

Refugee Advocacy Guide



The Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of South Australia

September 2020

When a foreigner resides with you in your land, you must not oppress him. You must treat the foreigner living among you as native-born and love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.
Leviticus 19:33-34

Fatma's Story: A Family Left Behind



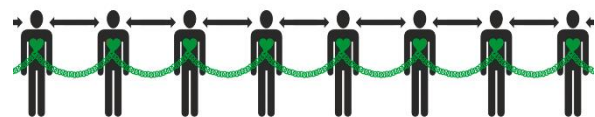
Fatma is a mother of four children, including Jasmin. Both Fatma and her partner lost work when Covid-19 hit Australia, and being in the process of seeking asylum, none of her family are eligible for support from the Federal government. They are now struggling to make ends meet and pay their basic costs. Please listen to Fatma's story in this [youtube video](#) where she speaks for herself,

<https://youtu.be/G3lYc3rkOeY>

Can you imagine tens of thousands of children and families losing work as a result of Covid-19 and being offered no support? No JobSeeker, no JobKeeper, for some, not even Medicare? Well this is the situation for 16,000 children refugees and their families.

The Synod of SA have joined over 180 civil society organisations in advocating for the government to ensure **#NoBodyLeftBehind** during the pandemic. We are calling for full access to Medicare, expanded JobSeeker and JobKeeper and visa security for refugees and people seeking asylum.

The Refugee Council of Australia's latest [report](#) examines the cost of not supporting people seeking asylum and refugees during the Covid-19 pandemic. It indicates that excluding refugees and people seeking asylum from financial support could cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars and exacerbate the nation's health and homelessness crises. Learn more about the campaign and get involved: www.refugeecouncil.org.au



Physically distant, socially connected
We are in this **together**



#NobodyLeftBehind

“Our Vision: We are a compassionate nation, where every person who seeks refuge here is treated fairly and made to feel welcome and safe – regardless of their country of origin or mode of arrival. “

“The Uniting Church in Australia has articulated its [vision for a just Australia](#) and we have a responsibility during the COVID-19 pandemic to make decisions that are compassionate, inclusive and just. Only in so doing, can we ensure Australia emerges from the COVID-19 crisis as a resilient, healthy and cohesive community.



There are tens of thousands of refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia who are part of our communities, and they cannot be left behind at this time of great need...Any small action will be a valuable contribution to ensure nobody is left behind at this time. These are practical ways we can continue to be the church and embody God's love in the suffering world. Please hold refugees and those seeking asylum in your prayers, and undertake action with compassion and love.” *Joint Letter from the Moderator and Synod Refugee Advocacy Group to all members of UCA SA, 7 May 2020*

What You Can Do:

Write polite and respectful letters to your local Federal Member of Parliament and to:

The Hon Steven Marshall MP

Premier of South Australia
GPO Box 2343,
ADELAIDE SA
Phone: 08 8429 3232
Fax: 08 8463 3168
Email: premier@sa.gov.au

The Hon Scott Morrison MP

Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm

You can also help to provide families like Fatma's the support they need to get through these challenging times:

- Donate food, money, or volunteer for a [UnitingCare Emergency Relief Centre](#) (08) 8236 4255 near you.
- Support [Circle of Friends](#) (cofa.org.au), and [Adelaide Asylum Seeker & Refugee - Covid Response Team](#) (0412680378) who are distributing food, rent, mobile phone payments, car registration, pharmacy bills etc to families.



If you wish to invite speakers for your congregation and be updated on the work of the **Synod Refugee Advocacy Group**, please contact
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