

Currently some Asylum Seekers are not given visas while their claim is in process, this means they have no means of supporting themselves, either from government assistance or right to work.

There should be a universal allowance of \$250 a week (inflation adjusted) for those asylum seekers in the process of having their claim assessed (whether RSB, IPT or High Court), if they have no visa, and therefore no other means of supporting themselves.

Visa's confer more rights than just access to financial support. This means some Asylum Seekers may never be given a visa, or their visa will not be reissued.

This only affects a small proportion of claimants but can have a very negative effect on this portion. This might include social isolation, adverse mental health outcomes including high risk of self harm and suicide, vulnerability to exploitation and has an overall effect of marginalizing the most vulnerable of this population group.

While we do not have any statistics from Immigration, we estimate there are 20-30 claimants at one time without a visa.

We think there also needs to be questioning over why visas can't be granted once identity is established. The fact that visas are denied to minimize options for appeal and allow easier deportation is unacceptable and inequitable.

The ICESCR was the first treaty to recognise the right to an adequate standard of living, which it defined in Article 11 as: The right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family, including adequate food, clothing and housing and continuous improvement in living conditions.

- Employment, health (both mental and physical and both primary and emergency), housing and education must be available on the same basis as nationals;
- Where employment is not available (for whatever reason) adequate social assistance must be provided;
- Priority access to adequate housing should be provided; and
- Where required additional steps need to be taken to ensure access to appropriate and adequate services and supports.

Change Needed

- All Asylum Seekers who have a claim being assessed have work rights.
- All Asylum Seekers who have a claim being assessed and do not have work rights have access to an allowance of \$250 a week, inflation adjusted.

*Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being mistreated or are in danger. **Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14***