REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZEN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEE SERVICES

REFUGEE SERVICE GUIDE



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About the Department of Refugee Services

The Department of Refugee Services is established under the Refugees Act, 2021 and is responsible for all administrative matters concerning asylum seekers and refugees in Kenya. Our services include: registration, documentation, protection, refugee status determination (RSD) and promoting durable solutions.

DRS services are offered in Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps, and in the Nairobi, Nakuru, Eldoret, and Mombasa offices. Service hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

REGISTRATION

Registration is undertaken when an individual present themselves at DRS offices with an asylum claim. The asylum seeker is required to present themselves at DRS offices within **30 days** of arrival in the country.

The registration process involves collecting biometric data (photographs, fingerprints and iris scans) and issuing the asylum seeker with identification documents. These documents serve as proof of the asylum seeker's registration.

What to Expect During Registration:

The asylum seeker will:

- Undergo medical and security screening.
- Sign a data collection consent form before registration.
- Be interviewed by a DRS staff member who will gather relevant information.
- Provide any identification documentation if available (e.g., passport, identification card, birth certificate or notification)

Biometrics will be collected for identification and registration purposes (Photographs, fingerprints and iris). The asylum seeker will then be issued with a proof of registration.

All asylum seekers and refugees are by law required to reside in camps which are the designated areas. Those wishing to live in other areas must seek permission from the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs.

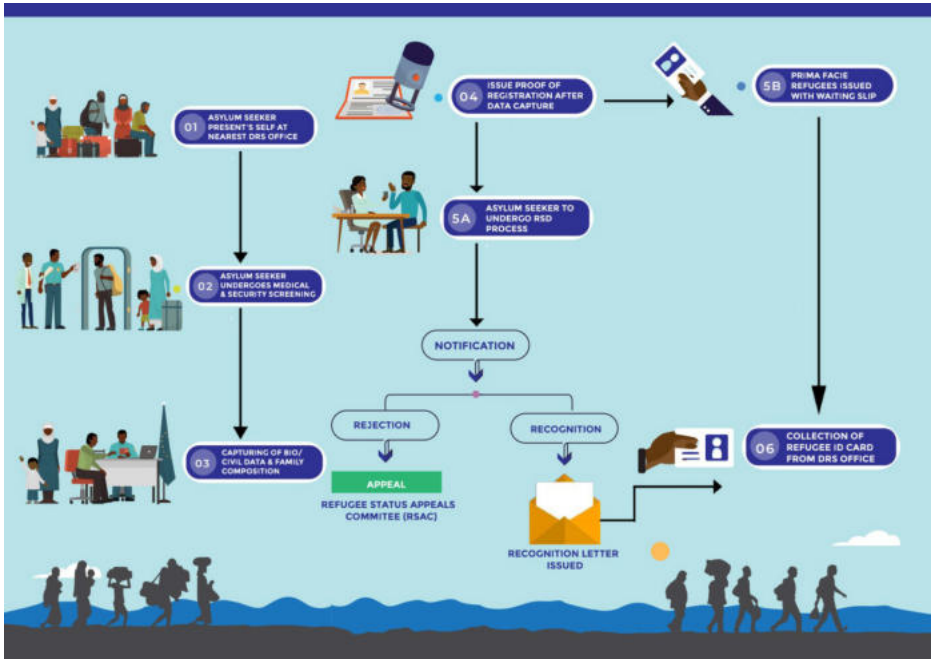
REFUGEE STATUS DETERMINATION (RSD)

Refugee Status Determination (RSD) is the process of determining whether a person who has applied for asylum meets the definition of a refugee as provided for by the Refugees Act, 2021.

Stages of RSD

- After registration, asylum applicants are given an appointment with the date and time for their RSD interview.
- The interview is followed by an assessment of the claim.
- A recommendation is then made. It must undergo reviews to confirm that it meets the set threshold before a decision is endorsed.
- The Commissioner for Refugee Affairs then issues the applicant with a recognition letter or rejection letter.
- If the decision is a recognition, the applicant will apply for a refugee identity card.
- If the decision is a rejection, the applicant may within 30 days appeal the decision to the Refugee Status Appeals Committee.

Asylum Process



PROTECTION

- Protection needs may arise at any stage of the refugee journey, from arrival in Kenya through the duration of a refugee's stay in the country.
- Protection services support refugees by providing information, guidance, and assistance on their rights, and by facilitating referrals including mental health and psychosocial support.
- They also provide specialized assistance to children, women, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and other persons with specific needs.

DOCUMENTATION

DRS issues documentation as well as recommendation letters.

Type of Document	Purpose of the document	Requirements	Processing period[1]	Validity
1. Proof of Registration	To confirm that the person is registered with the government.	Individual to present themselves at the DRS service centre. Relevant documentation from country of origin or place of habitual residence, if available.	Upon registration	**No expiry**
2. Asylum seeker Pass	To offer legal status as an asylum seeker.	Individual to present themselves at the DRS service centre.	Upon registration	**6 months**

1 Processing timelines may be extended on reasonable cause depending on the circumstances of the case.

3. Movement Pass	To facilitate movement of refugees and asylum seekers to and from designated areas.	Individual to present themselves with reasons for travel (with supporting documents where applicable).	1-3 days	**Varies**
4. Letter of Recognition	» Document confirms recognition of refugee status. » Issued to refugees after successful Refugee Status Determination (RSD).	» Undergoing RSD and meeting the criteria under the Refugees Act 2021.	90 days	**1 year**
5. Refugee ID card	Identification document	» 18 years and above » Proof of registration » Letter of recognition	2 months	**5 years**

6. Convention Travel Document (CTD)	For traveling outside Kenya except to country of origin.	***Universal Requirements*** » Duly filled Application form 19 » Application letter to the Commissioner of Refugee Affairs » Recommender's ID copy (Kenyan) » 3 passport size photos on a white background » Refugee ID » Proof of registration » For renewal, the original booklet being replaced » Justification for the travel	90 days	**5 years**

7. Recommendation letters for: » **Business Permit** » **Class M Work Permit** » **Marriage Certificate** » **Police Clearance Certificate** » **KRA Pin** » **Bank Account Opening** » **Driving License** » **Student Passes**	To access services	» Application letter » Refugee ID card » Proof of Registration » Supporting documents for the specific reasons	7 days	**Varies**
8. Exit Pass	To facilitate resettlement and Voluntary repatriation.	» Application letter » Applicant avails themselves for biometrics capture. » Copy of applicant's ID.	3-6 weeks	Validity expires at exit.

9. Cessation Letter	From refugee to foreign national: issued to a refugee who has acquired alternative status and wishes to be removed from the refugee database. From foreign national to refugee: Someone who was previously a foreign national and has now acquired refugee status.	» Proof of alternative status. » Letter from Immigration, for foreign national to refugee.	7 days	Valid until change of status.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

The Department of Refugees Services promotes durable solutions which include;

Voluntary Repatriation	• The most preferred solution to refugee situations is when conditions in the country of origin stabilize, enabling refugees to return safely and with dignity and rebuild their lives. • DRS in collaboration with key stakeholders ensure that refugees understand the current situation back home and have access to support for reintegration. • DRS facilitates documentation (exit passes) for individuals who wish to go back to their country of origin.
Local Integration	• Through the Shirika Plan, the Government seeks to ensure that refugees and host communities equally enjoy social services and economic opportunities. This will enable them to be self-reliant and resilient.
Resettlement	• Involves transfer to a third country offering permanent protection. • DRS facilitates documentation (exit passes) for the resettlement of refugees to third countries.
Complementary Pathways	• Complementary pathways can provide more flexibility and streamline the process compared to traditional resettlement. • DRS facilitates documentation.

For more information

REFUGEES ACT 2021

https://refugee.go.ke/sites/default/files/downloads/Refugees-Act-2021.pdf

Constitution of Kenya

https://refugee.go.ke/sites/default/files/downloads/The-Constitution-of-Kenya.pdf

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further assistance or more information about our services, please contact us:

I. HEAD OFFICE

Department of Refugee Services
The Corporate Place,
Kiambere Road, Upper Hill
P.O Box 42227-00100, Nairobi.
Tel: +254 020-4348 143/5,
+254 020 440 5057
Website: www.refugee.go.ke
Help Desk Email:
info@refugee.go.ke/
refugeeaffairs@refugee.go.ke,
Twitter handle: @DRSKenya
Facebook: Department of Refugee Services

II. JOINT REFUGEE SERVICE CENTER

Manga House, Kiambere Road
Upperhill
P.O Box 42227-00100, Nairobi.

III. DADAAB REFUGEE COMPLEX

P.O Box 62,
Daadab Garissa County
Email:drsdadaab@refugee.go.ke

IV. KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP

P. O. Box 57-30501,
Kakuma Turkana County
Email: drskakuma@refugee.go.ke

V. MOMBASA TRANSIT OFFICE

Mkomani Area, Fidel Odinga Road,
Behind Nyali Cinemax
P.O Box 85993- 80100 Mombasa.
Mobile: +254111605800
Email: drsmombasa@refugee.go.ke

VI. NAKURU OFFICE

Farming Systems of Kenya Building,

Kabarak Road-Kiamunyi

P.O Box 81-20100, Nakuru

Mobile: +254794584624

Email:drsnakuru@refugee.go.ke

VII. ELDORET OFFICE

Public Works Building next to immigration,

Oloo Street

P.O Box 6725-30100, Eldoret

Email: drseldoret@refugee.go.ke

IMPORTANT NOTICE

All services provided by the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) are offered FREE OF CHARGE.



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REBUILD
Boosting Livelihoods

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE