

Identifying people from refugee or asylum-seeking background

Identification of people from refugee backgrounds, including people seeking asylum, is important so that healthcare providers can tailor their approach.

There are a number of indicators that a person may be from a refugee background.

These include:

- country of birth
- year of arrival in Australia
- need for interpreter and preferred language
- visa type

If a person speaks a language other than English and comes from a country that has a history of conflict and human rights violations, e.g. Afghanistan, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Iran or Burma (Myanmar), they are likely to be from a refugee background. A country of asylum or transit such as Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand or Egypt can also suggest a refugee background. Country of birth is not necessarily an indication of ethnicity or religious background.

People from refugee backgrounds can also be identified by their visa number, which indicates the category of Australia's Humanitarian program under which they arrived.

This includes entrants with the following visa subclasses:

Offshore – Refugee

- Refugee Visa (Subclass 200)
- In-country Special Humanitarian Visa (Subclass 201)
- Emergency Rescue Visa (Subclass 203)
- Woman at Risk Visa (Subclass 204)

Offshore – Special Humanitarian Program

- Global Special Humanitarian Visa (Subclass 202)

Onshore Protection Program

- Permanent Protection Visa (Subclass 866)
- Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) (Subclass 785)
- Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) (Subclass 790)

Sponsored Visas – may be from refugee background

- Spousal visa (Subclass 309)
- Orphan Visa (Subclass 100's)

People seeking asylum

People seeking asylum who arrive in Australia and subsequently apply for protection as refugees have different visa types and eligibility for services.

Those arriving with valid entry documentation (e.g. a student or visitor visa) are permitted to reside in the community while their application is considered and are provided with a Bridging Visa after their original visa expires

For up-to-date information about visa types visit the Commonwealth Home Affairs website: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/refugee-200>



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Forms of Identification:

There is not one consistent form of identification carried by all refugees or people seeking asylum.

This fact sheet provides examples of documents that may be used to determine **asylum seeker** status. Please note migration policy and documents change often and some people may not have any of these documents. Health services should exercise discretion with the documentation available and seek advice from specialist services if required.

<p>ImmiCard Issued by the Commonwealth (currently Department of Home Affairs) to permanent protection visa holders who are eligible for Medicare and healthcare cards. Also issued to some people seeking asylum on bridging visa E (BVE-subclass 050 or 051) and refugees on TPV-785, THC-786, SHEV-790.</p>	
<p>SRSS payment card Issued to some people seeking asylum who are in receipt of Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) payments may have an SRSS payment card. From late 2017, the number of people on SRSS has been reducing.</p>	
<p>Department of Home Affairs visa application letters Some people seeking asylum will carry a letter from the Department of Home Affairs that acknowledges that they have lodged a protection visa application or appeal of a negative decision. If a person is waiting for an outcome on protection visa application, they are an asylum seeker</p>	
<p>IHMS card Issued by International Health and Medical Services (IHMS) to people in community detention to facilitate payment at their assigned general practice and pharmacy.</p>	

For more information about best practice care for refugee background clients

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www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons

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References: Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide: <https://refugeehealthguide.org.au/>
 Victoria Health Fact Sheets: www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/factsheets