

Mülteci
Hakları
Merkezi

Refugee
Rights
Turkey

“Health Care Services”
for Syrian Refugees and Other Persons under
“Temporary Protection”

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

REFUGEE RIGHTS TURKEY: FREE LEGAL COUNSELLING & ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES

Suriye’den Gelen Sığınmacılar İçin Türkiye’de
“Sağlık Hizmetleri”

SORULAR & YANITLAR

İNGİLİZCE

As a Syrian refugee, do I have the right to access free healthcare services?

Turkey provides temporary protection to Syrian nationals, stateless persons and refugees arriving from Syria. All registered persons under temporary protection have the right to access free healthcare services provided by public institutions. Benefiting from free healthcare services is not conditional upon residency in camps.

I have completed my temporary protection registration. How can I access healthcare services?

You can access primary health care institutions to receive an initial diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation services. Health stations, health centers, maternal and infant care & family planning centers, and tuberculosis dispensaries are primary healthcare institutions. These centers also provide screening and immunization for communicable diseases, specialized services for infants, children and teenagers, as well as maternal and reproductive health services.

You can also directly approach secondary or tertiary health institutions. There is also a possibility to benefit from healthcare services provided by university research hospitals and private hospitals with a referral. This is critical, as with the exception of emergency cases, you may not be able to access free services in university research hospitals and private health institutions without prior referral.

Referrals to university research hospitals and private health institutions are only made for emergency and intensive care services as well as burn injuries and cancer treatment.

I have not registered yet. Can I benefit from free healthcare services?

If you have not registered yet, you may only access emergency health services and health services for communicable diseases at primary healthcare institutions. Please bear in mind that you will also be required to present an identification document to receive these services. Thus, in order to avoid any limitation in access to healthcare services, we strongly encourage you to complete your registration at your earliest convenience.

I arrived to Turkey with a valid passport and obtained a residence permit. Can I also benefit from free healthcare services available to persons under temporary protection?

One of the key requirements for residence permits is to have a health insurance policy which is valid for the duration of the residence permit. Thus, persons who have residence permits are required to rely on this health insurance where necessary. It is therefore not possible for those who have valid residence permits to benefit from free healthcare services available to persons under temporary protection.

Is it possible to access free healthcare services in other provinces?

You may only access healthcare services in the province where you completed your registration. However, if it is not possible to receive full treatment in a particular province and where deemed necessary, you may be referred to another province. In addition, for emergency medical conditions, you can receive health care services without any restrictions.

Are there any other requirements that I should be aware of?

It is critical to have a Foreigner's ID number starting with 99. This number shall ensure you to get a provision from the Social Security System (SGK). "Provision" is the term used by the SGK to denote that you are active in the system. This ID number can be obtained upon the completion of registration. However, if you have an ID which bears the number starting with 98, please visit the website of the DGMM at www.goc.gov.tr and obtain your Foreigners ID number by entering your previous number starting with 98.

If you were not able to obtain your Foreigner's ID number starting with 98 through the website of the DGMM or if the SGK system fails to give you a provision, please approach the provincial DGMM office where you completed your registration at your earliest convenience.

In addition, as stated before, you may only access healthcare services in the province where you completed your registration. However, if you were referred to a secondary or tertiary health institution, to a university research hospital, or private hospital within the same province or in any other province for outpatient services, please bear in mind that the validity of this referral is 5 (five) working days. You must approach the institution, with your referral form, within the 5 working days. If you exceed this period, you will be required to seek a new referral. However, the validity period of referrals for individuals with chronic illnesses or for individuals possessing a control document is 30 (thirty) days.

On the date of appointment, you must get a barcode number before seeing your doctor. It is also important to have your temporary protection identity document with you when you visit the hospital.

What is the scope of free healthcare services?

Secondary and tertiary healthcare services are provided if they fall within the Health Implementation Directive (SUT). Although the general scope of healthcare services is considerably wide, for health issues which do not fall within the SUT or exceed the threshold set forth under SUT, you may be required to make an additional payment. For detailed information on the scope of healthcare services, you may approach non-governmental service providers, particularly those providing free psycho-social support services, or to our organization.

I do not speak Turkish. Are there interpretation services available during the course of health services?

Although there are interpreters in some health institutions in some provinces, this service is unfortunately limited. However, you may call 444 47 28, a free hotline operated by the Ministry of Health, to access interpretation services in Arabic while you are at a hospital or at a pharmacy. You may also call 444 74 08, another free hotline interpretation service operated by the Danish Refugee Council. We also would like to emphasize that you can get an appointment for the hospital you have been referred to from the 182 call center. There is, however, no interpretation assistance in the 182 call center where you get an appointment. Thus, while calling this number, it is important to have the assistance of a Turkish speaking person.

Where can I get medicines?

You may access free medication, prescribed by doctors and falling within the limits established in the Health Implementation Directive (SUT), from pharmacies who have contracts with AFAD. In some provinces, you may be requested to pay a patient share. In addition, should a difference occur between the prescribed medication and the provided medication, you may also be required to pay this difference.

Prescriptions may be either electronic or in written form. If your prescription is electronic, please make sure that you have the prescription number. If it has been provided in written form, it is important to have this document with you when you approach contracted pharmacies. Registration is a prerequisite to access medications. Please also make sure to have your foreigners' ID number starting with 99. Finally, when you approach pharmacies to get prescribed medication, you shall also be required to present your identification document.

How I can receive psychological or psychiatric support?

Persons who have completed their temporary protection registration are also entitled to receive mental health support as per the Temporary Protection Regulation. In addition to services provided by public institutions, you may also approach civil society organizations offering psycho-social services. You may call us to inquire about the availability of psycho-social service providers in your province.

What are my rights as a patient in Turkey?

You have the right to access health care services without discrimination, the right to be informed of your health condition and possible treatments, the right to consent or refuse the treatment as permitted by the law, and the right to privacy and respectful care. You also have the right to make a final decision on the treatment, the right to benefit from advances in treatment, the right to receive visits and request the company of another person and the right to receive safe and considerate care.

If you believe that your rights as a patient have been infringed, you have the right to make a complaint and where appropriate, to receive compensation for physical or psychological damages that you have suffered. To this end, you may apply to the Patient Rights Unit in the hospital where you have received healthcare services. In any case, and particularly in cases where you feel that your grievances had not been sufficiently addressed, you have the right to submit a written complaint to the Patient Rights Board under the Provincial Directorate of Health. It is also possible to voice your concerns or grievances through 184 SABİM Hotline (The Call Centre of the Ministry of Health). This hotline also provides interpretation services in Arabic.

Refugee Rights Turkey- Contact:

Wherever you may be in Turkey, you are welcome to visit our office or get in touch with us by telephone, fax or email all weekdays from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

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Refugee Rights Turkey



Refugee Solidarity Network



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