



People seeking asylum evicted by Home Affairs without support

2nd October 2020

More than 500 refugees and people seeking protection who have been living in community detention (also known as 'residence determination') have been evicted by the Department of Home Affairs without any support during a pandemic and a recession.

The Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC), the House of Welcome, and the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia have been approached for assistance by an increasing number of people, including those with young families and people over the age of 80, who have been notified that they will be released from community detention without transitional support.

We applaud the release of refugees and people seeking asylum from community detention and the giving them the right to work. However, to do so without financial or transition support is cruel and will lead to poverty and homelessness.

There will be no option for people but to rely on the community and the charity sector for support, as they will have nowhere to live and no savings to fall back on. It is not possible to save for a bond in community detention.

In NSW people on temporary visas are ineligible for longer term public housing and have little chance of securing short-term emergency accommodation.

All of the targeted people are in Australia having been transferred for medical assistance from offshore detention in PNG and Nauru. They have been given three weeks' notice to leave their homes at which time the small amount of financial support previously provided by the Federal Government will be stopped.

While in community detention, people are not permitted to work, access further education, or engage with the job market. Subsequently, on release, their likelihood of getting work is extremely low, particularly in the context of double-digit unemployment, no Australian work experience, language barriers, existing medical and mental health conditions, and no preparation to apply for jobs.

The more than 500 are predominantly from Iran, Iraq, Somalia or are stateless refugees from Myanmar. They sought refuge in Australia from persecution and many are still suffering from significant health issues, trauma and poor mental health. Amongst the group there are people being treated for cancer, chronic disease and heart conditions. Many are receiving psychiatric treatment.

People seeking asylum living in our community are not eligible for the Federal Government's JobSeeker, JobKeeper or government support package during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our organisations will do our best to assist with housing, food, health and financial relief where we are able. Funds for our organisations are provided by generous donors and some emergency relief grants provided by the State Government. Support comes from members of the public who stand beside refugees and people seeking asylum but the funds available are simply insufficient to meet the needs.

For a copy of the signed statement, please click on this [link](#).

For interview or more information:

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