

Refugee  
Rights  

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Turkey

Mülteci  
Hakları  

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Merkezi

**HEALTH CARE SERVICES  
For Syrian Refugees And Other Persons  
Under Temporary Protection**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Suriye'den Gelen Sığınmacılar İçin Türkiye'de  
SAĞLIK HİZMETLERİ



## **As a Syrian refugee, do I have the right to access free health care 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 health care services provided by public institutions.

## **I have not registered yet. Can I benefit from free health care services?**

If you have not registered yet, you may only access emergency health services and health services for communicable diseases at primary health care institutions. To avoid any restrictions in accessing health care services, we strongly encourage you to complete your registration at your earliest convenience.

## **I have a Pre-Registration Document. Can I benefit from free health care services?**

Persons who have been provided a Pre-Registration Document may only access emergency health services and health services for communicable diseases at primary health care institutions. You are required to complete registration in order to have unhindered access to free health care services.

If you have a serious health issue, please communicate this to registration authorities either during pre-registration procedures or after pre-registration. Authorities may decide to accelerate your registration process as a result.

# I have completed my temporary protection registration. How can I access health care services?

Persons who have completed their temporary protection registration are provided a Temporary Protection Identity Card. This document is free of charge and includes your photo and basic identity information. The ID card also contains your Foreigners' ID Number starting with '99'.

You can visit primary health care institutions to receive an initial diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation services. Health stations, health centers, maternal and infant care and family planning centers, and tuberculosis dispensaries are primary health care institutions. There are also "migrant health centers" in some provinces, serving as primary health care providers. All of 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. While state hospitals are considered secondary health institutions, university research hospitals and research and education hospitals are tertiary health institutions.

However, please be aware that with the exception of emergency cases, you may not be able to access free services in university research hospitals or education and research hospitals without a prior referral.

In addition, referrals to university research hospitals and private health institutions are limited to emergency and intensive care services, as well as burn injuries and cancer treatment.

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

## **Is it possible to access free health care services in other provinces?**

You may only access health care services in the province where you completed your registration. However, if it is not possible to receive adequate treatment in a particular province, then you may be referred to another province, subject to the health care provider's discretion. In the case of emergency medical conditions, there are no such restrictions.

## **I have a Foreigners' ID Card which has a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '98'. Can I benefit from free health care services with this card?**

It is critical to have a Foreigner's ID Number starting with '99'. This number ensures that you are given a provision from the Social Security System (SGK). "Provision" is the term that SGK uses to denote that you are active in the system. You can obtain this ID number when you complete registration. If you have an ID with a number starting with '98', please visit the website of the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) at [www.goc.gov.tr](http://www.goc.gov.tr) and obtain your Foreigners' ID Number starting with '99'.

If you were not able to obtain your Foreigner's ID number starting with '99' through the DGMM website or if the SGK system fails to give you a provision, please approach the Provincial Directorate of Migration Management office where you completed your registration at your earliest convenience.

## **Am I required to make an appointment?**

No appointment is required to access health care services at primary health care institutions. However, you must make an appointment for secondary health institutions. You can make this appointment at the 182 call center.

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

# **I have been referred to a hospital. What should I do?**

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 keep in mind that the validity of this referral is 5 working days. You must approach the institution, with your referral form, within 5 working days. If you miss this period, you will have 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 days.

# **What is the scope of the free health care services?**

Secondary and tertiary health care services are provided if they fall within the Health Implementation Directive (SUT). Although the general scope of health care services is wide, for health issues which do not fall within the gambit of the SUT or which exceed the threshold set forth under SUT, you may be required to make an additional payment.

# **Where can I obtain medicines?**

In order to avoid any obstacles to accessing medicine, it is critical to complete your temporary protection and obtain a Temporary Protection ID Card with a Foreigners' ID Number starting with '99'. When you approach pharmacies, you will also be required to present your identification document.

Please be informed that you may only access free medication that has been prescribed by doctors and that falls within the limits established in the Health Implementation Directive (SUT). You must obtain the free medication from pharmacies that have contracts with AFAD. In some provinces, you may be asked to pay a patient share. In addition, should there

be a price difference between the prescribed medication and the available medication, you may also be required to pay the difference between the two.

Prescriptions may either be in electronic or written form. If your prescription is made electronically, please ensure that you have the prescription number available. If it has been provided in written form, you must bring this document with you when you visit contracted pharmacies.

## **I do not speak Turkish. Are there interpretation services available at approved health care facilities?**

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 pharmacy. You may also call 444 74 08, another free hotline interpretation service operated by the Danish Refugee Council.

Interpreters are also provided at Migrant Health Centers in some provinces.

We would also like to emphasize that you should make an appointment at the hospital you have been referred to by using the 182 call center. There is, however, no interpretation assistance provided by the call center, so please ensure that a Turkish speaker can assist you during the call.

## **How can I receive psychological or psychiatric support?**

Persons who have completed their temporary protection registration are entitled to receive mental health support provided by public hospitals. In addition to services at public institutions, you may also approach civil society organizations offering psycho-social services. You can call us to ask about the availability of such 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 status and possible treatment(s), the right to consent or refuse treatment as permitted by law, and the right to privacy and dignified care. You also have the right to make a final decision on suggested treatments, the right to benefit from advances in treatment, the right to receive visits and request the company of an additional person during visits, and the right to receive safe and considerate care.

If you believe that your rights as a patient have been violated, you have the right to make a complaint and where appropriate, to receive compensation for any physical or psychological damages that you have suffered. To do this, you must apply to the Patient Rights Unit in the hospital where you have received the poor health care services. In cases where you feel that your grievances have 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 the 184 SABİM Hotline (The Call Centre of the Ministry of Health). This hotline also provides interpretation services in Arabic.

## How can Refugee Rights Turkey help me?

Refugee Rights Turkey provides free information and assistance to persons seeking international protection and those under temporary protection in Turkey. You may approach our office with questions concerning access to protection mechanisms in Turkey and fundamental rights and freedoms.

## **Is Refugee Rights Turkey related to the Turkish government or to UNHCR?**

No. Refugee Rights Turkey is an independent civil society organization. It is not an implementing partner of the Turkish government or UNHCR. However, Refugee Rights Turkey cooperates with relevant Turkish authorities and UNHCR to ensure the legal protection of persons seeking international protection and those under temporary protection in Turkey.

## **Do I need to pay for services provided by Refugee Rights Turkey?**

All services provided by Refugee Rights Turkey are free of charge. Should you become aware of any person or entity claiming to be acting in our name who requests any money or other financial benefit, please report them immediately to our office. We will maintain your confidentiality.

## **Will Refugee Rights Turkey keep my information confidential?**

Refugee Rights Turkey operates under a principle of strict confidentiality and respects the confidentiality of individuals. Thus, we do not share your information or documents with any third parties without your consent.

# Refugee Rights Turkey – Contact Information:

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 (Monday to Friday) from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

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# Mülteci Hakları Merkezi


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Refugee Rights Turkey



Refugee Solidarity Network



US Department of State  
Bureau of Population,  
Refugees, and Migration