

## CONFIRMATION OF YOUR STATUS IN NEW ZEALAND

You will receive a letter from the Refugee Status Branch (RSB) confirming that you have lodged a refugee and protection claim in New Zealand.

It is very important that you keep this letter and take it with you when you visit other government agencies, health and education providers, and service providers.

If necessary the RSB can confirm your status as an asylum seeker directly with the government agencies listed in this brochure. Agencies can call the RSB on: (09) 928 2236 or email: [RSB@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:RSB@mbie.govt.nz)

## INTERPRETING SERVICES

### EZISPEAK

Ezispak is the main provider of telephone interpreting services to the public sector. Ezispak offers telephone interpreting services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and in over 180 languages. You can use Ezispak when speaking to government agencies and service providers, including: Immigration, Health, Inland Revenue, Internal Affairs, Education, Work and Income, Career Services and the Police.

To use Ezispak visit or telephone the government agency you need and ask for "Ezispak telephone interpreting services" and the language you want. Ezispak is available through a new toll free number 0800 854 737 and through its website <https://ezispak.nz>

Ezispak also provides telephone interpreting services to the community and private sector, outside the government contract. You can ask for Ezispak or another telephone interpreter service when you contact or visit an NGO or not-for-profit.

## IDENTITY DOCUMENTS

To access services, you may need an identity document (ID). Usually, a passport is sufficient to establish your identity with most organisations.

### Certificate of Identity

If you do not have a passport, you will need to obtain a Certificate of Identity (COI) from an Immigration New Zealand (INZ) branch. A COI is issued when you apply for a visa application and it is approved. A COI will have your photograph and biographical details such as your name and date of birth. INZ can issue a visa into a COI.

Other agencies such as Work and Income and banks will also accept a COI as proof of identity. For further information please visit the INZ website: [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz)

## VISAS

While awaiting the status of your claim, you may apply for an appropriate visitor, work, student or limited visa to suit your needs. For further information please refer to relevant immigration instructions on [E8.10 Temporary visas for refugee or protection status claimants](#)

## RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Most government agencies and service providers (such as banks, electricity and internet companies) require proof of your residential address. This can be an official letter addressed to you - for example, RSB's letter confirming you have lodged a claim. If you do not have an official letter with your correct address on it, you can ask RSB for one.

### Accommodation

If you need to find accommodation, many local newspapers advertise rental accommodation - either a "flat" or a room in a shared house. Trademe ([www.trademe.co.nz](http://www.trademe.co.nz)) also has rental accommodation. Your local supermarket, library or community centre may have a noticeboard where people advertise rooms or flats. Real estate agents and letting centres can help you find accommodation. They will charge for this service. If you are struggling to find accommodation contact Work and Income: [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)

## BANK

You will need to open a bank account for tax purposes and to receive wages and income. Most banks require:

- two forms of ID such as a passport and a driver's licence or birth certificate, and
- proof of address such as a letter from a government agency or service provider (electricity company for example).

Visit your local bank or one near your work to open an account.

## INLAND REVENUE

To work in New Zealand, or to receive support from Work and Income, you need a tax number from Inland Revenue (IR). To obtain an IR number, complete an IR742 form. To obtain a copy of this form, telephone 0800 257 773 or download it [here](#). This form requires proof of visa, address, photo ID and fully functional NZ bank account. You can email the form to IRD ([Offhsore@ird.govt.nz](mailto:Offhsore@ird.govt.nz)). If you do not hold a NZ bank account then get the form verified by AA, NZ post or IRD. Once your documents have been verified you will receive a tax number.

Website: [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz)

Free phone: 0800 377 774

## EMPLOYMENT

If you are issued a work visa while your refugee and protection claim is being processed you are able to work in New Zealand. There are many places where you can find work, such as newspapers and online.

### Websites

Most jobs are advertised online and there are a number of useful websites where you can search for jobs according to region, type, and your skills and qualifications. Some popular websites are:

[www.seek.co.nz](http://www.seek.co.nz)

[www.trademejobs.co.nz](http://www.trademejobs.co.nz)

### Newspaper

Jobs in newspapers are usually called "situations vacant" and appear in the classified advertising section of newspapers such as:

The Press - [www.press.co.nz](http://www.press.co.nz)

### Government agencies

Career Services and Work and Income can assist you with practical advice to help you find a job, such as workshops, training opportunities, job listings, job search skills and writing a curriculum vitae (CV). Visit their websites:

Career Services: [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)

Work and Income: [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

If you have a valid and current visa you may be eligible to receive an Emergency Benefit from Work and Income while your refugee and protection claim is being processed.

You will need to contact Work and Income to make an appointment to see a case manager at the branch closest to where you live.

For more information visit your local Work and Income office, or phone them on: 0800 559 009, or go to their website: [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz). If you speak little or no English, Work and Income provides information in other languages:

> Mandarin — 0800 661 001

> Cantonese — 0800 664 004

> Hindi — 0800 993 003

> Farsi — 0800 996 006

> Khmer — 0800 994 004

> Punjabi — 0800 995 005

## EDUCATION

### English lessons

You may apply to attend English language classes. There are many organisations that teach English language courses, including tertiary institutions, secondary schools, home tutors and community education centres. You may have to pay a fee to attend these courses.

If you are issued a work visa while your refugee and protection claim is being processed, permission is given only to attend English as a second language courses, not any other course.

For more information see The Tertiary Education Commission [www.tec.govt.nz](http://www.tec.govt.nz) (search for 'ESOL students') and/or English Language Partners <https://englishlanguage.org.nz/>

### Primary and secondary schools

All children between the age of 6 and 16 must attend school in New Zealand. Asylum seeker children will generally be issued a student visa.

## HEALTH

New Zealand has a public health system that provides subsidised health care. Asylum seekers are eligible for this.

The cost of a doctor's visit varies depending on your age, location and personal circumstances. Doctors' visits are free for children under 13 years of age.

You must take the letter from RSB confirming you have lodged a claim for refugee and protection status with you to the clinic or hospital in order to receive subsidised health care.

Hospitals and public health services will provide an interpreter if needed. You must contact them in advance.

### Urgent medical care

In an emergency call 111 by telephone for an ambulance to take you to hospital, or you can go directly to the hospital closest to your home.

### Christchurch

Community and Public Health

Phone: 03 364 1777

## SUPPORT AGENCIES

There are a number of agencies which offer support services that asylum-seekers can access.

### Refugee Council of New Zealand

A national organisation which provides advice, information and assistance to asylum seekers.

Email: [info@rc.org.nz](mailto:info@rc.org.nz)

Website: <http://www.rc.org.nz>

### Community Law

Provides free initial legal advice to resolve legal problems.

Website: <http://www.communitylaw.org.nz/>

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Provides free information, advice and support.

Website: <http://www.cab.org.nz/>

### Refugee Resettlement & Resource Centre Canterbury

Provides advice and liaises with other agencies for resettlement support.

Website: [cantyrefugeecouncil@gmail.com](mailto:cantyrefugeecouncil@gmail.com)

### Christchurch Resettlement Services

Provides social work support and connects people to mental health and resettlement support.

Website: [www.crs.org.nz](http://www.crs.org.nz)

### Hagley Community College

Provides education and community support.

Email: [Thi.Phan@staff.hagley.school.nz](mailto:Thi.Phan@staff.hagley.school.nz)

### New Zealand Red Cross

The New Zealand Red Cross has a range of support services for refugees and asylum seekers including a Pathways to Employment programme, which some asylum seekers can access.

See [www.redcross.org.nz](http://www.redcross.org.nz)



# Services for Asylum Seekers

CHRISTCHURCH / SOUTH ISLAND

This brochure contains Information about services and support that are available to people seeking refugee or protected person status In New Zealand (known as asylum seekers).