



# Refugee and Protection Status Claim Written Statement Guidelines

A guide to preparing a written statement for a refugee and protection claim in New Zealand.

## About these guidelines

As a claimant, you are required to provide a written statement in support of your refugee and protection claim before your interview with the Refugee Status Unit (RSU). The written statement will help the refugee and protection officer (RPO) to understand your situation and prepare questions for your interview. It will also help the RPO to decide how much time may be needed for your interview, and what information needs to be sought or clarified.

It is your responsibility to establish your claim. The statement should be in English, written in your own words and explain all the reasons why you fear returning to your country of origin. Try to provide all the important facts, events and circumstances which have led you to seek refugee and protected person status in New Zealand. These should be clearly set out in a logical, chronological order as much as possible.

The written statement must be submitted no later than **12 weeks** after the *Confirmation of Claim to Refugee and Protection Status (INZ 1071) form* has been lodged.

- **Your responses to your difficulties, if any:** Provide details of your actions and responses following the key events which are the basis of your fear of returning to your home country. You should also include whether you sought help from any government or non-government agencies or organisations.
- **Leaving your home country:** include a brief description about how you departed your home country and travelled to New Zealand, including countries of transit or stops on the way. You should explain if, and how, any person, agent, or organisation helped you, and if you experienced any problems leaving your home country or on your journey to New Zealand.
- Provide details of any relevant events that have occurred since your arrival in New Zealand, and have led you to fear returning to your home country(ies) or are relevant to your fear of returning.
- Also explain what you fear will happen to you and by whom, if you return to your home country now.

*If relevant to the basis of your claim also include:*

- Details about your family background, including any matters relevant to your current situation.
- Details about any contact you have had with your family or friends since leaving your home country. Specify who you were in contact with and what they know about your situation.
- Details about your education history, including a list of all relevant schools and educational institutions you have attended in chronological order (give approximate dates if unsure), and if you have experienced any difficulties during your education.
- Details about your employment history, including self-employment and periods of unemployment, provided in chronological order (give approximate dates if unsure), and if you have experienced any difficulties during your employment.
- Details about your past residence, such as where you grew up, where you lived when your problems occurred, and if you relocated, where to and when.
- Anything else you think is relevant.

Try to provide specific dates, names and places whenever possible in your written statement.

## Content

You should include the following details:

- **Difficulties in your home countries – what happened, when, and why it happened:** provide details of all the circumstances and events that caused you to fear returning to your home country(ies). Events should be explained in a logical, chronological order and include dates, details, and the reasons for the difficulties.
- **Who you fear:** include the names of all the people/ organisations/agents/groups/specific family members who are relevant to your fear of returning to your home country(ies). Explain the reasons why you fear them and why they might wish to harm you.

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## Other information required

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- Indicate if you have received assistance with your written statement other than from a legal representative or licensed immigration adviser. If so, provide details about who helped you.
- Confirm that you understand your written statement's contents and that the information it contains is true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. If applicable, confirm that the English translation has been read back to you in a language you understand.
- You must sign and date your written statement.

### List of documents submitted in support of your claim:

- Any documents attached to the written statement should be original documents, wherever possible (they will be returned later). If the documents are not in English, a certified English translation should be included. If only scans/photographs/photocopies of documents are submitted explain why the originals are not available at this time.