

The principles governing our work

In relation to you:

- we respect you as an individuality with his/her decisions, choices and rights
- we support your independence and the client's realistic view of the situation
- we keep the legal norms of the Czech Republic and of the European Union
- our specialized services to you are free of charge

The aims of the rendered services

In relation to you:

- we respect your independence
- we support you in your effort to realize your rights and duties and to develop the ability to exercise them and to implement them
- we support your positive relationships to Czech society and your orientation in it

Who can contact us:

- foreigners of any age with all types of residence from countries outside the EU and their dependents of any age
- foreigners of any age from EU countries who are in an emergency life situation and have a difficulty in solving it
- applicants for international protection, recipients of international and additional protection and their dependents regardless of age. The OAR pays special attention to vulnerable groups (unaccompanied minor children, lonely women, etc.).

OAR/OPU further realize those activities which aptly supplement the provision of social services

Volunteering

In case of your interest it is possible to mediate your contact with the volunteers of the organization. The volunteers can help you with improving your language skills, with orientation in Czech society; they can accompany you in visits to various cultural or sporting events, etc.

Publication activity

We try within the framework of the individual projects to publish information on the themes of asylum and refugees which can help you to find your bearings in Czech society (this information is published in several language versions).

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The assistance and aid of OAR/OPU is also offered within the framework of other programmes whose agenda and more detailed information are cited only on the web sides of the organization www.opu.cz, including updated information and changes (this may include language courses, gratis translations or interpreting, individual material gifts, financial contributions, etc.)

Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU)

Information on services

OPU is a non-governmental, non-profit organization founded on 25 November 1991. The mission of the organization is the support and assistance to refugees and foreigners on their way to independence, in orienting themselves in their rights and duties and in their 4 integration into society. The organization also aims to create positive relationships between foreigners and majority society.

The Mission of the Services

We offer aid and assistance in these social services free of charge:

1) Social service:

SPECIALIZED SOCIAL COUNSELING

- provided in the whole territory of the Czech Republic (in all OAR/OPU branches)
- the social service includes:

a) SOCIAL COUNSELING

- education (assistance with the recognition of diplomas, assistance in choosing schools, choosing educational courses, etc.);
- social security (assistance in receiving individual benefits and orientation in the system)
- employment (what are the possibilities of legal employment, assistance with compiling the CV, in case of long-term collaboration assistance and aid in seeking employment, etc.)
- health care (what are the possibilities of health insurance, assistance with seeking doctors, etc.)
- a change of family situation (assistance when a child is born, assistance with concluding marriage, etc.)
- housing (provision of information about the housing market, in case of a long-term collaboration assistance and aid with search for accommodation);
- information about life in the Czech Republic (traditions, customs, political system, etc.)
- on consultation with OAR/OPU employees the possibility of accompanying for negotiations at offices and institutions – e.g. with schools, employment offices, health insurance companies, etc.

b) LEGAL COUNSELING

- consultations, compilation of requests, or representation in issues related to the Asylum Act, Act on the Residence of Foreigners, Act on Citizenship, Family Act, etc.

This includes the following consultations:

- proceedings concerning the granting of international protection;
- stay in the territory of the Czech Republic (visa, long-term and permanent residence);
- administrative expulsion;
- detention for the purpose of administrative expulsion;
- citizenship.

In justified cases lawyers can represent on the basis of a Power of Attorney in administrative and judicial proceedings. The compilation of the request and/or representation depend on the consideration of each individual case by OAR/OPU lawyers. The OAR lawyers do not work in the regional branches, but it is possible to mediate contact with them through an employee engaged in the given branch.

2) Social service HALFWAY HOUSE

- offered in the territory of Prague for the target group from the whole Czech Republic

This social service is only provided to the following PERSONS: young immigrants between 18 and 26 years who:

- a)** before reaching the age of majority were categorized as “unaccompanied minors” and are leaving the institutional care school facility,
- b)** lead risky way of life or are in danger of leading such way of life.

Both groups of the foreigners must meet the following criteria:

- they have solved their accommodation problem (i.e. They received international protection in the form of asylum or additional protection, or had received their permanent residence permit);
- are employed, or actively seek employment;
- in exceptional cases are students of secondary schools, colleges or universities;
- the social services of a halfway house are not for them a solution of their accommodation situation;
- they are not addicted to alcohol and drugs;
- they voluntarily agree with all conditions of the provision of services;
- they are not mentally ill or diagnosed as challenged in their intellectual functions;
- they do not suffer from any infectious diseases;
- their health does not require the provision of institutional care in a health care facility;
- they are capable of movement without the assistance of another person.

The purpose of this service is following:

- Provision of temporary accommodation – usually for 12 months;
- Training of special skills (cooking, cleaning, washing – by means of an active participation in the operation of the household; to learn to economize with earned money, to organize time, to communicate with authorities);
- Assistance with the finding of the subsequent adequate accommodation.

3) Social service FIELD PROGRAMMES

- will only be realized in the territory of the Plzeň Region. The mission of this service is to help and assist refugees and foreigners living in Plzeň and in the Plzeň Region on their way to independence, self-sufficiency, in orienting themselves in their rights and duties, and in their integration into Czech society.

The provision of counseling and material services in a natural environment based on the individual needs of the clients increases the availability of specialized counseling and the ability of the clients to make informed and responsible decisions, thus helping them in their easier and quicker integration into the Czech Republic with the aim to avoid social exclusion of foreigners. Field workers offer the target group of foreigners an information background in social and legal problems; at the same time they offer a complex assistance in solving problem situations resulting from usual everyday duties.

The rules of cooperation

The OAR can be contacted by telephone, E-mail and personally. All our services are provided free of charge. The information you can give to our employees is confidential and cannot be spread without your consent.

Our collaboration with you can be prematurely terminated on the basis of so-called termination reasons:

- 1)** If you repeatedly or principally fail to observe your duties ensuing from the contract;
- 2)** If you physically attack or endanger us.
- 3)** If you are at least twice under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating or psychotropic substances which make it difficult or impossible to achieve the agreed objectives.
- 4)** If OAR should terminate its activities or provision of the relevant social service.

In case you are not satisfied with the provided social service, you can file a complaint, either orally or in writing. It is also possible to file your complaint anonymously in a Book of Complaints which is kept in the waiting room. A complaint concerning an OAR employee is delivered to the director of the organization or to his deputy. A complaint concerning the organization can be lodged with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, with office in Prague 5, Kinských square, 150 00, and/or the Ombudsman (www.ochrance.cz).