

A guide

for residents of asylum reception centres

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Dear resident,

My name is Mohammad. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has asked me to introduce this booklet, which I hope you will find both useful and relevant.

I am a doctor and came to Norway as a refugee at the beginning of 2004. I have not been in Norway for very long, but know how important knowledge of the country can be. As a newcomer to the country, you will discover there is a lot to learn, but finding out as much as you can about Norway will make life easier while you are here. You need to know about the Norwegian educational system so that your children can learn as much as possible at school. You need to know about Norwegian laws so that you do not break them. It is also important to know how Norwegians themselves live and work.

Women need to know about the things that are important to them in particular. Families with children need to know about issues that are relevant to their situation, and children need information that is **suited** to their needs.

Those whose applications have been turned down need different information than those who have been granted **permission** to stay in Norway.

The material presented in this booklet will be discussed in more detail **at** the reception centre's information programme, which will also cover many other topics. The information programme will teach you a lot of important things about living in Norway.

This booklet is intended to help you learn about your rights, duties and opportunities in Norway, regardless of whether you will be allowed to stay here or **asked to leave**.

At the reception centre you will also be **informed** about the house rules, fire regulations, money regulations, rules for **residing** at the reception centre and rules **governing** absences from the reception centre. Reception centre staff will also tell you what to do if you need a doctor, and about local transport, shops, schools and pre-school day care.

Reception centres also offer a number of activities for residents. **You can enquire about** what activities you can take part in.

As a newcomer to the country, you will discover **that** there is a lot to learn, but finding out as much as you can about Norway will make **your** life easier while you are here. .

This booklet is also available from www.nyinorge.no

Pages 4-9

"When you apply for asylum, you will either be allowed to stay, or you will have to return home."

Chapter 1

Applying for asylum

You have the right to asylum in Norway if your life or your freedom is in danger, or if you risk torture or other kinds of inhuman treatment.

Norwegian law and international agreements determine whether you will be allowed to stay in Norway. This chapter explains what happens when you apply for asylum.

All those who need protection in Norway shall receive it. That is why the UDI gives every application for asylum careful consideration. This is what is called the asylum process. It is intended to ensure that all those who really need protection are allowed to stay, while those who do not need protection must leave Norway.

The asylum process

The UDI considers each application individually to make sure that everyone is treated fairly. Your application will be treated in the same way and in accordance with the same laws regardless of who you are.

When you apply for asylum in Norway, you are asking the Norwegian state to protect you. The Norwegian state can say yes or no to your application. Many asylum seekers have their applications rejected and must return home.

The UDI interviews each applicant and uses the results **from** this interview along with other information to decide whether you qualify for asylum. The UDI also **has a great deal of knowledge** about the conditions in your home country.

Asylum

You have the right to asylum in Norway if your life or your freedom are in danger, or if you risk torture or other inhuman treatment because of your political convictions. The same **rule** applies if you are persecuted because of your religious faith or because you belong to a particular nationality, social or ethnic group.

Women may be granted asylum if they are the object of persecution that **is aimed principally at women**. Persecution because of sexual orientation – **being a** homosexual, for example – may also constitute grounds for asylum. The UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees contains further details.

If the authorities in your home country can protect you against your persecutors, you will not normally qualify for asylum in Norway. Nor is it usual to grant asylum to persons who would be safe in **other parts** of their homeland.

Protection

You may still be granted a residence permit in Norway even if the degree of persecution you experienced was not enough to qualify you for political asylum. This could be because there is a war going on in your homeland or because you risk being subjected to inhuman treatment. If your application for asylum is rejected, the UDI will always look at whether you may still be allowed to stay in Norway.

Humanitarian grounds

In certain, special cases you may be allowed to stay in Norway if you or your children are suffering from a serious illness for which there is no treatment in your home country.

Residence

You will be notified by the police if you have been granted a residence permit in Norway. Then the preparations for your new life in Norway will start. You can read more about this in Chapter 7.

How long does it take?

The length of time it takes for an application for asylum to be decided varies from case to case. If it takes a long time, it could be because the UDI is investigating whether the information you have provided is correct. It could also be because the UDI is looking into the current situation in your homeland.

If your application has been refused, you may lodge an appeal. Your appeal will be considered by the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE). It normally takes at least 10 months for the UNE to **arrive at** a decision.

Refusal by the UDI

If the UDI refuses your application for asylum, an attorney will be appointed to help you. The UDI sends the refusal notice to your attorney. The attorney will inform you that your application has been refused and will tell you why. The attorney will arrange for an interpreter if you do not speak the same language.

You have the right to appeal against a refusal by the UDI. Your attorney must lodge your appeal with the UDI no later than three weeks after you have received notification of refusal.

Your attorney will help you formulate your appeal. If the UDI continues to uphold its refusal despite your appeal, your case will be sent to the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE) for a final decision. The UNE is a separate body which deals with immigration appeals.

While your attorney is preparing your appeal, he/she will also request that you be allowed to stay in Norway until your appeal has been considered. The UDI will decide if you are allowed to stay in Norway while your appeal is being considered. You may therefore be required to leave Norway before you have received a final decision.

Rejection by the UNE

If the UNE also rejects your application, you will normally have to leave the country within a period of two weeks.

A final rejection by the UNE may be appealed to the courts. If you do so, however, you will have to pay your own legal costs. You can ask the court to order the UNE to reconsider your case (Petition for Review). You will normally not be allowed to remain in Norway while the UNE considers your petition for review.

Returning home

If your application for asylum is rejected, you must leave the country. You can apply to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for assistance with your return journey. The IOM will pay your travel costs and provide other practical assistance if you travel home with them. You can read more about this in Chapter 6: Returning home.

Children

Children under the age of 18 who are applying for asylum together with their parents will be included in their parents' applications. Parents can say if they do not want their children to be interviewed by the UDI. The situation of the children is an important factor in the UDI's consideration of the family's application for asylum.

If the parents are granted a residence permit in Norway, their children under the age of 18 will also be allowed to stay. In general, the same principle applies if the parents' applications are rejected. However, each child's application is also considered on its individual merits.

Transfer to another safe country

If you have stayed in another safe country before arriving in Norway, or if you have a visa from another safe country, your application for asylum will be considered by that country. You may therefore be sent there. This is called the Dublin Procedure. All EU countries as well as Norway and Iceland belong to this scheme.

If you have a Dublin case, you will normally complete a self-declaration form and be interviewed, but the Norwegian authorities will not consider your application for asylum. Nor will you be given permission to work in Norway while you are waiting for a decision to be made.

Circumstances that affect the treatment of your asylum application

1. Crime

If you break the law in Norway while you are an asylum seeker, the UDI will deal with your application very quickly. If your application is rejected, you will quickly be deported. You will have difficulty entering Norway and a number of other European countries at a later date.

2. Additional information not provided during the asylum interview

If, after your asylum interview, you feel that you have additional information **that might be of importance** to your application, you must let the UDI know as quickly as possible. You have a right and a duty to reveal such important information as quickly as possible. Talk to the staff at your reception centre if you are in any doubt.

Temporary work permits

People who are applying for asylum in Norway may, under certain circumstances, be granted a temporary work permit while they are waiting for a decision to be made. A number of conditions must be met before you can be granted a work permit while you are waiting. Ask the staff at your reception centre for further details.

The length of time it takes for an application for asylum to be decided varies from case to case. If it takes a long time, it could be because the UDI is investigating whether the information you have provided is correct.

If your application for asylum has been rejected, you must leave the country. You can apply to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for assistance with your return journey.

If you have stayed in another safe country before arriving in Norway, your application for asylum will be considered by that country.

For more information:

www.udi.no

www.noas.org

www.une.no

Pages 10-15

"Taking care of your health makes your life more comfortable at the reception centre."

Chapter 2

Health

Good health is important for everyone. This chapter provides you with information about the type of medical help you are entitled to and offers suggestions on how to take care of your personal health.

Being sick does not make qualifying for asylum more difficult. Therefore, you should speak out if you are suffering from any serious illness or ailment. In Norway you can receive medical treatment. You can also receive help to improve your health.

All healthcare personnel in Norway have a duty to protect their patients' privacy. This means that they are not allowed to tell anyone else about your medical condition, unless you give them permission. They are not even allowed to give anyone your name, or inform them that you are a patient.

Do you need an interpreter?

You have the right to have an interpreter present if you are not sure that you will understand what is being said. Healthcare personnel are responsible for getting you an interpreter if they think it is necessary. Sometimes they interpret over the phone. If you do need an interpreter, you must say so ahead of your appointment with the doctor. It may take a few days to get hold of an interpreter. All interpreters have a duty of confidentiality.

Arrival on time

If you have made an appointment with a healthcare professional, it is important to arrive on time. You must let them know if you cannot come, or if you will be delayed. If you do not let them know, you will lose your appointment and will have to make a new one. As a rule, you will also have to pay for any appointments that you miss.

Acute illness / serious injury

If you become acutely ill or suffer serious injury, you must notify the reception centre staff and/or contact your local hospital. If you are unable to notify either of these, you must ask someone else for help so that you can receive treatment. Call 113 if you need an ambulance.

Seeing the doctor

Contact a healthcare professional if you are sick or have health problems. In Norway, everyone has the right to **choose** a doctor (General Practitioner) they can go to **regularly**. Asylum seekers also have the right to a GP. You must pay a portion of the cost of the consultation when you see your GP. Your GP will refer you to a specialist if necessary. Children receive free medical care up to a certain age.

Formatert: Engelsk
(Storbritannia)

Medication

The chemist's (pharmacy) sells all kinds of medication. Some products can be bought over the counter, but the majority are only available with a prescription from your doctor. A few medicines can be bought in ordinary supermarkets. If you need specific medication for a chronic illness, the government will pay most of the cost. Your doctor will write out a 'blue prescription' and you will then have to pay only a small proportion of the actual cost of the medicine,

Mental health

Being an asylum seeker with an uncertain future can be difficult. The waiting period can be long. Many people are disappointed. Many people feel a sense of loss and loneliness. It is normal to be sad, sleep badly, and become angry, tired or insecure. Some people suffer from headaches, pains or nausea.

There are some things you can do yourself to improve your mental health. Daily exercise will normally help. Running, football, weight-training and play are good for your physical and mental wellbeing. The same goes for reading, studying and participation in communal activities. Anything that makes you concentrate on achieving something is good for you. Passivity while you wait is not good for you.

Many of those staying at asylum reception centres have experienced various forms of persecution, war and violence. Some develop serious psychological problems as a result of their experiences. These problems can be reinforced by living in a country and a culture that are unfamiliar. Contact a healthcare professional if you **are suffering from** psychological problems and need help.

Children's mental health

Children need someone to understand and support them. Children who have experienced war or abuse are particularly vulnerable. The same goes for children who have lost loved-ones or have experienced death at close quarters. They are often afraid of being alone, of being in the dark, or are anxious that something bad might happen to them. If your children have suffered painful experiences, it is very important that you tell the reception centre staff or a doctor.

Preventing illness

Diet

In Norway you will have to eat food that is different to what you are used to. In the winter you must take a Vitamin D supplement to compensate for the lack of sunlight. To maintain good health you must eat a healthy, balanced diet. It is good to eat fruit, vegetables, fish, meat and dairy products. If you are unsure about which foods are good for you, ask for advice at your reception centre.

It is especially important for children to eat the right things. So keep a close watch on your children's diet.

Cleanliness and hygiene

It is important to keep your living space clean. It reduces the risk of infection. Bacteria can thrive where it is damp, such as in the kitchen or bathroom. Washbasins, toilets, showers, drains and other areas where there is water must therefore be kept clean.

Personal hygiene

Good personal hygiene is also important to avoid disease. You should wash both hands with soap when you have been to the toilet and before and after you have prepared food.

Dental health

Food residue and bacteria accumulate between the teeth. To avoid tooth decay, teeth must be cleaned every day with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Children's teeth should also be carefully cleaned. Teach your children to look after their teeth. A visit to the dentist is very expensive.

Sexual health

Sexually transmitted diseases

All sexually transmitted diseases are contracted through sexual contact. Condoms and femidoms are the only contraceptive devices which prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. You can buy condoms in most supermarkets and at the chemist's (pharmacy). Femidoms are available from the chemist's.

You have the right to free diagnosis and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. Examples of diseases which are transmitted through sexual intercourse are HIV, gonorrhoea, syphilis, herpes, Chlamydia and genital warts.

Ask your reception centre staff or your doctor if you would like to know more.

HIV/AIDS

When you arrived in Norway you were offered the opportunity to take an HIV test. HIV is contracted through unprotected sexual intercourse and the transfer of blood. HIV can also be transmitted through breastfeeding.

Condoms protect against HIV. Use a condom during all forms of sexual intercourse with anyone you are not certain is free of infection.

You cannot catch HIV from day-to-day contact with other people. If you have HIV or AIDS, you are entitled to receive medical help. Ask your reception centre staff or your doctor if you would like to know more.

Female circumcision

Female circumcision is common in some cultures. In Norway, female circumcision is strictly forbidden. Female circumcision amounts to genital mutilation. In Norway, anyone convicted of carrying out or complicity in the carrying out of genital mutilation is liable to up to eight years in prison. The law applies to everyone living in Norway, even if the deed was carried out abroad.

Many women who come to Norway have been circumcised. Circumcision can lead to serious health problems for women. Healthcare professionals can give advice and help to those who have already been circumcised.

Contraception

Healthcare professionals can explain the various methods you can use to avoid becoming pregnant. The most common method of contraception for men is the condom. Women have a variety of methods to choose from, e.g. contraceptive pills, injections and

plasters, and the coil. Talk to a healthcare professional about what suits you and your situation best.

Abortion

In Norway, it is up to the woman to decide if she wants to terminate her pregnancy within the first 12 weeks. The approval of a doctor, priest, imam or other person is not required. The woman's husband has no right to decide this matter, even if he is the father of the foetus.

The woman must contact a doctor or a midwife if she wishes to have an abortion. If a woman wishes to have an abortion after the twelfth week of pregnancy, she must seek the approval of a panel of medical practitioners at the nearest hospital. The woman's midwife or doctor has a duty to help her with her application.

Antenatal care

When you are pregnant, you should have regular antenatal check-ups. You decide for yourself whether you would like to see a midwife, a doctor or make an appointment with the baby and child clinic. Both midwives and doctors are trained to carry out these checks. If you wish, you may take someone with you to your appointment. If complications arise during your pregnancy, your doctor or midwife will refer you to a specialist.

Attending regular antenatal check-ups has a number of advantages. Both your own health and that of your unborn baby will be monitored, and you will receive information and assistance. Antenatal check-ups are free of charge.

In the margin

All healthcare personnel in Norway have a duty to protect their patients' **privacy**. That means they are not allowed to tell anyone else about your medical condition, unless you **give them permission**.

Many people feel a sense of loss and loneliness. It is normal to feel sad, sleep badly, and become angry, tired or insecure. Some people suffer from headaches, pains or nausea.

Children need someone who understands and supports them. Children who have experienced war or abuse are particularly vulnerable.

Condoms protect against HIV. Use a condom during all forms of sexual intercourse with anyone you are not certain is uninfected.

If a woman wishes to have an abortion after the twelfth week of pregnancy, she must seek the approval of a panel of medical practitioners.

For more information:

www.trygdeetaten.no

Pages 16-19

"Every child has the right to an education."

Chapter 3

Education

Every child has the right to an education. Parents are responsible for sending their children to school. **This chapter provides you with some information about how the Norwegian education system works.**

Schools in Norway

There are ten years of compulsory education in Norway, which means that parents must send their children to school and make sure that they do their homework. Primary and lower secondary education is free of charge, and the local authority pays for the children's school books. Children start school in August of the year in which they turn six.

Children must attend classes in every subject. Children may be exempted from part of the Christian Knowledge and Religious and Ethical Education (CKREE) curriculum, if the parents so request. Children in the first and second years normally attend school for 4–5 hours a day. The school day is longer for older children. Children in Norway must bring a packed lunch to eat in school. School meals are not provided.

Children are given homework from their first year at school. Parents are responsible for making sure that their children do their homework and for helping them with it. Primary and lower secondary school children are not given grades for their work, but their teachers provide parents with written feedback on how they are getting on.

Boys and girls attend the same classes, and study all subjects together. During their first years in school many children spend one day a week receiving tuition outdoors. This is called outdoor school. For much of the year in Norway it is very cold, with rain, ice and snow. It is therefore important for the children to have warm clothes, boots and rainwear. They must also keep a change of clothes at school in case they get wet.

Enrolment

Every child must be enrolled in their local school before they start. Most people receive a letter notifying them when enrolment is to take place, but an announcement is also published in the local newspaper. In the year in which the child turns five – often in September – the parents must go to the school and complete an enrolment form.

Children who are going to stay in Norway for more than three months must start school shortly after their arrival in the country.

After-school care (SFO)

All schools offer an after-school care scheme (SFO) for the youngest children, where they can play under adult supervision. Parents who wish their children to attend SFO pay a monthly fee. A light meal is provided for children attending SFO.

Parents and the school

Parents and the school work together to help **raise the children**. Twice a year all the parents in the class are invited to a meeting with the teachers. These are called parents' meetings.

Once a year the teacher invites each child's parents to a meeting at which the teacher says how the child is **developing** at school and the parents are asked for their views. Before these meetings older children write down what they like and dislike about school.

Parents can at any time ask for a meeting with the child's teachers if they need advice or would like to discuss other matters with them.

Language help

Primary and lower secondary school children may receive extra lessons in Norwegian, in addition to the normal curriculum. Pupils shall learn to understand, speak, read and write Norwegian. Norwegian is important for learning other subjects.

Some schools have separate classes for pupils who do not speak Norwegian. Pupils attend such classes for a period of six months to two years. Here the focus is on learning basic Norwegian. Other schools put pupils into mainstream classes straight away. In that case they are given a lot of extra language help.

Pupils are moved to a class corresponding to their actual age when the teacher believes their Norwegian is good enough to allow them to follow the normal curriculum.

In consultation with the child's teacher, parents decide if the child is to have Norwegian as his/her main language or as a second language. The pupil may switch from Norwegian as a second language to normal Norwegian classes during his/her school career.

The need for mother-tongue teaching is greatest when the child is learning to read and write at primary school. However, mother-tongue teaching may be extended if there is a need for it. Pupils may sometimes be taught other subjects in their mother tongue. In that case the pupil attends a class with the subject teacher and the mother-tongue teacher, with the subject matter being translated into his/her own language.

Pupils who have difficulty speaking, reading and writing Norwegian may receive mother-tongue tuition at lower secondary school too. Mother-tongue teaching may come in addition to the normal school day and may take place at another school than the one the pupil normally attends.

Upper secondary school

Asylum seekers aged 16–18 are entitled to enrol at an upper secondary school if they have completed 10 years of compulsory education or the equivalent in their home countries. Completing upper secondary education is necessary in order to qualify for university or other higher education.

Parents usually pay for their children's textbooks while they are at upper secondary school. Residents of asylum reception centres can apply to the UDI, through the reception centre, for financial assistance to pay for such textbooks.

Some students may need additional language tuition at upper secondary school. Some schools have therefore introduced a two-year foundation course during which students receive additional tuition in Norwegian and English. This also allows them more time to study other subjects. Ask the school counsellor for more information.

IN THE MARGIN

Compulsory education is free and the local authority pays for the school books. Pupils start school in

the August of the year in which they turn six.

Children who are going to stay in Norway for more than three months must start school shortly after arriving in the country.

Parents usually pay for their children's textbooks while they are at upper secondary school. Residents of asylum reception centre can apply to the UDI, through the reception centre, for financial assistance to pay for such textbooks.

For more information:

www.ung.no

www.bip.no

www.nokut.no

www.vox.no

Pages 20-24

"The purpose of Norway's social system is to provide for its inhabitants' welfare."

Chapter 4

Norwegian society

In this chapter you can read about how Norwegian society works. It may be different from your own country. **It is vital that all members of society are familiar with these important facts.**

Democracy

Norway is a democratic country. **This** means **that** everyone has the right to vote and help decide who governs the country.

The Norwegian parliament is called the Storting. Members of the Storting represent different political parties. General elections are held every four years.

The government must be approved by the Storting. Norway is a constitutional monarchy. The King is head of state, but has no political power.

Norway has a two-tier system of local government. Elections are held to select representatives to regional County Councils and local District Councils. All Norwegian citizens over the age of 18 are entitled to vote at general elections (to the Storting), but voting is not compulsory.

Even though you are not a Norwegian citizen you are entitled to vote at County Council and District Council elections, provided that you have been resident in Norway for the three years prior to election day.

The Constitution

The Constitution is the most important law in Norway. It sets out who is to govern the country and how it is to be governed. The Constitution also sets out the fundamental rights of those who live in Norway.

Division of power

In Norway, power is divided between three institutions: the Storting (parliament) that **legislates**, the Government that executes those laws, and the Judiciary (courts) that enforces the law. Power is divided into three branches so that they can balance each other and ensure that no one branch of government can abuse its powers for its own advantage.

Rule of law

No one may be imprisoned without trial. Laws and regulations ensure that the rights of Norway's inhabitants are upheld. The laws set out the **duties** of each person residing in Norway. Only the courts have the power to punish people. This is called the rule of law.

Freedom of speech

Freedom of speech is very important in a democracy. Freedom of speech means that no one may be persecuted because of what they say or think. Everyone has a right to **express** their own **opinions** about conditions in society.

There are more than one hundred newspapers in Norway, as well as several television and radio channels. Journalists often criticise the government, other public bodies and people with power in Norway. An independent media is important in a democracy.

Religious freedom

While the Church of Norway is the established church in Norway, everyone has the right to practice their own religion. Religious freedom also means the right not to be religious. Religion has little influence on political and social life in Norway. Most people consider religion and faith to be a private matter.

Equality and equal rights

In Norway, it is not permitted to discriminate against someone on the grounds of gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. Women and men are **of equal status** and must be accorded equal rights in all areas of society.

Gender equality means that women and men have the same opportunities, rights and obligations, at home, in the workplace, in politics and elsewhere in society.

The welfare state

The Norwegian state ensures that no one **starves** or lacks an education, medical treatment, **clothing** or housing. A system like this is called a welfare state.

The local and central government authorities allocate money for schools, hospitals, road-building, pensions, social services and other purposes. The money comes from direct and indirect taxes paid by the country's inhabitants. Every time you buy something, a portion of what you have paid goes to the government. The government also earns money from oil production and other business activities. Many important companies are owned by the Norwegian state.

Tax

Everyone in Norway pays tax on what they earn. The people who earn most pay the most in tax, while those who earn least pay the least tax. Tax revenues enable the government to provide us with a variety of welfare services and benefits. For example, the asylum reception centre where you are living, the school that your children go to and the hospital at which you may receive treatment are all paid for out of the taxes everyone in Norway pays.

Because taxes pay for public services that benefit everybody, it is important that everyone who earns money contributes their share by paying tax. If you do not pay the tax that you owe, you could be given a fine, be sent to prison or have to pay a punitive tax assessment.

In order to get a job in Norway you must either have a Norwegian personal identity number or a Norwegian work permit. You will be given a personal identity number if you are granted a residence permit. You must also obtain a tax card if you undertake paid work in Norway. The card indicates how much tax should be deducted from your wages. You can get a tax card from your local tax office.

Wages are tax-free if you earn less than NOK 1,000 from each employer. You must also pay tax on what you earn while you are participating in the Introduction Scheme (see Chapter 7). You must notify your reception centre if you get a job and earn money. Your local tax office will be able to tell you more about working and tax in Norway.

Children's rights

Children have clear and important rights. They have the right to food, housing, medical care, clothes and an education. They have the right to think and believe what they want and to get the best help society can give them. Children have the right to be heard in all matters that affect them. The weight given to a child's opinion shall be proportional to his/her age and level of maturity. The Norwegian authorities are responsible for ensuring that the rights of all children in Norway are upheld. The state shall protect all children against all kinds of abuse.

Children who are not together with their families have the right to additional protection and help. The state shall help children who are seeking asylum and work to reunite them with their families.

Upbringing

Parents shall bring up their children in a way that takes care of the child's interests and needs. Children shall be taught how Norwegian society works. Children shall also be taught to understand the meaning of human rights and equality. It is illegal to hit children or in any other way physically punish children, regardless of the reason. It is also illegal to mentally abuse a child.

Children and work

Children under the age of 12 are not permitted to take paid work. After their thirteenth birthday, children may undertake light work, e.g. delivering newspapers. The work must not affect the child's safety, health or development, nor should any job negatively affect his/her schoolwork.

Child Welfare Service

The task of the Child Welfare Service is to help children who are in a difficult situation. In Norway, the Child Welfare Service may intervene if it feels that a child is at risk. Usually Child Welfare Officers will offer guidance to parents to enable them to look after their children.

In the most serious cases, where the child's health or safety is at risk, the Child Welfare Service may have to place the child with a foster family or in a children's home. The aim is to make sure **that** the child is well looked after, either **residing** with his/her parents or in the care of the Child Welfare Service. Ask the staff at your reception centre if you have any questions about the Child Welfare Service.

Family life

People in Norway can live with whomever they wish as long as they are over the age of 18. Many people live alone. Some people are single parents, some live with a partner of the same sex, while others live with friends. You can get married or register as partners with the authorities – or you can simply live together. Homosexual couples in Norway can live together as unregistered or registered partners.

Marriage

Men and women must be 18 years old in order to marry. Everyone has the right to choose who they will marry. No one in Norway can be forced or pressured into marriage, nor may children and teenagers be sent out of the country to be married by force. If a marriage has **occurred** under pressure, then family reunification will not be permitted. A forced marriage may also be declared invalid in Norway. Legal proceedings for annulment must be instigated no later than six months after the forced marriage was entered into.

It is illegal in Norway to have more than one spouse. It is a criminal offence to **get married** if you are already married and the first marriage has not been formally dissolved.

Divorce

Both men and women have the right to divorce. If one spouse no longer wishes to be married to the other, he/she must first request a formal separation (the waiting period before a divorce is finalised). When the couple have been separated for at least one year, either party can demand a divorce. The couple may not live together during the period of separation. If the couple have lived together for less than two years, the parties can demand a divorce without any separation period. If the couple wanting the divorce have children, they must attend family counselling sessions before they can apply for a divorce.

It is possible to have a marriage annulled by court order without a separation period if one spouse has subjected the other to serious abuse or attempted to kill them, or threatened them with violence or abuse.

Violence

Violence and threats against family members are not permitted in Norway. Read more about this in Chapter 5. There are 50 domestic violence shelters spread throughout the country. These shelters accept women and children who have been physically abused and feel threatened. You do not need a referral to seek refuge at or contact one of these shelters.

IN THE MARGIN

Laws and regulations ensure that the rights of Norway's inhabitants are upheld. The laws set out the obligations of each person resident in Norway. No one may be imprisoned without trial.

For more information:

www.krisesenter.com

www.skatteetaten.no

www.bufdir.no

pages 25-29

"It is important to know how

*asylum cases are **processed**.*"

The asylum process step-by-step

You arrive in Norway and register as an asylum seeker with the police.

You are transferred to a transit centre.

You are interviewed by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI).

Applications for asylum that are thought likely to be unfounded will be processed within 48 hours.

You are moved to another transit centre or to an ordinary asylum reception centre.

Your application for asylum is considered. **The length of time required to process those applications may vary from case to case.**

Applications from unaccompanied children will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

You **will be** notified of the decision. If you are granted a residence permit, the task of finding a **municipality** willing to accept you for resettlement starts. If your application is refused, however, you can appeal or return home .

You will go to live in one of the country's **municipalities**

If your application has been refused, you can appeal the decision. You must lodge your appeal no later than three weeks after receiving notification of refusal. Your attorney will help you make your appeal.

If the UDI upholds its refusal after considering your appeal, the case is referred to the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE). The UNE normally makes a decision within 10 months

If the UNE rejects your appeal, the decision is final and you must return home. You can bring your case before the courts, but you will have to pay your own legal **fees**.

*"All asylum applications **are processed** in accordance with the same laws."*

It is important to know what will happen to you while your application is being processed.

"It is important to be familiar with Norwegian laws in order not to break them.

Chapter 5

Knowing the law

Every country has laws that **have to be obeyed by its inhabitants**. This is important for everyone's safety. **This chapter will familiarise you with some of the laws in Norway.**

Everyone in Norway needs to know what is legal and what is illegal. When you are in Norway you must obey Norwegian law. Some laws in Norway are different from those in other countries. You may be convicted of an offence even if you do not know that you are breaking a Norwegian law. It is therefore important to be familiar with the most important laws.

In Norway, the law takes precedence over religion or tradition. That means you must obey Norwegian law even if it goes against a tradition that you are accustomed to. You cannot justify an unlawful act by calling it tradition or a religious act.

If you are uncertain about whether something is legal or illegal in Norway, ask the staff at your asylum reception centre.

Your asylum reception centre staff will explain more about Norwegian laws as part of the information programme.

The police

The police have many functions. They prevent crime and keep the peace. They also protect people within the country's borders, and investigate crime.

Asylum seekers and crime

If you break the law in Norway while you are an asylum seeker, the UDI will **process** your application very quickly. If your application is rejected you will speedily be removed from the country. It may also make it difficult for you to enter Norway and a number of other European countries at a later date.

It is illegal to make a false statement or present false documents in connection with your application for asylum. Asylum seekers whose applications have received a final rejection must leave the country within the specified deadline. If they do not, they may be arrested by the police, imprisoned or moved to a secure detention centre before being removed from the country.

Punishment

If you break the law, you may be tried before a court. If you are found guilty and convicted of a serious criminal offence, you may be sentenced to many years in prison and/or be given a large fine. The maximum penalty in Norway is 21 years imprisonment. The maximum penalty may be imposed in connection with serious narcotics offences and murder cases. Norway does not have **the** death penalty.

Various types of offence

Discrimination

Discrimination means treating someone worse than others because of their gender, nationality, race, religion, skin colour, disability or sexual orientation.

If you are treated worse than others because of your ethnic background, you are the victim of racial discrimination. This is illegal in Norway, but may nevertheless occur in shops, the workplace or elsewhere in society. Discrimination may also occur at your asylum reception centre.

You are entitled to say that you have been discriminated against and take action against such behaviour. If you are the victim of racism or other gross discrimination, the perpetrators could face prosecution. The staff at your asylum reception centre will tell you more about this as part of the information programme.

Violence and threats of violence

The use of violence and causing physical injury to **any person** is illegal in Norway. This also applies to family members. It is also illegal to threaten someone with violence. The law is particularly strict with regard to violence against women and children. All violence, both inside and outside the family, is illegal.

Rape / sexual abuse

Rape is a serious crime in Norway. This also applies to marital rape. There is no excuse for rape, regardless of how the victim is dressed or behaves. Convicted rapists are sent to prison.

Age of consent

It is illegal in Norway to have sexual intercourse with anyone who is under the age of 16, even if both parties give their consent. It is the responsibility of each person to find out if their sexual partner is over the age of 16.

Incest

Sexual relations with family members (parents, children, siblings, grandparents, etc) is called incest. Incest is strictly forbidden in Norway.

Genital mutilation

Female circumcision is strictly forbidden in Norway. All forms of female circumcision, including "sunna", are regarded as genital mutilation. It is illegal to force someone into, agree to or participate in the genital mutilation of girls or women. Genital mutilation carries a maximum penalty of eight years in prison. You can read more about this issue in Chapter 2. The staff at your asylum reception centre can give you more information about this law.

Sexually transmitted diseases

If you know that you are infected with a sexually transmitted disease yet still infect other people with this disease, you may be prosecuted. If you are in any doubt about whether you have a sexually transmitted disease, you should consult a doctor. Doctors have a duty to **protect** their patients' **privacy**. Read more about this in Chapter 2.

Forced marriage

Everyone in Norway over the age of 18 is entitled to decide for themselves who they will marry. This means that no one living in Norway may be forced into a marriage against their will - either in Norway or abroad. Everyone is entitled to decide for themselves if they wish to divorce.

Marriage is sacred in many religions. Nevertheless, the law must be obeyed, even if different rules apply in other cultural or religious traditions. Read more about this in Chapter 4.

Child abuse

Children may not be punished with blows, kicks or any other form of violence inside or outside the home. All physical and psychological punishment of children is illegal and its perpetrators may be prosecuted. The sexual abuse of children is strictly forbidden and such offences may result in a long prison term.

The Child Welfare Service may intervene if it feels that a child is at risk. You can notify the Child Welfare Service if you know of a child that you think is at risk. Normally child welfare officers offer guidance to parents to enable them to look after their children. Read more about this in Chapter 4.

Weapons

It is illegal to carry firearms, knives or any other weapons, even for self-defence purposes. The same applies to replica firearms, toys, air soft guns and other objects with the appearance of a weapon. It is illegal to buy or sell weapons without a special permit from the Norwegian authorities.

Alcohol

It is legal to consume alcohol almost everywhere in Norway. It is illegal to drive under the influence of alcohol.

Narcotic drugs

The sale, possession and consumption of all forms of narcotic drugs is strictly forbidden within Norway's borders. Khat, hashish and cannabis/marijuana, which may be legal in some other countries, are considered to be illegal narcotics in Norway.

Smuggling

It is not permitted to bring goods into the country unlawfully. All buying and selling of smuggled goods may result in prosecution. You have a personal responsibility to make sure that you do not buy smuggled goods.

Theft and handling stolen goods

Theft is illegal in Norway. It is also illegal to buy or sell items that have been stolen, even if they were stolen by someone else.

Prostitution, procuring and people trafficking

It is illegal to buy or sell another human being. It is also illegal to hire people out for the purpose of prostitution or aid in the organisation of prostitution.

If you are the victim of such activities, you can receive help to get away. Talk to the staff at your asylum reception centre if anyone is forcing you or attempts to force you into prostitution. You should also tell the UDI about your situation.

IN THE MARGIN

The law takes precedence over religion or tradition. That means everyone must obey Norwegian law even if it goes against a tradition you are accustomed to.

If you break the law you may be tried before a court. If you are found guilty and convicted of a serious

criminal offence, you may be sentenced to many years in prison and/or be given a large fine.

Discrimination is illegal in Norway. If you are the victim of racism or other gross discrimination, the perpetrators could face prosecution.

Children may not be punished with blows, kicks or any other form of violence. All physical and psychological punishment of children is illegal and could result in a prison sentence.

Talk to the staff at your asylum reception centre if anyone is forcing you or attempts to force you into prostitution. You should also tell the UDI about your situation.

For more information:

www.politiet.no

www.lovdatab.no

Side 36-39

*"If your application is turned down **at the final appeal**, **then** you must return home. Ask the IOM for help.*

Chapter 6

Returning home

If the rejection of your application for asylum is final, you lose the right to stay in Norway. This chapter will provide you with information about what steps to take if you receive such a rejection.

An application for asylum **gets either a YES or a NO answer**. Many asylum seekers are refused permission to stay in Norway and must return home.

Having your application for asylum turned down may feel unjust. Many people think they have very good reasons for being allowed to stay in Norway. You may have left your house and possessions behind in order to flee to Norway. But if your application has been rejected, it means that the Norwegian authorities do not believe there are good enough grounds to grant you asylum.

If you have received a final rejection of your application for asylum, the authorities expect you to return to your homeland. You will normally have a duty to leave the country within 2–3 weeks of receiving notification of your final rejection.

It is important that you and your family are prepared for the possibility of such a final rejection through the knowledge of what

you are able to do. You should have a realistic view of your chances of being granted asylum. If you have travelled with children to Norway, it is particularly important that you explain to them what will happen if your application fails.

Refusal

If your application for asylum is refused, an attorney will be appointed to you. You have the right to appeal against the decision to refuse your application. Your attorney will help you formulate your appeal. Read more about this in Chapter 1.

Returning home

If a final decision has been made to reject your application for asylum, you must leave Norway. You will be invited to a meeting with the staff at your asylum reception centre. They will tell you what opportunities are open to you now that your application has been finally rejected.

You can apply to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for help and financial assistance with your return journey.. Help will be provided on the condition that you return to your homeland voluntarily.

The IOM will help you obtain travel documents. Travel with the IOM is free of charge.

The advantage of applying to the IOM is that all your costs will be paid for you, and you will receive help to obtain travel documents and plane tickets.

You must apply to the IOM for support before the deadline for returning home has expired. Talk to the staff at your reception centre.

Forced repatriation

If you are still in Norway after the date by which you should have returned home, your case will be handed over to the police. You will be transported out of the country by force if you do not leave voluntarily. In the case of a forced **repatriation**, you will owe the Norwegian authorities for your removal costs. These costs must be paid before you will be allowed to re-enter the country.

Financial support when returning home

If you have been granted leave to stay in Norway but still want to return home, you may qualify for financial support (Return Assistance). In addition to this assistance, the Norwegian authorities will pay your **travel** fares.

You do not qualify for this assistance if your application is still being processed or if your application has been rejected.

IN THE MARGIN

If your application for asylum is refused, an attorney will be appointed to you. You have the right to appeal against the decision to refuse your application. Your attorney will help you formulate your appeal.

Travelling home with the IOM is free of charge. You will also receive help to obtain travel documents and plane tickets.

For more information:

"If you are granted residency, there is a lot to be learned about Norway."

Chapter 7

When you have been granted a residence permit in Norway

This chapter explains what will happen if you are granted a residence permit in Norway, including what opportunities you will have for finding somewhere to live and **what forms of education are available**.

Accommodation at an asylum reception centre is offered as a temporary measure while you are waiting for the answer to your asylum application. Once you have been granted a residence permit in Norway, you will eventually move out of the asylum reception centre.

You have two choices:

1)

You can find yourself a place to live with no help from the authorities. If you do so, you will have to manage on your own financially.

2)

You can cooperate with the asylum reception centre and the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI) in finding a place to live.

You can find a place to live yourself. **In that case you must have enough money to support yourself and your family because you will not be provided with any help to find accommodation in your new municipality.**

If you are dependent on financial assistance from the public authorities, the asylum reception centre and the IMDI will help you find a local authority in which you can settle. You will receive only one offer of accommodation from the IMDI. If you turn it down, you will lose the right to stay at the asylum reception centre. You will also lose the right to financial support.

Resettlement interview

When you and your asylum reception centre have received notification that you have been granted a residence permit in Norway, a meeting will be arranged to discuss your resettlement. The aim of this meeting is to find out what you want to do in the future. It is important to find a municipality that suits you. The resettlement interview should take place within two weeks of your being granted a residence permit.

The asylum reception centre and the IMDI will base their search for a host municipality on the information you have provided at

your resettlement interview. It is therefore very important that you say what kind of job, training or further educational course you would prefer. You must also let them know if you have family or relations already living in Norway, and any other information that may be important for where you want to live.

During the resettlement interview you will be given practical information about the process of finding you a host municipality..

Resettlement

The IMDI's regional office determines which municipality you will be resettled in. The IMDI tries to take into consideration what you have said at your resettlement interview. But it is not always possible to find a **municipality** that matches your wishes perfectly. The IMDI will find a **municipality** where you will have the chance to qualify for a job or further education by participating in an introduction programme. Read more about this in the section covering the introduction programme.

Find out which places **provide** what you are looking for. The staff at your asylum reception centre can show you how **to** find out about the various **municipalities** in Norway. If you are an active participant in the process, it will be easier to find a suitable place for you to live.

Many people may want to resettle in the same area, or find a place close by their first-choice location.

Many people may want to resettle in the same town. Each **municipality** has only a limited number of resettlement places, not everyone can move to their first-choice location.

If you have accepted an offer of resettlement in a **municipality**, you can remain at the asylum reception centre until your new host town is ready to accept you. How long you will have to stay at the reception centre varies from case to case.

When it has been decided where you will be resettled, the **municipality** concerned will contact you and the asylum reception centre. They will let you know where you will be housed and when you can move in. You will also be given other practical information about the move.

Remember that you will receive only one offer of resettlement from the IMDI. If you turn this offer down, you will lose the financial support you have been receiving and you will have to move out of the asylum reception centre.

Learning Norwegian

Most people who have been granted a residence permit have the right, and the duty, **to attend a Norwegian language course**. You must complete this course in order to qualify for a permanent residence permit or Norwegian citizenship.

You must complete the Norwegian language course before the end of your first three years in Norway. This scheme applies to those who have been granted a residence permit in Norway after 1 September 2005.

Being able to speak Norwegian is important **in understanding and being understood**, in getting a job or education, and in participating in Norwegian society. If you already have good Norwegian or Sami language skills, you may be exempted from compulsory language tuition.

It is your host municipality that is responsible for **Norwegian language education**. They will decide if you should attend Norwegian classes. **If you do not receive the education that you are entitled to, you have the right to lodge a complaint.**

Introduction programme

Most people who receive a residence permit **have to** take part in an introduction programme. You will join the programme shortly after moving to your host town. This is an educational programme which all adult immigrants with a refugee background between the ages of 18 and 55 have a right and a duty to attend.

The objective of this programme is to make it easier for you to get a job, enabling you to support yourself and your family. The introduction scheme includes both men and women. There you will learn Norwegian and learn about Norwegian society and

working life.

The **education** offered in the introduction programme will be tailored to your background and your plans for the future.

The introduction programme is a full-time programme, five days a week, lasting up to two years.

If you get paid work and become financially independent, you can leave the programme before the end of the two years. Your host **municipality** must give its consent if you wish to leave the programme.

You will receive an introduction grant while attending the introduction programme. This is a salary for attending the programme. The introduction programme has many of the same rules as a job. You must pay tax on the introduction grant you receive, and deductions will be made in your grant if you are absent without good reason. You are allowed to take on extra work in addition to the introduction programme.

Your **municipality** is responsible for the introduction scheme. It is also your **municipality that** decides if you are to attend the introduction programme.

You have the right to complain if you are not permitted to take part in the introduction programme. The staff at your asylum reception centre will tell you more about the introduction scheme.

Education

When you have been granted a residence permit in Norway, you are allowed to study at a university or college of higher education. There are certain entry requirements for courses of higher education. If you have qualifications from your homeland, you must get them recognised by the Norwegian authorities. Ask the staff at your asylum reception centre or adult education centre for details.

Personal identity number and citizenship

When you are granted a residence permit, you will be given a Norwegian personal identity number. This number is important to qualify for social security payments, medical treatment, education or a work permit in Norway. You will be given a personal identity number by the National Population Register.

Family reunification

When you have been granted a residence permit, close family members may apply to join you in Norway. They must apply at their nearest Norwegian embassy, consulate or legation. Permission is granted for one year at a time.

Close family members are spouses and registered partners, cohabiting partners of more than two years' standing and children under the age of 18. Some other family members may also be granted residence in Norway.

In most cases you will have to have a certain level of income before your family members will be allowed to come to Norway.

People who come to Norway under the family reunification scheme also have the right and duty to attend a Norwegian language **course**. Many will also qualify for the introduction scheme. Read more about this above.

There are many important rules to abide by when you are applying for family reunification. You will find the information you need on the UDI's website (www.udi.no). The information has been translated into many different languages. Ask the staff at your asylum reception centre if you need help to find the right information.

Your new home

When you move into a house or flat, there are several things you must **pay attention to**. If you are unsure **about** how to take care of your home, it is better to ask than wait until something goes wrong. Staff at your local authority will be able to answer your questions.

Responsibility

If you are living in rented accommodation, you are responsible for its interior maintenance. This applies to floors, walls, ceilings, fixtures and fittings, and all furnishings. If you do not keep your accommodation in good repair, you may have to pay for anything that breaks.

Bills

When you are living independently, you will have a number of regular bills to pay. These include rent, electricity, television licence and telephone. The bills will be sent to you by post. You must pay your rent every month. If your **municipality** has not arranged for the supply of electricity to your new home, you must **take care of** that yourself.

If you do not pay your bills by their due date, you will be sent a reminder – with the possible addition of a reminder fee. If you still do not pay what you owe, the case may be sent to a debt collection agency. This means goods corresponding in value to the debt you have incurred may be confiscated, or you may have to pay an additional penalty charge. You may also be put on a credit blacklist, which could prevent you from getting a loan if you needed one.

Insurance

You should insure both your possessions and the property itself against fire, flooding and theft. Insurance cover means that you will receive compensation for most of your financial losses if such an event were to happen. Insurance costs money.

Fire

All homes must have at least one fire alarm and a fire extinguisher. The fire extinguisher is used to put out fires in electrical systems or appliances. Non-electrical fires should be smothered or put out with water. If a fire should break out, you must call the fire service by dialling 110.

National Insurance

Norway's National Insurance Scheme provides a number of social security benefits for people who need them. Remember that it is **a criminal offence** to falsely claim social security benefits.

The National Insurance Scheme provides financial security to those who cannot work and earn their own living. To qualify for social security benefits, you must meet a number of requirements. We do not have the space to mention them all in this booklet. Your local social security office can give you the information you need. Here is a list of the most common social security benefits:

Sickness benefit

If you are ill and cannot go to work, you are entitled to sickness benefit to compensate for lost wages. You must have been employed for at least four weeks at your place of work to qualify for sickness benefit, and you are entitled to sickness benefit from your first day off work. Sickness benefit is paid at the end of the month.

Sick child care benefit

You have the right to claim sick child care benefit if you have to stay off work to look after a child under the age of 12 for whom you are responsible. Sick child care benefit is limited to a certain number of days per year per child.

Incapacity benefits

If you are unable to work because of chronic illness or injury, you are entitled to a temporary incapacity benefit or a disability pension. You may qualify for temporary incapacity benefit if you are unable **to** work for a period. A disability pension is paid if it **is** determined that you will never be able to work again.

Old age pension

When you reach retirement, normally at the age of 67, you will receive an old age pension from the state. The size of the pension depends on how much you have earned during your working life. Everyone over the age of 67 is entitled to the minimum state pension.

If you would like to know more about how the old age pension is calculated, or how much you can expect to receive when you retire, contact your local social security office.

Social security benefits

The social services can help to resolve or prevent social problems. The social services are also obliged to find accommodation for those who are unable to find a **place** to live. People who are unable to work or support themselves in some other way may receive financial assistance from their local social security office.

You must ask the social services for help if you need it. You are entitled to appeal if your application for assistance is rejected.

IN THE MARGIN

You can find yourself a place to live **without any** help from the authorities, or you can do so in cooperation with your asylum reception centre and the IMDI

The IMDI's regional office determines which **municipality** you will be resettled in. The IMDI tries to take into consideration what you have said at your resettlement interview.

When you have been granted a residence permit, you have the right to attend a Norwegian language education course. You must complete this course in order to qualify for permanent residence or Norwegian citizenship.

The tuition offered in the introduction programme will be tailored to your background and your plans for the future.

When you have been granted a residence permit, close family members may apply to join you in Norway.

The National Insurance Scheme provides financial security to those who cannot work and earn their own living. To qualify for social security benefits, you must meet a number of requirements.

For more information:

www.nyinorge.no

www.imdi.no

www.udi.no

"Unaccompanied children are entitled to additional care at the asylum reception centre."

Chapter 8

Asylum seekers under the age of 18

If you are under the age of 18 and have arrived in Norway unaccompanied by your parents, you belong to a special group called unaccompanied child asylum seekers.

When you arrived in Norway, you were told what would happen to you now that you have become an asylum seeker. Unaccompanied minors (children and young people under the age of 18) have a special need for protection. In this chapter we explain what opportunities you have and what you are entitled to during your initial period in Norway.

Reception centre for unaccompanied children

Unaccompanied child asylum seekers have special rights. Asylum reception centres have separate units for unaccompanied children and teenagers. These units are staffed around the clock. One of the people working at the reception centre will be your particular contact person. The staff at the reception centre are responsible for you and will help you with your day-to-day needs.

Guardian

When you arrive in Norway, a guardian will be appointed for you. Your guardian will make sure you receive all the benefits you are entitled to. He or she will also look after your legal and financial interests. Ask the staff at your reception centre about the help you can expect from your guardian.

Attorney

You will also be given the help of an attorney. Your attorney will help you apply for asylum in Norway. You should normally meet your attorney before your interview with the UDI, and he or she will help you prepare for that interview. Afterwards, you and your attorney will go through the interview and make sure that everything in the statement is correct. If your application for asylum is refused, your attorney will help you make your appeal. Read more about this process in Chapter 1.

Education

Every child in Norway must go to school. If you are aged between 6 and 16, you will attend a primary or lower secondary school. Your asylum reception centre will enrol you at the appropriate school. If you are aged between 16 and 18, you are entitled to

attend a course of Norwegian language tuition. You may also be entitled to tuition in those subjects taught up to lower secondary school level. Then the aim is for you to take the lower secondary school final examination. The staff at your reception centre will communicate with your school and ensure that you receive help with your homework.

Information programme

You will have many subjects to study at school. But there are things you will need to know that the school will not cover. As an asylum seeker you need to know what you are entitled to and what opportunities you have. You also need to know what you must do yourself in various situations. The staff at your reception centre will tell you about these and a number of other issues as part of the information programme.

Confirming your age

Some adults claim to be under the age of 18 because they think it will give them a better chance of being granted asylum. That is why it is usual for the UDI to carry out a medical examination to determine an asylum seeker's age. You may agree to undergo this examination or refuse, but it could weaken your case if you do not undergo this examination.

Searching for parents or relatives

When you arrive in Norway, you may be given help to find your parents, if they are still alive. You may also be given help to find other relatives. If you provide information which can help in the search for your family, it will be easier to contact them.

You can talk to the staff at your reception centre to find out more about how you can try and contact your family.

Resettlement

The UDI processes applications from child asylum seekers faster than other applications. This is done to make your stay at the reception centre as short as possible.

If you are granted a residence permit in Norway, you should receive an offer of resettlement from a local authority no later than three months after the UDI has granted you permission to stay here.

Talk to the staff at your reception centre for more information about your situation.

Returning home

If you wish to return home, you can ask the staff at your reception centre how you can get help with your travel arrangements. Read more about this in Chapter 6.

Money

You are entitled to pocket money while you are staying at the asylum reception centre. The amount you receive will be larger if you buy your own food and groceries. The money is intended to cover clothes, medical treatment, medication, etc. The manager of your reception centre will look after your money if you are an unaccompanied child asylum seeker. You decide together what the money shall be spent on. Ask the staff at your reception centre about how much money you are entitled to.

IN THE MARGIN

One of the people working at the reception centre will be your particular contact person. The staff at the reception centre are responsible for you and will help you with your day-to-day needs.

For more information:

www.noas.org

www.bip.no

www.udi.no

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"This booklet provides you with important information. If you want to know more, just ask the staff at your asylum reception centre."

Back cover

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