

FAQs for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

This part of the website is intended for asylum seekers and refugees. For other members of the public interested in understanding more about the situation of refugees and asylum-seekers, please refer to here:

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/3/56e95c676/refugees-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs.html>

1. How do I claim asylum in Indonesia?

If you wish to apply for refugee status in Indonesia, you will need to fill out a Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Application Form.

You and each adult member of your family (18 years of age or above) should fill out a separate form, providing a brief summary of why you left your country and why you feel you cannot return. Please provide this information truthfully as providing false information could lead to delays in processing your claim, or in your claim being rejected. If you are unable to read or write a UNHCR interpreter will assist you.

All information you provide is treated confidentially and is not shared with third parties or with other members of your family. If you feel more comfortable being interviewed by someone of the same sex, you can make a request to UNHCR's registration staff.

Once you fill out the form you will undergo a registration interview with a UNHCR officer who will collect your biodata information and the details of your refugee claim, take your photograph, and collect your fingerprints and iris scans.

Following the registration interview, if appropriate you will be issued with an Asylum-Seeker Certificate, which is valid for 1 year, and if required, an appointment slip for a further interview to determine whether you qualify to be a refugee. This interview is called the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview. Because of the large number of asylum-seekers approaching UNHCR, any further interview will take place at least two years from the date you register.

2. Can UNHCR give me legal advice?

Unfortunately, due to limited resources and the nature of our role in Indonesia, UNHCR cannot provide legal advice. SUAKA is an organisation in Indonesia that can provide legal advice to people seeking asylum. They also produce self-help kits which are available on their website free of charge (suaka.or.id). Another organisation called JRS gives limited advice to asylum seekers who live in the Bogor/Cisarua area (jrs.or.id/en/).

3. I'm in detention, can UNHCR help me?

Yes, UNHCR can still process your asylum application from detention. However, release from detention and transfer to alternative accommodation are controlled by the Directorate

General of Immigration, and UNHCR cannot compel the authorities to release you. If you get detained during the course of your UNHCR process, please inform UNHCR immediately so we can update your location in our records and continue to process your case.

4. Can UNHCR help me to resettle?

Resettlement is one of a range of options that UNHCR calls 'comprehensive solutions'. If someone is recognised as a refugee UNHCR will consider the personal circumstances of each individual to decide what options may be available for them in the longer term. Resettlement is not available to all refugees due to the very limited number of resettlement places offered by countries who participate in the resettlement scheme. Under current circumstances only the most vulnerable refugees can be resettled.

Detailed information about resettlement can be found here: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ac0d7e52.pdf>

5. Can UNHCR help me be reunited with my family?

If you have close family members residing in Indonesia please inform UNHCR at the time of registration. While we cannot guarantee you will be reunited with your relatives, as these decisions are often made by the Indonesian authorities, we will do whatever we can to facilitate the process.

If you have close family members residing in a third country please make sure you provide their name, address, and telephone number to UNHCR. Resettlement on family reunification grounds is normally restricted to immediate family members, meaning your spouse, parents, or children. As all decisions relating to resettlement are made by the authorities of the country where your relatives reside, UNHCR cannot guarantee you will be considered. Your relatives can also contact the authorities in the country where they reside to make a request for you to be reunited with them through direct sponsorship programs. Please note that UNHCR has no role in the processing of such applications.

6. I want to return to my home country. What should I do?

UNHCR is able to refer you to a scheme called Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) which is operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The AVR scheme can facilitate your return to your home country, including the costs of travel.

In order to be considered for the AVR scheme you should come to the UNHCR office in Jakarta any Friday morning at 09:00, where you will meet with both UNHCR and IOM staff.

You should bring with you your Asylum-Seeker Certificate or Refugee Card, your passport and contact details for any relatives or friends in your home country. If you do not have a passport IOM will assist you in obtaining a new one to facilitate return to your country.

If you are not based in or near Jakarta you should approach any UNHCR or IOM staff in the area where you live, who will refer your details to Jakarta.

7. Can UNHCR help me with my medical problem?

UNHCR does not provide medical assistance but can point you towards your nearest Puskesmas, which is the primary healthcare system in Indonesia. You should take your UNHCR refugee card or Asylum-Seeker Certificate with you to the nearest Puskesmas and expect to pay between IDR 5,000 and IDR 35,000 for a consultation with a doctor (including medicine). Puskesmas provide outpatient facilities such as general practitioner consultation, dental clinic, family planning consultation, infant vaccination, toddler related nutrition and health facilities. Puskesmas operates 07:30 to 16:00.

Leaflets on access to Puskesmas clinics are available at the UNHCR office in Jakarta.

8. Who is a refugee?

According to article 1A(2) of the *1951 Refugee Convention*, a refugee is:

“Any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country”.

9. What is the purpose of the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview?

The interview is an opportunity for you to tell UNHCR what has happened to you and why you have left your country, and for UNHCR to gather enough information in order for a panel to reach a decision on whether you qualify to be recognized as a refugee.

10. Are my family members, who registered with me, required to be present at the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview?

Yes, all family members should come with you to your Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview.

11. What should I bring with me to the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview?

You should bring with you any documentary evidence which you have that you think will help to explain and support the reasons why you cannot return to your country. You should also bring any travel documents and identity papers that you have. Other useful documents may include photographs, medical records, court summons, newspaper clippings and anything else that specifically relates to you and your claim for asylum. You will be allowed to bring documents into your interview but your other property will remain in a locker at the reception area during your interview.

12. Can I have a legal representative to assist me during my refugee status determination procedure?

Yes, you may request to be accompanied to your Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview by a legal representative. Applications to be accompanied by a legal representative

should be submitted to the attention of the RSD Officer at UNHCR in Jakarta. The legal representative should be admitted to practise law either as a solicitor or barrister in Indonesia or should be employed by a recognised human rights organisation. The legal representative should submit a formal notice of representation using the UNHCR form or on appropriate letterhead in good time to allow UNHCR to check the bona fides of his or her qualifications before proceeding with the interview.

13. How will I be notified of the outcome of my asylum application?

UNHCR will inform you when your decision is finalized as soon as possible. However, do note that it can take quite some time so please be patient. You will be called to come to the UNHCR office to receive your decision in person when it is ready. If you are in detention or in IOM accommodation outside Jakarta, our UNHCR staff at your location will inform you about your decision.

14. What if I am recognized as a refugee?

If you are recognised as a refugee you will be notified of the decision and you and each member of your family will be issued with a UNHCR Refugee ID Card. The card is valid for two years. For refugees in Jakarta, Refugee ID Cards are delivered at the UNHCR office, while for those residing outside Jakarta, Refugee ID Cards are sent to UNHCR staff for distribution in community accommodation centres and detention facilities. In locations outside Jakarta with no UNHCR presence, Refugee ID Cards are delivered by UNHCR staff on mission.

All family members are required to collect their own Refugee ID Cards in person. Before you will be issued with your ID card your identity will be verified by checking your fingerprints and/or iris scans to ensure that you are the person who you claim to be. No one is allowed to collect a Refugee ID Card on behalf of another person except in special circumstances.

Your Refugee ID card is provided free of charge and you should not pay anyone for it.

15. What should I do if I lose my refugee card or asylum seeker certificate?

If you lose your documents you should notify UNHCR immediately in writing clearly stating the circumstances of the loss and requesting reissuance. A reissued Refugee ID Card is valid for two years from date of issuance and a reissued Asylum-Seeker Certificate is valid for one year. If you lose your card or certificate more than once the must obtain a report from the police documenting the loss before a replacement can be issued.

16. What if I am denied refugee status?

If the UNHCR panel decides that you are not a refugee then you will be informed of this decision in writing through a UNHCR staff member. The options available to you will also be explained. If you disagree with the decision reached by UNHCR then you have a right to appeal against the decision within 30 days of being notified of the decision. If you fail to submit an appeal your case will be closed.

17. How can I submit an appeal request?

If the UNHCR panel decides that you are not a refugee you will receive notification of this, and contained in the envelope with your notification will be an appeal application form. You should complete the form and return it to UNHCR within 30 days of the date on which you received your notification. It can be sent to UNHCR using the details listed on the form. You should explain on the form why you believe the decision was wrong. Any new evidence not yet submitted can also be enclosed with the appeal form.

18. Who will review my appeal request in UNHCR?

In the interests of fairness your appeal will be reviewed by UNHCR staff who have not previously had involvement in your case. They will make sure that the correct decision was reached by the initial panel.

19. Will I get another chance for an interview after I submit an appeal request to UNHCR?

In some cases we will invite you for a further interview to discuss your appeal application, however, this may not be necessary in all cases. It is therefore important that you include all of the reasons why you disagree in your appeal form, and that you include any documents which you think we should see.

20. What will happen if my refugee status is denied on appeal stage?

If your appeal is rejected then you will receive notification of that decision in person. From this stage you do not have another right of appeal and you should make arrangements to return to your country of origin. If you need help in returning home you can approach UNHCR or IOM for assistance.

As your case is closed following appeal, you are no longer considered a person of concern to UNHCR. Should you make a request to reopen your case you should be aware that it is very unlikely to produce a different result unless there are significant changes since the initial decision and appeal were considered.

21. How do I get emergency medical attention?

In case of emergency you should go to the nearest hospital or call the 118 emergency number for ambulance and rescue.

22. How do I get emergency physical security protection?

If you are in an emergency or are the victim of a crime you should contact the police on 112.

23. Do I have to pay to access UNHCR services?

No. All UNHCR services are free of charge and you should never be asked to pay for anything. If you are asked to pay you should report this to a member of a UNHCR staff or report it by email to UNHCR Indonesia's email address (insja@unhcr.org), or send a letter by post or into

the box at the reception area at the UNHCR office in Jakarta. Please note that UNHCR is not able to respond to anonymous complaints.

24. What is Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR?)

AVR is a scheme operated by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) which helps people who have decided to return to their country (see Question 6 above).

25. When is UNHCR open for registration of new asylum claims?

If you wish to register a new asylum claim you should come to the UNHCR office in Jakarta from 08:00 Mondays-Thursdays.

26. How can I check the status of my case?

UNHCR in Indonesia is a very busy operation. We try hard to process cases as fast as we can but you are likely to experience delays as we work through our case. Writing letters to check on the status of your case adds to delays so please use our online tool to check the status at: <http://services.unhcr.or.id>

27. What if I need to talk to someone?

We offer telephone counselling as well as counselling sessions by appointment. These are ways in that you can get answers to your questions, however, before using our counselling services please consult this list of Frequently Asked Questions to see if your question can be answered here first.

If you wish to receive counselling with a UNHCR staff member you will need to register to make an appointment. This can be done Tuesdays through Thursdays from 10:00-11:00.

Counselling appointments are provided Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 13:00-16:00 for Farsi speakers, and Thursdays from 13:00-16:00 for all other languages.

Please note that due to the high number of persons approaching UNHCR for counselling, you can only make one appointment within a period of two months.

Alternatively, telephone counselling is available on Friday afternoons from 14:00-17:00 on 021 2964 3655.

28. How do I make a complaint?

If you are unhappy with the way you have been treated you can make a complaint in writing and place it in the box in the public reception area of UNHCR Jakarta's office. Please do not use the box for enquiries.

You can also send your complaint to UNHCR by email at insja@unhcr.org.