

Asylum Advice

Claiming Asylum
in the UK



Section 1: Claiming Asylum

1.1 Do you need to apply for asylum?

You should only make a claim for asylum (international protection) if you fear returning to your country. To be recognised as a refugee under the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, you must have left your country and be unable to go back because you have a well-founded fear of persecution, based on one of the following reasons:

- Your race
- Your religion
- Your nationality
- Your political opinion; or
- Your membership of a particular social group.

If it is decided that you are not a refugee, because your claim is not based on one of the five reasons listed above, but there are other grounds for believing that you would face a real risk of suffering serious harm if you return to your country, then you may qualify for humanitarian protection.

If you do not think you have a claim for international protection (asylum or Humanitarian Protection) but would still like to remain in the United Kingdom (UK) for other reasons, you should seek legal advice.

If your claim for international protection is refused it may affect any further applications for leave to visit the UK.

1.2 Where can I claim for asylum?

Are you at an airport, seaport or international train station?

If you intend to claim asylum it is important that you do so as soon as possible when you enter the United Kingdom. If you have fled persecution and are in need of protection then you must ask to see an immigration officer. When you speak to the immigration officer you will need to confirm that you are applying for asylum in the United Kingdom because you are at risk.

Are you already in the United Kingdom?

If you want to claim asylum and you are already in the UK, you must book an appointment to attend the Asylum Intake Unit in Croydon (South-East London). You must attend with any dependants who form part of your asylum claim. It is important that you make a claim for asylum as soon as possible after your arrival in the United Kingdom or as soon as you have found out that your circumstances have changed and that you now require international protection.

In addition to the appointment system, the Asylum Intake Unit also accepts applicants on a walk-in-basis. Please be aware that if you use the walk in service, there is no guarantee that you will be seen on the same day. You may be turned away and asked to use the appointment service. If you or a member of your family has an **urgent** need, however, then you should be screened immediately.

Appointment line for the Asylum Intake Unit: 020 8196 4524

Asylum Screening Unit is located in Lunar House, 40 Wellesley Road, Croydon CR9 2BY

If you need to change or cancel your appointment, please telephone as soon as possible on 020 8196 4524.

1.3 Advice and guidance on claiming asylum and the asylum process

Asylum Help is part of the Migrant Help charity. Through Asylum Help the organisation provides advice and guidance to asylum seekers. Asylum Help can provide independent advice, guidance and information on claiming asylum, the asylum process, accommodation, financial support, finding legal representation, access to healthcare and other asylum matters.

Information on the asylum screening process, on the substantive interview and about what happens once a decision has been made on your case, can be found in both audio and written format on the asylum advise uk website. These are available in 15 key languages. Please visit our website www.asylumhelpuk.org.

If you would like to speak directly to an adviser, please call Asylum Helpline (Advice) on: 0808 8000 630. Please note that Asylum Help is unable to give any legal advice regarding your claim for asylum.

1.4 Do you need Asylum Support?

If you need to apply for asylum support once your claim is registered then you need to call:

Asylum Helpline (Support Applications) on 0808 8000 631

This service can be provided in a language you understand.

**Further Information regarding asylum support can be found at:
www.asylumhelpuk.org**

If you are homeless or unable to support yourself, please ensure that you make this clear during the asylum screening process. The Home Office will assess whether you require temporary accommodation, which they can provide immediately after screening.

1.5 Assisted Voluntary Return

If you decide that you do not want to claim asylum, and are an irregular migrant and wish to return home, you may be able to get help and support from the Refugee Action Choices programme. Their Assisted Voluntary Returns for Irregular Migrants (AVRIM) programme will be able to assist you in arranging flights home and families may be able to access integration support.

Please visit <http://www.choices-avr.org.uk> where you can access information in 18 key languages. Or alternatively call:

Choices: 0808 800 0007

For further information regarding any part of this section please contact Asylum Help.

www.asylumhelpuk.org

Asylum Helpline (Advice) 0808 8000 630

Asylum Helpline (Support Applications) 0808 8000 631

Asylum Help is part of the Migrant Help organisation.
Other translated information is available at www.asylumhelpuk.org

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