

## **Ways you might like to help refugees and asylum seekers as a group or individually**

Refugees and asylum seekers fall into 5 main categories –

- The Humanitarian and family re-union refugees. These fly in and are residents on arrival and become citizens after a few years.
- Asylum seekers who arrive by plane. They are on temporary Bridging visas at first but if found to be refugees they then get permanent residency leading to citizenship.
- SHEV & TPV refugees who arrived by boat as asylum seekers but have been then determined to be refugees. These are all given 3 or 5 year visas and under present federal legislation cannot become residents (except a very small number of SHEV holders who might get a business visa or a spousal visa if they marry an Australian citizen).
- Asylum seekers who arrived by boat but are still being processed or appealing their rejection as a refugee. They are on short-term temporary Bridging Visas and cannot become residents. They cannot access Centrelink or other government financial support. Some have no work rights and cannot access Medicare either. Some of them cannot be deported back to their countries and therefore remain many years on 6-month or annually renewed Bridging visas.
- Those people who arrived by boat and were sent to Nauru or Manus/PNG. Many of these are now living in Australia temporarily - either in Detention Centres, in Community detention housing or have been granted short-term Bridging visas. They were brought to Australia either in need of medical treatment or because they have children.

All of the above would appreciate your help to either –

- Visit and become a friend
- Go with them to the beach, the market, the Botanic Gardens, the Museum etc and show them how to access these places on their own. Help them to find other free places to visit/ activities to do.
- If they're newly released into the community, help them to find clothing, household goods, toys etc – introduce them to Op shops, K-Mart, the 'Free For Asylum Seekers & Refugees in Adelaide' Facebook page.
- Just chatting in English with them is very helpful or help them to find a local Community English class.
- Help them how to find accommodation if they need it - Realestate.com rentals, visit a real estate agent in their district.
- Help them with driving practice so that they can acquire an SA licence if they want to. Show them where the RAA mobile app is or the mylicence.sa internet site where they can practice the questions they'll be tested on.

- Go with them when they have to go to Centrelink, the doctor, the dentist, Legal Services Commission etc. – having a support friend makes these appointments much less scary and often gets a resolution quicker. It's hard to navigate bureaucracy in a foreign land!
- Help them to connect to a local community – a church, a Community or Welcome Centre, an Ethnic Community group.
- Help them to look for work – advertisements, internet sites, mobile apps such as 'Jobs in SA', going to worksites e.g. a café/restaurant, laundry, garage (for mechanics).
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### **Specific needs of those on Bridging visas with no work rights/Medicare**

This cohort sometimes have no Bridging visa either. They all are allowed to live in the community while Immigration consider their cases but they are particularly vulnerable.

A congregation might like to financially support one of these people with money for food, rent, small medical costs etc.

### **Specific needs of the refugees who've been on Nauru or Manus/PNG**

Those brought to the mainland have either been transferred because they have children or because they or their partner were/are sick (physical and mental health issues). They are all waiting in limbo for a third country to sponsor them for settlement (at present only the USA and Canada are offering for them to apply).

- On 4/5/21 the remaining N/M refugees in the Adelaide Detention Centre were moved to a Detention hotel in Melbourne. Only one person remains currently in Detention here - at his request because he has a fiancé in Adelaide.
- There are still a very small number living in Community Detention in Adelaide, not allowed to work. However, the majority of N/M families, couples and individuals are now all on 6-monthly recurring Bridging Visas since October 2020. They are allowed to work and get Medicare. Finding jobs after eight years of not being allowed to work has made it hard for some to find employment while others are employed but not in their chosen field. They are not allowed to study therefore can't get their overseas jobs/qualifications updated to work in their field in Australia. Friendship of having them to your house for a meal, driving them around to Cleland, Hahndorf, the beach etc., taking them to a movie or a concert would be wonderful!

Compiled by Catherine Russell