

Key Policy Points on People Seeking Asylum and Refugees

Some things that should never happen

1. Arbitrary or indefinite detention
2. Refoulement - people being sent back, or having no choice other than to return to a nation where they are likely to be persecuted
3. Creating harsh situations for one group for the purpose of deterring another group from seeking asylum in the same way
4. Using "illegal" or similar words to refer to the action of seeking asylum or to the people seeking asylum. These are legal, even if refugee status is not the end result.

It's not fair!

*How often have we used this statement to look after our own wellbeing or defend our rights? For people seeking asylum it **really** fits.*

A better way involves the following:

1. All people seeking asylum are being processed with respect for their human dignity as demanded by the UNHCR Convention on the Status of Refugees. Their claims for protection are being processed promptly and fairly.
2. Australia continues to work within the region and international context to lead a more humane, ordered response to processing the claims of people seeking asylum.
3. People who seek asylum are living in the Australian community. Out of respect for their humanity they have the right to work, access to basic services, and to some financial support if they cannot find work. The financial burden of their support is accepted by the Government and not shifted to the community sector.
4. Children are housed in the Australian community with the full range of services necessary for their welfare. Young unaccompanied children and adults, families with children and those with mental and physical health issues are also carefully supported living in the community.
5. Given the importance of family ties, when found to be refugees, people have the opportunity to be reunited with separated close family members promptly.
6. No one is being transferred from Australian territory to other nations for processing or protection unless there is a firm regional agreement assuring that they will have equivalent rights and support in the countries to which they are transferred, and that they will be promptly resettled if found to be refugees.