abnormal event.

How can I get help?

Go for counselling – this is where you get to speak to a professional about what happened to you and your feelings surrounding the incident/s. It is a space where you can start exploring and understanding the personal effects caused by the traumatic event. Counselling can take place on an individual, couple, family or group basis.

The Trauma Clinic in Johannesburg and the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture in Cape Town offer counselling and therapy for people suffering from post-traumatic stress and other trauma-related difficulties. See the directory section for contact details and further information about other trauma clinics.

HIV/AIDS

A person who is infected with HIV can look and feel healthy for up to 10 years or more before signs of AIDS appear. HIV steadily weakens the body's defence (immune) system until it can no longer fight off infections such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, tumours and other illnesses. That is why it is important for you to find out whether you might be HIV-positive as early as possible so that you can begin treatment. There is no cure for HIV or for AIDS, but there are treatments available to manage HIV, which can help you to lead a normal life. To get the right treatment, you need to know your HIV status.

HIV is passed – or transmitted – from one person to another only in very specific ways. These are:

- through sexual intercourse;
- through infected blood, which may be present on unsterilised needles and syringes; and
- from an infected mother to her baby, either when the baby is still in the womb, during childbirth, or during breastfeeding.

HIV DOES NOT SPREAD THROUGH CASUAL, EVERYDAY CONTACT BETWEEN PEOPLE.

This means that it is okay to play sports and work together, shake hands, hug friends or kiss them, sleep in the same room, breathe the same air, share drinking and eating utensils and towels and use the same showers or toilets.

Testing for HIV

To find out whether you are infected with HIV and to receive treatment that can help you lead a healthier, more productive life if you are infected, you need to have a blood test. Most public-health facilities test for HIV. The test is free.

Before being tested, you will receive counselling. You will also receive counselling when the result comes back, irrespective of whether you are HIV-positive or HIV-negative. In most facilities, two tests are done, and it takes about 20 minutes to get the result. In some complicated cases, a sample of your blood might have to be sent to a laboratory, in which case it could take a few days to get your result back. HIV tests are very accurate.

There are also a number of organisations, including private doctors, who offer consultation, counselling and HIV testing. The Treatment Action Campaign website (www.tac.org.za) provides information about places where you can get counselling, get tested and get treatment. Also see the directory section of this guide for further information.

Prevention of mother-to-child transmission

If a woman is pregnant and has tested HIV-positive, public health facilities offer nevirapine, a drug that can significantly lessen the chances of infection from mother to child.

Nevirapine is an anti-retroviral drug that is given to prevent the transmission of HIV from the infected mother to the unborn child during birth. For more information on the treatment and to find the nearest health facility that offers this treatment, please contact an NGO service provider, the UNHCR or go to the Treatment Action Campaign website (www.tac.org.za) for a list of public health facilities that provide ARV treatment.

Treatments

Medicines known as anti-retrovirals (ARVs) now help people with HIV live normal lives. You will only begin taking anti-retrovirals when you develop a serious HIV-related illness (known as an opportunistic infection), or when your CD4 count drops below 350. For most people with HIV, this happens on average eight to ten years after infection, but there are many exceptions. It is therefore important that you consult a doctor about the best treatment for your specific case.

Refugees and asylum seekers have a right to get free ARV treatment at public hospitals.

Treatment for rape and sexual assault victims

In cases of rape or sexual assault, it is government policy to provide a 28-day course of anti-retrovirals to victims in order to prevent the transmission of HIV. This is known as post-exposure prophylaxis. If you choose to take post-exposure prophylaxis you need to do so within 72 hours of being raped or sexually assaulted. This treatment is indicated only if you were HIV-negative before you were raped/assaulted.

Contact one of the following rape crisis numbers for assistance:

Bloemfontein	→ 051 447 6678
Cape Town	→ 021 447 9762
Durban	→ 031 312 2323
East London	→ 043 743 7266
Johannesburg	→ 011 728 1347
Kimberley	→ 053 831 1715
Mafikeng	→ 018 384 4870
Nelspruit	→ 013 755 3606
Polokwane	→ 015 297 7538
Port Elizabeth	→ 041 484 3804
Pretoria	→ 012 342 222

Alternatively, contact one of the following help lines:

loveLife	0800 121 900
Aids Help Line	0800 01 23 22
Aids Hot Line	0800 11 06 05

Or report the incident to the nearest police station, which should be able to assist you.

Violence against women and children



- Every woman or child has the right to an environment where they are subjected to physical, sexual or verbal abuse
- All such abuse towards women and children should be reported to the police
- A protection order can prevent further violence

Violence against women and children is a major health and human-rights concern. The definition of violence in this instance includes intimidation, physical, sexual or verbal abuse of women, as well as the threats of such acts, whether they occur in public or private life. It is also considered to include the deprivation of women's liberty.

Men often abuse women and children when they feel angry or powerless. They might also feel that women and children are the property of their husbands, fathers and brothers. Some women and children may accept violence and abuse because they believe violence is an expression of love and that the man's authority cannot be questioned. Abusers are not always men – women can abuse other women too.

All abuse of women and children is illegal in South Africa no matter who the abuser is.

Reporting cases and laying a criminal charge

If you or your child suffers any form of abuse, you should report the incident to the nearest police station. The police will assist you in opening a criminal case. The police will ask you to make a statement.

They will then give you a case number and assign an investigating officer to your case.

Most police offices have special units for domestic violence, sexual offences and child protection. A police officer will assist you with the case and refer you for a medical examination and counselling. A police officer must escort you through the process.

It is important that you go to the police station that is closest to you. Otherwise, your case may be transferred to the closest police station, which may slow down the processing of your case.

Getting a protection order

If you are afraid that the violence will continue or if you feel threatened at all, you can go to a magistrate's court to get a protection order, which is a directive from the court to your abuser to stop abusing you, to ask him or her to stay away from you or to get this person evicted from your home. You do not need a lawyer to get a protection order.

When you go to court, take any documents that you feel will strengthen your case; these can include medical reports, photographs of the injuries you sustained during abusive incidents or other evidence.

If the magistrate believes there is enough evidence of abuse, he or she will issue you with an interim protection order and provide a date when you have to return to court. The sheriff of the court or the police will serve the protection order on the abuser.

The magistrate will also give you a suspended warrant of arrest that you can use to get the abuser arrested if he or she disobeys the order after it has been served on him or her.

On your return to court, both you and the abuser should be present, and the court will hear the facts of the case. Following this hearing, the interim order should be confirmed and you will be issued with a final protection order. If the abuser fails to abide by this order, it might result in his or her arrest.

A number of women's and children's organisations provide legal assistance free of charge to abused women and children. Call the toll-free hotline 0800 150 150 that deals with Violence Against Women and Children to get advice and counselling.

Trafficking

In basic terms, human trafficking can be described as a form of modern-day slavery in which people are recruited and transported to another country under false pretenses and are then exploited and forced to work without the option of leaving that situation. Trafficked victims are lured with false promises of good jobs and better lives, and then forced to work under brutal and inhumane conditions.

The people involved in forcing individuals into trafficking are usually dangerous and should not be confronted. If you do come across someone who has been trafficked, you should immediately contact your local police station or the toll free number of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for assistance at 0800 555 999

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 - Free State
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 - KwaZulu-Natal
 - Limpopo
 - Mpumalanga
 - Northern Cape
 - North West
 - Western Cape

Quick reference website guide



National emergency and help lines

AIDS Helpline	→ 0800 012 322
AIDS Hotline	→ 0800 110 605
Ambulance	→ 10177
Be Court Wise	→ 083 22 99 440
Cancer Helpline	→ 0800 22 66 22
Childline	→ 0800 055 555
DHA complaints line	→ 0800 60 11 90
Fire brigade	→ 10177
loveLife	→ 0800 121 900
National Network on Violence against Women	→ 012 348 1234
	→ 011 838 0411
Police emergency	→ 10111
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	→ 012 338 5302
Women abuse helpline	→ 0800 150 150

Contact details of service providers


National offices and organisations

Government

Department of Home Affairs

Ministry of Home Affairs

 Second Floor, Executive Block, Corner Maggs and Petroleum streets, Waltloo, Pretoria

 Private Bag X114, Pretoria, 0001

 012 810 8099 (Pretoria) | 021 469 1600 (Cape Town)

 012 810 7307 (Pretoria) | 021 461 4191 (Cape Town)

Deputy Minister of Home Affairs

 012 810 8024  012 810 7311

Director General of Home Affairs


 012 810 6126  012 810 7307


Directorate: Refugee Affairs

 012 810 8911  012 810 8177

Refugee Appeal Board of South Africa

Services → Considers appeals brought against the decisions of the refugee status determination officers


 16th Floor, Sanlam Centre, Corner Andries and Pretorius streets, Pretoria

 The Secretary: Refugee Appeal Board, Pretmed Building, Private Bag X500, Pretoria, 0001

 012 320 1191  012 320 1297

Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs


Role → Reviews manifestly unfounded decisions on asylum claims and reviews the work of status determination officers


 16th Floor, Sanlam Centre, Corner Andries and Pretorius streets, Pretoria



 012 320 0961  012 320 1273

Department of Social Development

Role → Responsible for social assistance and care of vulnerable persons such as unaccompanied minors

 HSRC Building, 134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria


 Private Bag X901, Pretoria, 0001

 012 312 7500/7653  012 312 7988

Non-governmental organisations

Family and Marriage Society


Services → Family and marital counselling

 15 Pascoe Avenue, Kempton Park, Gauteng

 011 975 7107  011 975 7108

Forced Migration Studies Programme

Services → Centre for research and teaching that helps shape global discourse on migration aid and social transformation. The programme regularly undertakes community outreach actions

 The Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Room 6, Ground Floor, South West Engineering Building, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

 011 717 4032  011 717 4040

 migration@migration.wits.ac.za

Jesuit Refugee Services Regional Head Office

Services → Coordinates all the work of the Jesuit Refugee Services offices in the region


 St Vincent's School, 158 Oxford Road, Rosebank, Johannesburg

 011 327 0811  011 327 0811

 southern.africa@jrs.net


Law Society of South Africa

Services → Assists with the identification of attorneys who specialise in immigration and refugee law by area

 304 Brooks Street, Menlo Park, Pretoria

 PO Box 36626, Menlo Park, Pretoria, 0102

 012 366 8800  012 362 0969

 liaison@lssalead.org.za

Legal Aid Board


Services → Provides free legal services to indigent people in South Africa

 Sixth Floor, Van der Stel Building, 179 Pretorius Street, Pretoria

 012 401 9200  012 324 1950

Parliamentary Monitoring Group

Services → Monitors the proceedings of South African parliamentary committees and makes available the minutes of such proceedings

 Second Floor, Associated Magazines, 21 St Johns Street, Cape Town


 021 465 8885  021 465 8887

Statutory bodies

Commission on Gender Equality

Services → Promotes gender equality and makes recommendations on any laws and policy that affect gender equality

 Women's Jail, Constitution Hill, 2 Kotze Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg


 PO Box 32175, Braamfontein, 2017

 011 403 7182  011 403 7188


 cgeinfo@cge.org.za

Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

Services → Advises on labour rights and codes of good practice in terms of the Labour Relations Act, and mediates in labour related disputes.


 10th Floor, JCI Building, 28 Harrison Street, Johannesburg

 011 377 6650  011 834 7386


 011 377 6650/00 (hotline)

Gauteng Rental Housing Tribunal

Services → Deals with all types of illegal or unfair practices relating to the landlord-tenant relationship

 14th Floor, The 1066 Old Mutual Building, 35 Pritchard Street, Johannesburg


 011 630 5035  011 630 5057

 0800 046 873 (toll-free)

Independent Complaints Directorate

Services → Investigates rights violations by the police


 388 Andries Street, Pretoria


 Private Bag X941, Pretoria[JK2]

 012 392 0400  012 320 3116/7


Public Protector

Services → Receives and investigates complaints from the public against government agencies or officials, and has the power to recommend corrective action and to issue reports

 Hillcrest Office Centre, 174 Lynwood Road, Brooklyn, Pretoria

 Private Bag X677, Pretoria, 0001

 012 366 7000  012 362 3473

 0800 112 040 (toll-free)

South African Human Rights Commission

Services → Addresses human rights violations and seeks redress for such violations through monitoring, advocacy, education and training


 29 Princess of Wales Terrace, Corner York and St Andrews streets, Parktown, Johannesburg

 Private Bag 2700, Houghton, Johannesburg, 2041

 011 484 8300  011 484 1360


South African Qualifications Authority

Services → Provides information regarding the evaluation of foreign qualifications

 Hatfield Forum West, 1067 Arcadia Street, Hatfield, Pretoria

 Postnet Suite 248, Private Bag X06, Waterkloof, 0145


 012 431 5000  012 438 5147

 086 010 3188 (helpdesk)

International organisations

Amnesty International

Services → Promotes and advocates human rights

 Kutlwangong Democracy Centre, corner of Visagie and Prinsloo street, Pretoria

 012 320 8155  012 320 8158

 info@amnesty.org.za

International Committee for the Red Cross

Services → Assists with family tracing


 790/794 Church Street, Arcadia, Pretoria

 012 430 7335  012 430 4471

 pretoria.pre@icrc.org

International Organisation for Migration

Services → Assists with voluntary repatriation and transportation


 Third Floor, Sanlam Building, corner Festival and Arcadia streets, Hatfield, Pretoria

 012 342 2789  012 342 0932

 mrfpretoria@iom.int

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees


Services → Assists the South African government directly and through implementing partners in providing protection to and finding durable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers


 Metropark Building, 351 Schoeman Street, Pretoria

 012 354 8303  012 354 8390

UNICEF

Services → Assists with support for the protection and welfare of children

 Metropark Building, 351 Schoeman Street, Pretoria

 012 354 8201  012 354 8293

Provincial offices and organisations

Eastern Cape

Basic needs service providers

Diocesan Development Forum

Services → Accommodation and advice and support for HIV/AIDS patients

 58 St Patrick's Road, Port Elizabeth

 041 582 4087  041 582 4087

Somali Association Eastern Cape


Services → Assists refugees in accessing services in the Port Elizabeth area

 90 Stanford Road, Korsten, Port Elizabeth


 041 600 6020  041 453 5107


South African Red Cross (PE)

Services → Tracing services (exchange of family news through Red Cross societies in various countries); assistance with reuniting vulnerable persons, such as unaccompanied minors (up to age 18 years) or elderly persons with their families in host country (or in South Africa); requests for school, university, birth, marriage or death certificates.

 16 St Marks Road, Southernwood, East London

 18 Bain Street, Port Elizabeth

 043 722 2400 (East London)
041 585 6745 (Port Elizabeth)


 043 743 9033 (East London)
041 586 4334 (Port Elizabeth)


Legal services

Black Sash

Services → Paralegal advice on accessing social grants, labour matters and other legal matters

 6 Bathurst Street, Grahamstown, Dorsham House, corner Elizabeth and Govan Mbeki avenues, Port Elizabeth



 046 622 8091 (Grahamstown)
041 487 3288 (Port Elizabeth)

 046 622 7647 (Grahamstown)
041 484 1107 (Port Elizabeth)

East London Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance for indigent people

 1 Commissioner Street

 043 704 4700  043 704 4716

Legal Resources Centre

Services → Takes up constitutional cases that benefit a group of people


 116 High Street, Grahamstown

 046 622 9230  046 622 3933

Port Elizabeth Justice Centre (LAB)


Services → Free criminal and civil legal assistance to indigent people

 President Centre, 564 Govan Mbeki Avenue, North End

 041 408 2800  041 487 3335

Queenstown Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance for indigent people



 2 Robinson Road

 045 807 3500  045 838 4620

Rhodes University Legal Aid Clinic


Services → Free legal assistance to indigent people



 41 New Street, Grahamstown

 046 622 9301  046 622 9312

Rhodes University Satellite Legal Aid Clinic

Services → Free legal assistance focusing on farm worker/rural issues

 24 Ebdon Street, Queenstown

 045 838 5600  045 838 5271

Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs

Queenstown district office



 5 Zeiler Street

 045 839 2109  045 838 1429

Refugee reception office

Services → Processes all asylum applications for this region

 KIC, 5 Sidon Street, North End, Port Elizabeth

 041 403 7412/11  041 403 7433

 Siphon.Lucas@dha.gov.za

Regional office


 Old Etata Building, corner Owen and Leeds Road, Umtata

 047 531 5040  047 531 2060


Department of Social Development



Port Elizabeth

 Corner Stroon and Matie streets, Stoodale


 041 451 3458


Provincial office

 Dukumbana Building, Independent Avenue, Bisho

 040 608 5806/5810  040 639 1644

South African Police Services


 Corner Lennox and Mountcroix Streets, Port Elizabeth

 041 394 6326

Psycho-social support services

FAMSA

Services → Family and marital counselling

 63A High Street, Grahamstown


 046 622 2580  046 622 2545

Lifeline Port Elizabeth

Services → 24-hour telephonic crisis counselling


 1 Nile Road, Perridgeville


 041 373 8882  041 373 8880

 041 373 8666 (crisis line)

Port Elizabeth Mental Health

Services → Free family counselling by appointment

 21 William Street, Cotswold

 041 365 0502  041 365 0529

Shelters

Salvation Army Haven of Hope


Services → Limited emergency accommodation

 11 Fettes Road, North End

 041 373 4317  041 373 9363

Statutory bodies

South African Human Rights Commission

 Fourth Floor, Oxford House, Oxford Street, East London

 043 722 7821  043 722 7830

Free State

Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs

Bloemfontein regional office

 Corner Moshoeshoe and Lubbe streets, Rocklands

 051 412 7100  051 434 1316

Department of Social Development

 Old Mutual Building, Maitland Street, Bloemfontein

 051 400 0302  051 400 0211

Psycho-social counselling


FAMSA



 10 Strauss Street, Universitas, Bloemfontein

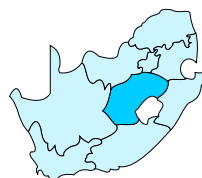
 051 525 2395  051 522 4199

Statutory Bodies

South African Human Rights Commission

 50 East Burger Street, Bloemfontein

 051 447 1130  051 447 1128 / 086 635 4180



Basic needs service providers

Central Methodist Church

Services → Emergency accommodation for new arrivals, medical assistance for immigrants, counselling to refugees infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, pre- school and school
Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm and after hours
🏠 Corner Pritchard and Small streets, CBD
☎ 011 333 7672 📠 011 333 3254
✉ central_district@methodist.org.za

Christians for Peace in Africa

Services → Arranges school matters for asylum seekers and refugees, offers counselling, distributes second-hand clothing and provides other humanitarian assistance
Intake → Daily from 10am to 2pm, but preferably call first
🏠 At Yeoville Community School, 66 Regent Street, Yeoville
☎ 011 888 6427 (Reverend Thomas-Rene Kituto)
011 888 6427
✉ christiansforpeacein africa@yahoo.com
www.christiansforpeacein africa.co.za

Coordinating Body for Refugee Communities

Services → Assists with access to primary and secondary education, provides orientation for immigrants arriving in South Africa, lobbies and undertakes advocacy on refugee issues and provides referrals to NGOs on other issues
🏠 First Floor, Royal Place Building, 85 Eloff Street, CBD
☎ 011 333 6460 📠 refugee@cbrc.org.za

Gift of the Givers

Services → Disaster response and humanitarian work
Intake → No direct intakes, prefers liaising with NGOs
🏠 43 Mint Road, Fordsburg
☎ 011 832 1546 📠 011 832 1535
✉ info@giftofthegivers.org

Jesuit Refugee Services

Services → Limited accommodation and assistance for new arrivals and vulnerable groups, referrals to hospitals and clinics, counselling to refugees infected and affected with HIV/AIDS, limited funeral assistance, small-business assistance, educational assistance for primary and secondary schools
🏠 Seventh Floor, Royal Place Building, 85 Eloff Street, CBD
☎ 011 333 0980 📠 011 333 0119
✉ thabile@jrssa.co.za

Papillion Development Centre

Services → English Classes, computer training, distributes clothing to orphans and the poor
Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 1pm
Only open to people with valid permits
🏠 Corner Mabel and Lily Streets, Rosettenville
☎ 011 435 9799 📠 086 610 2852

Refugee Ministries Centre

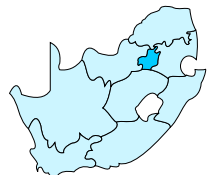
Services → Facilitates access to asylum offices in Johannesburg and Pretoria for vulnerable groups, provides interpretation services and monitoring at Johannesburg and Pretoria refugee reception offices and Lindela, helps with education through the Three2Six Programme at Sacred Heart College
Intake → Daily from 8am to 1pm
🏠 13 Wanderers Street, CBD (for intakes)
71 Frederick Street, Observatory (administrative office)
☎ 011 333 8452 📠 086 503 9069
011 622 8771 (administrative office)
✉ info@refugeeministries.org.za

Refugee Children's Project

Services → Supports refugee children in particular, assists with access to schools, applications for fee exemptions, debt cancellation for unpaid school fees and psycho-social support, provides uniforms and stationery and skills training for women and teenagers
Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 8.30am to 4pm
🏠 Fifth Floor, Meubelsentrum Building, 11 Kerk Street, corner Mooi, CBD
📠 PO Box 15744, Braamfontein, 2028
☎ 011 333 9266 📠 011 333 8757
✉ rcpsa@rcpafrika.org.za

Somali Association of South Africa

Head office
🏠 97 Seventh Avenue, corner Church Street, Mayfair
☎ 011 839 0939 📠 086 698 6423



Somali Community Board





Head office

-  Office 13, Amal Shopping Centre, 144 Central Avenue, Mayfair
-  011 837 2910  011 837 2910
-  info@somalisouthafrica.co.za

South African National Zakaat Foundation

Services → Muslim charity that provides humanitarian assistance, business-skills training and bursaries




Intake → Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 1pm

-  39 Mint Road, Fordsburg
-  011 834 6046  011 833 4003
-  jhb2@sanzaf.org.za

South African Red Cross Society

Services → Direct humanitarian assistance, family tracing and facilitation of the sending and receiving of messages from families across conflict zones

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 12pm

-  16th Floor Sable Centre, 41 De Korte Street, Braamfontein
-  011 339 1992  011 339 1993



Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs



Johannesburg regional office

-  New Government Building, corner Harrison and Plein streets, CBD
-  011 639 4000  011 834 6623

Lindela Deportation Centre (Home Affairs)

-  10 Tom Muller Road, Fordsburg, Krugersdorp West
-  011 662 0500

OR Tambo International Airport port control




-  011 975 1516/0765  011 390 1015

Refugee reception office

Services → Processes applications for refugee status, refugee identity documents etc


-  19 Planet Avenue, Crown Mines
-  011 226 4600  011 226 4603/02
-  Florencia.Belvedere@dha.gov.za

Department of Social Development

-  Thusanong Building, 69 Commissioner Street, CBD
-  011 355 7600  011 355 7653



Joburg City Migrants Help Desk

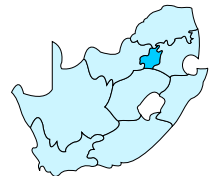
Services → Assists migrants with accessing government services in Johannesburg and provides general advice to migrants

-  CJ Cronje Building, 80 Loveday Street, CBD
100 Christiaan de Wet Road, Florida Park
-  011 376 8684 (CBD desk)
011 761 0270 (Florida Park desk)
-  011 376 8593 (CBD desk)
011 472 6930 (Florida Park desk)

Johannesburg Family Court

Services → Adjudicates on family-law matters and assists in instituting divorce proceedings

-  15 Market Street, Johannesburg
-  011 639 0433





Legal services

Black Sash

Services → Provides paralegal assistance to help secure grants and ensures administrative justice

 First Floor, Khotso House, 25 Anderson Street, Marshalltown

 011 834 8361/5  011 492 1177

 gauteng@blacksash.org.za

Johannesburg Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Provides free legal aid to indigent people


 SA Eagle House, Ninth Floor, 70 Fox Street, CBD

 011 870 1480  011 870 1488

Lawyers for Human Rights

Services → Provides legal assistance regarding unlawful arrest, detention and deportation, provides assistance with asylum-application procedures, appeals and reviews in case of rejected asylum applications.

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 8.30am to 1pm for walk-ins

 Braamfontein Centre, 23 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein

 011 339 1960  011 339 2665

 joburg@lhr.org.za

Legal Resources Centre

Services → Assists with class-action legal cases that impact on big groups


 Braam Fischer House, 25 Rissik Street, CBD

 011 836 9831  011 836 8680

ProBono.org

Services → Puts immigrants in touch with private lawyers etc who may take on their matters for free

Intake → Thursday mornings only for refugee matters

 Office 902, Ninth Floor, Schreiner Chambers, 94 Pritchard Street, CBD



 011 336 9510  011 336 9511

Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre to End Violence against Women

Services → Legal counselling regarding domestic violence, rape, maintenance, custody access

Intake → Mondays to Fridays from 8.30am to 4pm, appointments preferred

 Tenth Floor, Braamfontein Centre, 26 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein


 011 403 4267/8230  011 403 4275

 reception@tlac.org.za

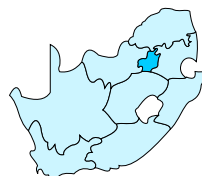
University of Witwatersrand Law Clinic

Services → Provides legal assistance with asylum applications, appeals and reviews in case of rejected applications and other general legal advice

Intake → Mondays from 12pm onwards

 1 Jan Smuts Ave, Braamfontein

 011 717 8562  011 717 8519



Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

Trauma clinic

Services → Provides individual and group counselling to survivors of violence and torture, facilitates support groups, offers training workshops on complex trauma and trauma management, also offers specialist services for the psychiatric management of survivors of complex trauma and torture, runs community outreach programmes to raise awareness on trauma

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 4pm for assessment

🏠 Fourth Floor, Braamfontein Centre, 23 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein

☎ 011 403 5102 📠 011 403 7532

✉ info@csvr.org.za

Islamic Careline

Services → Counselling for abused women and children, marital counselling, trauma debriefing, play therapy, HIV/AIDS counselling

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 4pm, Fridays 9am to 12pm

Fees → Donations preferred for face-to-face counselling

🏠 32 Dolly Rathebe Road, Fordsburg

📮 PO Box 42872, Fordsburg, 2033

☎ 011 373 8080 📠 011 373 8099

✉ careline@islamsa.org.za

Johannesburg Child Welfare

Services → Counselling and therapy for abused children under the age of 12

Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4pm

🏠 41 Fox Street, corner West Street, CBD

☎ 011 298 8500 📠 011 298 8590

✉ director@jhbchildwelfare.org.za

Lifeline

Services → Rape counselling for survivors and family, domestic violence counselling and trauma counselling

Intake → Direct counselling by appointment only

Fees → Donations accepted

🏠 2 The Avenue, corner Henrietta Street, Norwood

☎ 011 728 1347 (24-hour crisis line)

📠 011 728 3497

People Opposing Women Abuse

Services → Telephonic and individual counselling for women, legal advice and court preparation, shelters for abused women

Fees → Donations accepted

🏠 Confidential

☎ 011 642 4345/6 📠 011 484 3195

📞 083 7651235 from 4.30pm (crisis line)

✉ info@powa.co.za

Sonke Gender Justice Network

Services → Addresses gender, HIV and health vulnerabilities through advocacy and training

🏠 Sable Centre, 41 De Korte Street, Braamfontein

☎ 011 339 3589 📠 011 339 6503

✉ info@genderjustice.org.za

Southern African Centre for Survivors of Torture

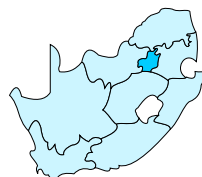
Services → Assists Zimbabwean torture victims with specialised individual and group counselling, also provides medical assistance for torture survivors

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 12pm for assessment

🏠 11th Floor, Braamfontein Centre, 23 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein

☎ 011 339 4476 📠 011 339 4477

✉ sacstinfo@gmail.com





Public health facilities

Coronationville Hospital

 Corner Fuel and Oudswarren streets, Newclare
 011 470 9000  011 477 4113

Helen Joseph Hospital

 Perth Road, Auckland Park
 011 489 1011

Hillbrow Community Health Centre




 Corner Smit and Klein streets, Hillbrow
 011 694 3700

Johannesburg General Hospital

 Jubilee Road, Parktown
 011 488 4911  011 643 1612

Yeoville Clinic

Services → Family planning, pre- and post-HIV and sexually transmitted disease testing and counselling, provision of the emergency pill. Social worker available for counselling on Thursdays





 Corner Kenmere and Hopkins streets, Yeoville
 011 648 7979  011 4872048

Shelters





Bethany Shelter

Restrictions → Free shelter for abused women only
 Corner Millbourn Road and Viljoen Street, Bertrams
 011 614 3245  011 624 2647
 dedwards@netactive.co.za

Bienvenue Shelter

Services → Shelter for newly arrived refugee women and children. Three-month limit. Referrals only.
 36 Terrace Road, Bertrams
 011 624 2915  011 624 2915
 082 509 2912




Ekhaya Overnight Shelter

Restrictions → Men and women, but no children allowed.
R4/night
 Corner Quartz and Kotze Streets, Hillbrow
 011 725 6531  011 725 6572
 steven@mes.org.za



Freda Hartley Shelter for Women

Restrictions → Free shelter for women only
 97 Regent Street, Yeoville
 011 648 6005  011 648 3016



Jabulani Khakibos Kids Centre

Restrictions → For boys who have been on the streets
 1 High Street, Berea
 011 642 0736  jabulanikhakiboskids@gmail.co.za

Place of Refuge

Restrictions → For men and women
 Diagonal Street, La Rochelle
 011 435 7867

Rosebank Mercy Centre

Restrictions → Single men only, R5/night
 17 Sturdee Avenue, Rosebank
 011 447 4399

Strabane Mercy Centre

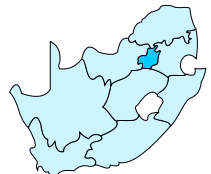
Restrictions → Only men and women over 30 years of age, R5/day
 98 Kerk Street, Johannesburg
 011 336 2423  011 336 2423

The House

Restrictions → For girls between 12 and 18 only, three month limit
 60 Olivia Road, Berea
 011 680 2913  011 433 0901

Usindiso Sanctuary

Restrictions → For abused women, especially those with children, capacity for 85 women, R62/month
 80 Albert Street, Marshalltown
 011 334 1143  011 334 1206




Soup kitchens

Cathedral of Christ the King

 Saratoga Avenue, Joubert Park

Irene Church

 Corner Belt and End streets, Doornfontein

Trinity Congregation Church

 Corner Muller and Bedford streets, Yeoville

Gauteng: Tshwane

Basic needs service providers

Jesuit Refugee Services

Services → Provides limited accommodation and assistance for new arrivals and vulnerable groups, referral letters to hospitals, HIV/AIDS counselling, limited funeral assistance, micro loans and grants for primary education


 Provisus Building, 523 Church Street, Arcadia



 012 341 9185  012 341 8407

 admin@jrssa.co.za

Misericordia International Centre

Services → Free English and French classes

 Wesley Methodist Church, 258 Burgers Park Lane, Pretoria

  012 322 5888

Refugee Aid Organisation

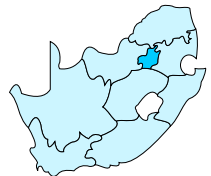
Services → Humanitarian assistance for unaccompanied and separated children

Intake → By appointment only

 Corner Prinsloo and Jacob -Marie streets, Pretoria

 072 785 3959  012 320 2949



 claudia@sa-rao.org



Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs

Pretoria regional office

 Sentrakor Building, Pretorius Street, CBD
 012 324 1860/74  012 326 8328




Refugee reception office (Marabastad)

Services → Processes asylum applications in the Pretoria area
 Corner DF Malan Drive and Struben Street, Pretoria West
 012 327 3500  012 327 2621
 Solani.Ntukwana@dha.gov.za

Tshwane interim refugee reception office

Services → Processes asylum applications from SADC nationals
 Pretoria Showgrounds, 203 Soutter Street, Pretoria
 012 306 0800  086 518 3362

Pretoria Sexual Offences Court

 Corner Schoeman and Schubert streets, Pretoria
 012 319 4000  012 323 5733

Legal service providers

Lawyers for Human Rights: Refugee Rights Project




Services → Legal assistance regarding unlawful arrest, detention and deportation and repatriation; assistance with asylum-application procedures, appeals and reviews in case of rejected asylum applications; advice on family reunification, relocation and resettlement

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 12pm

 Kutlwanong Democracy Centre, 357 Visagie Street, Pretoria
 012 320 2943/4/5  012 320 2949

Pretoria Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal services to indigent people

 Van Der Stel Building, 179 Pretorius Street, Pretoria
 012 401 9200  012 324 9150

Psycho-social counselling services

FAMSA

Services → Family and individual counselling

Intake → By appointment only

Fees → R180 for individual counselling, R220 for couple counselling




 234 Lange Street, Brooklyn
 012 4600 733  012 4600 745
 famsa@absmail.co.za

Inter Trauma Nexus

Services → Rape counselling, victim support, post-traumatic stress disorder

Intake → Per appointment only

Fees → R300/session



 425A Ronald Street, Garsfontein
 012 993 4219  086 633 5186

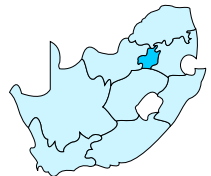
Lifeline

Services → Face-to-face rape counselling for survivors and family, domestic-violence counselling

Intake → Per appointment during office hours



Fees → Donations accepted

 153 Allcock Street, Colbyn
 012 342 9000  012 342 1224
 012 342 2222 (24-hour crisis line)
 info@lifelinepta.org.za



Public health facilities

Pretoria Academic Hospital

 Corner Voortrekker Road and Dr Savage Street, Gezina
 012 354 1000




Pretoria West Hospital

 Syweirde Street, Pretoria West
 012 648 7979

Shelters



Itumeleng

Restrictions → For street children, boys only between the ages of 6 and 18. Maximum capacity for 18 boys

 53 Plein Street, Sunnyside
 012 343 1373  012 344 5747



Mercy House

Restrictions → Only accepts referrals from a social worker, for abused women and children

 53 Plein Street, Sunnyside
 012 329 5528




Pam se Huis

Restrictions → Only for the elderly

Fee → R700/month
 885 Botha Street, Hermanstad
 012 379 7338


The Salvation Army

Restrictions → Only open to pensioners

Fee → R700/month
 219 Church Street, Pretoria
 012 327 3005  012 327 2506



Soup kitchens

Catholic Church


 Corner Celliers and Jorissen streets

Gauteng Council of Churches

Restrictions → Food parcels once per month. Newcomers must register with the council and provide valid proof of asylum or refugee documents and proof of residency in Pretoria

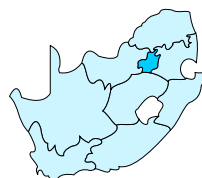
 St Alban's Church, Schoeman Street
 012 323 5187/8

Roman Catholic Cathedral

 Corner Bosman and Skinner streets

Salvation Army

 Church Square



Basic needs service providers

International Refugee Service



Services → Accommodation, meals and referrals (in partnership with other service providers in Durban)

 38 Broad Street, Central Durban
 031 304 4860  086 670 7430

KwaZulu-Natal Refugee Council

Services → Networking and advocacy with refugee organisations, skills empowerment

Intake → Daily 8.30am to 4.30pm

 Industry Building House, 59 Diakonia Avenue, Durban
 031 304 9456

Refugee Pastoral Care


Services → Food, clothing and shelter for new arrivals, aid to unaccompanied minors and with burials of deceased refugees

Fee → R18/night

 Emmanuel Cathedral, Cathedral Road, Durban
 031 307 1074  031 261 2377
 refpascdbn@iafrica.com




Refugee Social Services

Intake → Orientation for newcomers to the centre on Mondays from 8.30am, valid permits required

 Room N242, Diakonia Centre, 20 St Andrew's Street, Durban
 031 310 3574  031 310 3576

The South African Red Cross Society

Services → Tracing services (exchange of family news through Red Cross societies internationally); assistance in re-uniting vulnerable persons, such as unaccompanied minors or elderly persons, with their families in host country (or in South Africa)

 201 Northway, Durban North
 031 563 2914  031 563 2929

Union of Refugee Women

Services → Full-day crèche for refugee children from Mondays to Saturdays

Fee → R250/month

 36 Lionel House, 26 Pickering Street, Point Road, Durban
 031 332 6265 
 saurw@ananzi.co.za

Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs

Durban office

 350 Umgeni Road, Greyville
 031 308 7900  031 308 7926

Refugee reception office

Services → Processes all asylum applications in the KwaZulu-Natal region


 137 Moore Street, Durban
 031 362 1201  031 362 1220
 Naleen.Balgebind@dha.gov.za

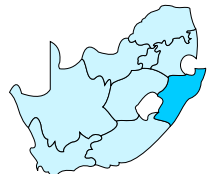
Department of Social Development

Durban office

 Room 116, First Floor, Esplanade Government Building, corner Stanger and Victoria Embankment
 031 360 5444  031 337 5914

Provincial office


 208 Berg Street, Pietermaritzburg
 033 264 5400  033 264 5435



Legal services

Durban Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal services for indigent people

 Fourth Floor, Salisbury House, 332 Smith Street

 031 304 0100  031 304 3564

Lawyers for Human Rights

Services → Legal assistance with unlawful arrest, detention and deportation; representation at appeals and reviews; assistance with re-unification, resettlement and repatriation


Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 12pm

 Diakonia Centre, 20 Diakonia Avenue, Durban

 031 301 0531  031 301 0538

Legal Resources Centre

Services → Takes up legal cases that would benefit a group of people

 N240 Diakonia Centre, 20 Diakonia Avenue, Durban

 031 301 7572  031 304 2823

Pietermaritzburg Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal services for indigent people


 20 Otto Street

 033 394 2190  033 342 2576

Port Shepstone Justice Centre (LAB)


Services → Free legal services for indigent people

 Shepstone Mall, Aiken Street


 039 682 5908

Psycho-social counselling

Lifeline

 38 Adrian Road, Stamford Hill, Durban

 031 303 1344  031 303 1419

 031 312 2323 (crisis line)


Statutory bodies

Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

 Fifth and Sixth floors, Embassy Building, 199 Smith Street, Durban


 031 362 2300  031 368 4644/7387/7407

Commission for Gender Equality

 12th Floor, Commercial City, 40 Commercial Street, Durban


 031 304 9445  031 307 7435



Independent Complaints Directorate

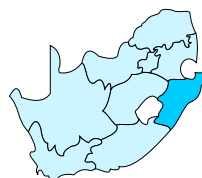
 Third Floor, The Marine Building, 22 Dorothy Nyembe Street (formerly Gardiner Street), Durban

 031 310 1300  031 305 8214

South African Human Rights Commission

 First Floor, Victoria Embankment, Durban

 031 304 7323/4/5  031 304 7323



Basic needs service providers

Children Resource Centre

Services → Assists unaccompanied migrant children in and around Musina

Contact → Ms Ernie Nelusha

 1225 Kwinda Street, Musina


 015 533 1428  015 533 1428

Jesuit Refugee Services - Makhado

Services → Provides emergency assistance, including food and non-food items, for refugees; provides ransport money for travel and assistance with medical emergencies

Intake → Mondays to Fridays from 8am to 4pm

 01 Industria Street, Makhado

 015 516 3066

 thandi.jrslimpopo@vodamail.co.za

Refugee Children's Project

Services → Assists migrant children and vulnerable women with access to services and finding shelter


 13 Wilson Street, Musina

 072 270 2001/0764082591


Thohoyandou Children's Home

Services → Provides shelter and takes care of children without parents, including migrant children, around the Thohoyandou area

Contact → Mamane (social worker)

 Please insert physical address

 Private Bag X5044, Thohoyandou, 0950

 015 962 1524

Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs

Beitbridge port control

 015 530 0067  015 530 0018

Musina office

 Riverlodge Building, Musina


 015 534 3232  015 534 2886


Regional office


 Library Gardens, Corner Grobler and Schoeman Streets, Polokwane

 015 290 4600  015 295 7908

Department of Social Development


 Department of Health and Social Development Building, 18 College Street, Polokwane

 015 293 6004/6054/6011/6053


 015 293 6150/6060/6170

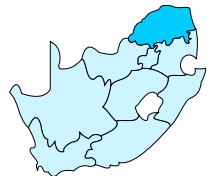
South African Police Services

Beit Bridge

 015 534 6326

Musina

 015 534 7400




International organisations

International Organisation for Migration

Services → Assists stranded migrants and unaccompanied children with protection issues, family tracing and related activities

Intake → Mondays to Fridays 9am to 12.30pm

 21 Willem Smit Street, Musina

 015 534 1314  015 534 3413

Save the Children UK

Services → Provides support to more than 14 centres in Musina that provide humanitarian aid to migrant children

Intake → No direct services at this office


 10 Harper Road, Nancefield township, Musina

 015 534 3305  015 534 3304


United Nations High Commission for Refugees

Services → Provides protection, humanitarian and advocacy services for refugees in Musina through its partner organisations

Intake → None

 10 Irwin Street, Musina

 015 534 2381  015 534 2381

 rsapr@unhcr.org


Legal service providers

Alldays Advice Office

Lawyers for Human Rights


Intake → This branch does not see clients at the office. The officers work mainly on arrest and detention monitoring at the relevant centres in Musina



 42 Villa Lua, National Road, Musina

 076 216 1120 (Sabelo Sibanda)

Makhado Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance


 Noor Gardens, corner Krogh and Devenish streets



 015 519 1100  015 519 1103

Musina Legal Advice Office

Services → Paralegal assistance with all type of matters

Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4pm

 1224 Rollet Kwinda Street, Nancefield Extension 2

 015 533 1002  015 533 1002/086 540 2990

Nkuzi Development Association


Services → Deals with abuse of migrants in their places of employment, specifically in agriculture

 105 Schoeman Street

 015 297 6972  015 297 6975

Polokwane Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance to indigent people

 Pioneer Building, 52 Landros Mare Street


 015 291 2429  015 295 4386

University Of Venda Law Clinic

Services → Legal assistance to everyone including migrants


 Law School Building, University of Venda


 015 962 8637/015 962 8639


 015 962 8045

Statutory bodies

South African Human Rights Commission

 Office 102, First Floor, Library Gardens Square corner Schoeman and Gliber streets, Polokwane

 015 291 3500/4




 015 291 3505



Governmental service providers

Department of Home Affairs

Nelspruit regional office

 Corner Henshall and Brander streets
 013 753 3131  013 752 5250

Witbank regional office

 Justice Avenue
 013 656 6416  013 656 4834

Department of Social Development

 Building 3, 7 Government Complex, Nelspruit
 013 766 3429  013 766 3475

Legal service providers

Bohlabela Advice Centre

Services → Paralegal advice
Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4pm
 Behind Ansari shopping complex, R40 Main Road,
Bushbuckridge
 013 799 1841  013 799 1841

Funda Advice Centre

Services → Paralegal advice
Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4pm
 Corner Steven Masango and McDonald streets, Belfast
 013 253 1998  013 253 1998



Leandra Advice Centre

Services → Paralegal advice
Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4pm
 1095 Freddy Butana Khambule Street
 017 683 1229  017 683 0385

Nelspruit Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance to indigent people
 Nedbank Centre, 30 Brown Street
 013 753 2154  013 755 1540

Nkomazi Community Advice Office





Services → Paralegal advice
Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4pm
 Stand 788B, Schoemansdal Trust, Shongwe Mission
 013 781 0660  086 546 2547

Witbank Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal services to indigent people
 Witbank Vusani House, Arras Street
 013 656 5290  013 656 5291




Psycho-social support services

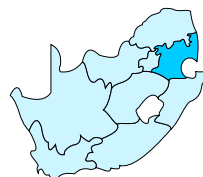
Lifeline Nelspruit

Services → Telephone counselling
Hours → Mondays to Fridays 8am to 1pm
 27 Murray Street
 013 755 2635  013 752 8444
 013 755 3606 (crisis)


Statutory bodies

South African Human Rights Commission

 Cartex Building, 32 Bell Street, Nelspruit
 013 752 5890  013 752 6890



Governmental service providers**Department of Home Affairs****Kimberley regional office**

 New Public Building, 7 to 9 New Main Road


 053 839 5402  053 831 4836



Upington regional office

 16 Scott Street

 054 332 3120  054 332 4799

Department of Social Development

 Mimosa Complex, Barkley Road, Homestead, Kimberley

 053 807 5600  053 871 1062

Legal service providers**Lawyers for Human Rights**

Services → Deals with farm workers and facilitates contact with Lawyers for Human Rights Refugee and Migrants Rights Project

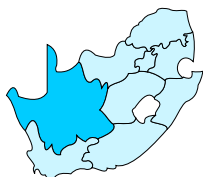
 River City Centre, corner Hill and Scott streets, Upington


 054 331 2200  054 331 2220

Statutory bodies**South African Human Rights Commission**

 Ancorley Building, 50 Mark Street, Upington

 054 332 3993  054 332 7750

**Governmental service providers****Department of Home Affairs****Klerksdorp regional office**

 50A, OR Tambo Street


 018 462 6720  018 462 1933

Department of Social Development

 Provident Building, University Drive, Mmabatho

 018 387 0255/3497  018 384 5521/6219

Statutory bodies**South African Human Rights Commission**



 145 Bethlehem Drive, Rustenburg

 014 592 0692  014 592 7910



Basic needs service providers




African Disabled Refugee Organisation

 22 Alfred Street, Cape Town
 021 422 0645

The Ark City of Refuge

Services → Shelter and food, school facilities, crèche, computer classes and skills-training programmes for refugees and asylum seekers with valid permits and referral from Cape Town Refugee Centre




Intake → Homeless and unemployed persons only

 5 Old Faure Road, Eersterivier, Cape Town
 021 843 3927  021 843 3013

Bonne Esperance Shelter for Women and Children (Catholic Welfare and Development)

Services → Limited assistance with food, accommodation and clothing, day- and after-school care for children, language classes, basic business and computer skills training

Intake → By referral from other NGOs only, no walk-ins!

 4 Lower Ottery Road, Philippi, Cape Town
 021 691 8664  021 691 8665

Cape Town Refugee Centre

Services → Food and accommodation, medical assistance, assistance for pregnant women and women with infants, assistance with accessing schools and for unaccompanied minors

Intake → Mondays and Tuesdays 9am to 12pm, Thursdays by appointment

 F12, First Floor, Wynberg Centre, 123 Main Road, Wynberg, Cape Town
 021 762 9670  021 761 2294

The Haven




Intake → Adults only, R10/night, monthly fee for pensioners.

 Ambagvallei Street, Huguenoot, Paarl
 021 862 1812  021 862 3120

Rosemoore Shelter for Battered Women and Children


Services → Food and shelter for abused women and children

Intake → Only abused women and children

 In George, details not listed for security reasons
  044 875 1551

Salvation Army (Care Haven)

Services → Counselling, shelter and food for abused women and children only

 Not listed for security reasons

 021 638 5511  021 637 0226
 careaids@iafrica.com

Saartjie Baartman Centre

Services → Shelter and various projects for abused women

 Corner Klipfontein and Aries roads, Mannenberg, Cape Town
 021 633 5287  021 637 3487
 www.saartjiebaartmancentre.org.za

Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town




Services → Limited assistance with food and clothing for newly arrived asylum seekers (first six months in Cape Town), general and spiritual counselling, assistance for disabled refugees and unaccompanied minors, English classes from basic to advanced, sewing and computer classes

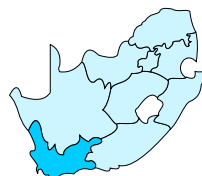
Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm, food and clothing distributed on Wednesdays

 47 Commercial Street
 021 465 6433  021 465 6317

The South African Red Cross Society

Services → Provides tracing services (exchange of family news through Red Cross societies in various countries); assistance with re-uniting vulnerable persons, such as unaccompanied minors (up to age 18 years) or elderly persons, with their families in host country (or in South Africa); handles requests for school, university, birth, marriage or death certificates


 Unit 5, Ndabeni Business Park, Corner Old Mill and Inyoni Street, Ndabeni, Cape Town
 021 532 0202  021 531 3007



Education and skills training

Agency for Refugee Education, Skills Training and Advocacy


Services → Provides skills and training necessary to assist with integration including English language, sewing, vocational skills, business, business mentorship, computer literacy etc; facilitates psycho-social support groups, advocacy, lobbying and research, provides information and career counselling
Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 8.30am to 4.30pm and Fridays 8.30am to 3.30pm


 Early Learning Centre, 22 Springbok Street, Athlone, Cape Town

 021 633 8762  086 514 8956

 coordinator@aresta.org.za

Alliance for Refugees in South Africa

 Office 901, Ninth Floor, Tribault House, St Georges Street, Cape Town


 021 421 2348

 africaday2009@gmail.com

www.afrisa.org.za

Excelsior Empowerment Centre

 First Floor, Shamdoll Centre, 54 Halt Road, Elsies River


 021 932 8585

 excelsiorcentre@yahoo.com

Shane English School

Services → Free English classes for refugees and asylum seekers with valid permits

 Eighth Floor, V&A Waterfront, 56 Shortmarket Street, Cape Town

 021 424 3190

St Joseph's College/Adult Education Program

Services → Free literacy classes (in English, Afrikaans and Xhosa); skills training in sewing and design, business, computers and alternative health.

Intake → Saturdays only, 9am to 5pm

Bursaries for skills training courses available for refugees and asylum seekers that are continuous learners at the college



 21 Belmont Road, Rondebosch, Cape Town

 021 685 1257  021 686 9295

Governmental service providers


Department of Home Affairs

Cape Town International Airport port of entry


 021 935 5900/01  021 935 5913

Cape Town regional office

 Faircape Building, 56 Barrack Street

 021 468 4503


021 468 4505 (National Immigration Branch)

 021 462 1198

021 462 1148 (National Immigration Branch)

Refugee Reception Office

Services → Processes asylum applications in the Cape region

 Sturrock Building, 18 Montreal Road, Airport Industria, Nyanga, Cape Town


 021 380 5000  021 380 5023


 Richard.Sikakane@dha.gov.za

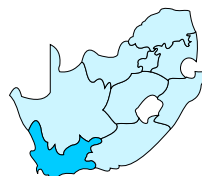
Department of Social Development

Services → Provides assistance and social grants to vulnerable people

 Union House, 14 Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town

 021 483 3858/3765/3158/5445

 021 483 3887



Legal services

Athlone Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance for indigent people

 Melofin Centre, Old Klipfontein Road, Athlone, Cape Town

 021 697 5252  021 697 5316

Black Sash


 Fourth Floor, 12 Plein Street, Cape Town

 021 461 7804  021 461 8004

 info@blacksash.org.za

George Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance for indigent people

 Tommy Joubert Building, corner Craddock and Courtney streets

 044 802 8600  044 802 8610

Lawyers for Human Rights

Services → Legal assistance on farm-worker issues, assistance with migrant issues by establishing contact with LHR in Pretoria or Johannesburg

 Former Corobrick offices, Bridge Street, Stellenbosch

 021 887 1003  021 883 3302

Legal Resources Centre

Services → Legal assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in class actions or broad public-interest matters

Intake → Mondays to Fridays 8.30am to 1pm and 2 to 4.30pm

 Greenmarket Place, 54 Shortmarket Street, Cape Town

 021 423 8285  021 423 9935

Stellenbosch Justice Centre (LAB)

Services → Free legal assistance for indigent people

 Eikestad Mall

 021 882 9221  021 882 9237


University of Cape Town Law Clinic

Services → Legal advice to refugees and asylum seekers, assistance with appeal hearings, family reunification, voluntary repatriation and resettlement, conducts interviews on behalf of UNHCR in Cape Town

Intake → Mondays to Thursdays 8.30am to 1pm

 Kramer Law School Building, 1 Stanley Road, Middle


Campus, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town

 021 650 3775


Psychosocial counselling services

Lifeline/Childline

Services → 24-hour telephone counselling services


 56 Roeland Street, Cape Town

 021 461 1113  021 461 6400

 021 461 1111 (crisis line)

Sonke Gender Justice Network


Services → Sexual and reproductive-health education for refugees, distribution of condoms, addresses HIV and health vulnerabilities and gender issues



 Westminster House, 122 Longmarket Street, Cape Town

 021 423 7088  021 424 5645

The Trauma Centre for the Survivors of Violence and Torture

Services → Counselling of refugees and asylum seekers who are survivors of torture and trauma, individual and family counselling, assistance with integration into South African society, information workshops and support groups


 Cowley House, 126 Chapel Street, Woodstock, Cape Town

 021 465 7373 (by appointment)  021 462 3143

Public health facilities


Groote Schuur Hospital

 Main Road, Observatory, Cape Town

 021 404 9111


Red Cross Children's Hospital

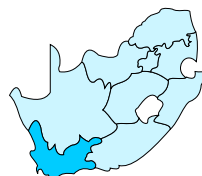
 Klipfontein Road, Rondebosch, Cape Town

 021 658 5111

Tygerberg Hospital

 Fransie van Zyl Drive, Tygerberg, Cape Town

 021 938 4911



Statutory bodies

Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

Assists in the event of unfair labour practices

78 Darling Street, Cape Town

021 469 0111 021 465 7193/7

Commission for Gender Equality

Fifth Floor, ABSA Building, 132 Adderley Street, Cape Town

021 426 4080/3 021 424 0549

Independent Complaints Directorate

Sixth Floor, Colonial Mutual Building, 106 Adderley Street,

Cape Town

021 941 4800 021 949 3196

South African Human Rights Commission

Seventh Floor, ABSA Building, 132 Adderley Street,

Cape Town

021 426 2277 021 426 2875

Quick reference to useful websites

Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration

www.cma.org.za

Commission on Gender Equality

www.cge.org.za

Consortium for Migrants and Refugees in South Africa

www.cormsa.org.za

Department of Home Affairs

www.dha.gov.za

Department of Social Development

www.dsd.gov.za

Department of Health

www.doh.gov.za

Forced Migration Studies Programme

www.migration.org.za

Independent Complaints Directorate

www.icd.gov.za

International Organisation for Migration

www.iom.int

Lawyers for Human Rights

www.lhr.org.za

Medicins Sans Frontières

www.msf.org.za

South African Government Information

www.info.gov.za

South African Human Rights Commission

www.hrc.org.za

Southern African Migration Project

www.queensu.ca/samp

UNICEF

www.unicef.org/southafrica

United Nations High Commission for Refugees

www.unhcr.org

