



SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO ARE SEEKING ASYLUM

In Victoria, any young person of compulsory senior school age is entitled to enrol and commence at school, regardless of their visa status.

Students who are seeking asylum (i.e. they have applied for a Protection Visa) are enrolled in Victorian government schools as an international student but are not charged tuition fees. They can be enrolled and start immediately in government schools.

IDENTIFYING ASYLUM SEEKING STUDENTS AT ENROLMENT

Sometimes students and families may directly tell you they have applied for a Protection Visa. Other times, you may need to collect basic information and then ask if they have applied for a Protection Visa (with an Interpreter, if needed)

There are simple indicators that a student and family may have applied for a Protection Visa:

- » The family are from a refugee-producing country
- » Where they lived shortly before they arrived in Australia (ie. a transit country such as Malaysia or Thailand)
- » Their visa subclass (eg. Bridging Visa E (BVE)) and protection visas that are temporary (eg. TPV 785 and SHEV 790)

ACCESSING FEE EXEMPTION AT ENROLMENT

- » To access fee exemption, a student or family must provide evidence to the school that they have applied for a Protection Visa
- » Acceptable evidence includes: a visa lodgement receipt or letter from the Department of Home Affairs showing that the student is included in the Protection visa application
- » A copy of the evidence of lodgement should be emailed to international@edumail.vic.gov.au
- » Schools receive funding for asylum seeking international students through the [Student Resource Package \(SRP\)](#)
- » Asylum seeking students should be counted in the school census to ensure the school is funded.
- » Contact the DET's International Education Division on 9637 2990 or via international@edumail.vic.gov.au if you have any questions about Protection Visa applicants
- » For more details, see [International Student Visa Fee Table](#)

WELLBEING CONSIDERATIONS

You can ensure adequate supports are in place by identifying students and families who are seeking asylum at enrolment. Use onsite or telephone Interpreters to assist with communication.

Things for you to consider and do:

- » Senior students will be stressed about leaving school and being treated as fee-paying International Students at TAFE and University. Assist students to apply for special access schemes. See TAFE and University Scholarships for people seeking asylum
- » 'Voluntary School Contribution' notices are anxiety provoking for families seeking asylum. At enrolment, explain to parents/carers that these payments are not compulsory and provide a translated letter with this message.
- » Ask if the family are linked to a Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) provider, either Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES) or Life Without Barriers.
- » Provide families with information regarding local support services and emergency relief providers.
- » In some instances, families may be entirely reliant on charitable sources for their shelter, food and medical care. If parents/carers do not have work rights they will not have access to Medicare.
- » Support students to access low cost text books
- » Provide uniform alternatives/ensuring that uniform items can be purchased at a low cost
- » Provide food programs for all students eg. breakfast club, sandwiches at lunchtime, basket of fruit and packaged food items.
- » Families will be extremely anxious about the outcome of their Protection claims, and unable to plan for the future.
- » Older students will likely have adult-like caring responsibilities at home and may be affected by their parents'/carers' trauma.
- » School camps may be anxiety provoking for students and parents/carers.
- » If you identify asylum seeking students who are unaccompanied minors without parents/carers, we recommend you contact Foundation House for consultation.

FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL AID LINKS

- » [DET Refugee and Asylum Seeker Wellbeing Supplement](#)
- » [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\)](#)
- » [State Schools Relief \(SSR\)](#)
- » [Les Twentyman Foundation - Back to School Program](#)
- » [Computerbank - Low Cost Computers](#)