

GUIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS'

EMAIL/ONLINE ASYLUM & REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION EXTENSIONS

In May 2021, the Department of Home Affairs [announced](#) that it would be launching an online (email) process to renew asylum and refugee documentation that expired during the Covid-19 National Lockdown in South Africa.

This email renewal service is only for people who hold refugee or asylum documentation that expired on or after 26 February 2020. For all other services, including new applications for asylum, Home Affairs has said people must wait and they will announce additional services in time.

1 CHECK THE CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS

WHICH REFUGEE RECEPTION OFFICE DO I EMAIL?

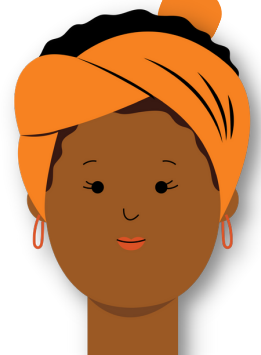
You must email the Refugee Reception Office where you received your most recent extension. (For example, if your asylum or refugee document was issued at Musina Refugee Reception Office, but you last renewed it in Cape Town, you should email the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office.) Each Refugee Reception Office has one email address for asylum seekers (section 22) and one email address for refugee status holders (section 24). If you are not sure which document you are using, it should be written on the top of your document. See the table below to find the correct email address.

WHAT DO I WRITE IN THE FIRST EMAIL?

When you write the email to Home Affairs, you must send this from your own personal email address. You should send one separate email for each person that is documented in your asylum or refugee file - for example, spouses or children. (Each of these emails can be sent from your own personal email address.) In the email, you must write your full name (as it appears on your refugee/asylum document) and your file number. In the subject line of the email, please write your file number as it appears on your document.

CAPE TOWN	Asylum seeker documents (Section 22) Refugee documents (Section 24)	CTRRC.Extension22@dha.gov.za CTRRC.Extension24@dha.gov.za
PRETORIA	Asylum seeker documents (Section 22) Refugee documents (Section24)	DTRRC.Extension22@dha.gov.za DTRRC.Extension24@dha.gov.za
MUSINA	Asylum seeker documents (Section 22) Refugee documents (Section24)	MusinaRRC.Extension22@dha.gov.za MusinaRRC.Extension24@dha.gov.za
DURBAN	Asylum seeker documents (Section 22) Refugee documents (Section24)	DurbanRRC.Extension22@dha.gov.za DurbanRRC.Extension24@dha.gov.za
PORT ELIZABETH	Asylum seeker documents (Section 22) Refugee documents (Section24)	PERRC.Extension22@dha.gov.za PERRC.Extension24@dha.gov.za

THE PROCESS IS
FREE OF CHARGE.



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DOWNLOAD, FILL OUT + EMAIL THE FORM

After you have sent your first email, Home Affairs will reply to your email with an attached template form and some requested information in the body of the email itself. The attached template form is called 'Request for Extension or Reprint of Section 22/ 24 visa Template.' You must now fill out this form as well as provide the required information in the email body itself. Do not add any additional information in the email body other than what is requested.

WHAT ABOUT MY FAMILY MEMBERS?

Some people have their spouses and children documented as 'dependents' in one asylum or refugee file. If you are a family in one asylum or refugee file, you should send one separate email for each person that is documented in that file - for example, spouses or children. (Each of these emails can be sent from your own personal email address.)

HOW DO I FILL OUT THIS FORM CORRECTLY?

It is important that this form is filled out correctly. Either, you can print this form and fill it out by hand, and then scan it as an attachment. Or, you can fill it out electronically using a PDF editor.

Make sure that:

- You write all information clearly and make sure it is absolutely correct
- You fill out one form per person in your file
- If you have children under the age of 18, that you as parent or legal caregiver, sign on their behalf.

The email address that you use on the form will be the email address that Home Affairs will be replying to.

With this form, you must attach the three required documents. These are:

1. A copy of the expired asylum or refugee document for each person in your file. This needs to be a clear colour scan, or a very clear photograph. Do not submit blurry or unclear photographs.
2. An affidavit is only needed for those people who have lost their expired asylum or refugee document. If this is the case, you must go to a police station to have the affidavit commissioned and you must explain when and how the document was lost. You must include your asylum or refugee file number on this affidavit. (If you do not know your file number, please see page 4 of this infographic).
3. For your proof of address, you must attach a bank statement, lease agreement or utility bill. If this is not possible, you can submit an affidavit that states your name, file number and current address. This can be done at any police station.

MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE SPELT THE EMAIL ADDRESS CORRECTLY WHEN SENDING THE FORM TO HOME AFFAIRS!

3

AWAIT THE RENEWAL

HOW WILL HOME AFFAIRS ISSUE AN EXTENSION?

The Department of Home Affairs will send you a renewed asylum or refugee document by email. They will send this to the email address that you wrote in your form. If there are any issues with your documents, or they need to go to the Refugee Reception Office, they will indicate this to you by email. (If this is the case and you have any concerns, you can contact us using the contact details on page 4, below.)

Here are some important points about receiving your renewed document by email.

- When you receive your new document, it will be sent to you at the email address that you wrote on the form. It will be sent as an attached PDF.
- This PDF will be password protected.
- The password is your file number. You need to enter your file number exactly as it is written on your document to open the PDF.
- The renewed document will not have a signature or a stamp on it. It will have 'Covid-19' written across it and it will have other security features.

HOW LONG WILL THIS PROCESS TAKE?

We do not know how long this process takes. The Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town cannot follow up on your behalf.

We suggest that you first double check that you have sent the form to the correct email address with the correct spelling. Secondly, we suggest you check your junk or spam folders.

It may take a few weeks to receive a reply from Home Affairs. Please do not send multiple emails to the Home Affairs email as this may only delay the process further.



HOW CAN I USE MY NEW DOCUMENT?

Once you have downloaded your new asylum or refugee document, you can print it out and save a copy on your phone.

This document can now be used to access services (employment, banks, schools, etc.) the same way as you used your previous refugee or asylum document.

Some services will want to verify this document. They can do so by emailing the verification email addresses which will be at the bottom of the document itself.

**REMEMBER THAT ALL
ASYLUM/REFUGEE
DOCUMENTS THAT EXPIRED
ON OR BEFORE 15 MARCH
2020 ARE STILL
CONSIDERED EXTENDED
UNTIL 30 JUNE 2021.
SEE [HERE](#).**



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS MY ASYLUM OR REFUGEE FILE NUMBER?

Your file number appears on your document itself. It is written underneath the barcode in the upper left hand corner of your document. File numbers usually start with three letters (for example, CTR or MUS or PTA or DBN or ECZ).

YOUR FILE NUMBER IS ON YOUR DOCUMENT. IT USUALLY STARTS WITH THREE LETTERS AND THEN SEVERAL NUMBERS.



I'VE LOST MY DOCUMENT AND I DON'T KNOW MY FILE NUMBER. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you have lost your asylum or refugee document and you do not know your file number, try to think of anyone who might have taken a copy of your document (employer, school, bank). Without your file number, you cannot apply to the online renewal process. You will have to wait for Home Affairs to re-open services at the Refugee Reception Office in order to proceed.

I STILL HAVE NOT HEARD FROM HOME AFFAIRS. WHAT CAN I DO?

We do not know how long this process takes. The Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town cannot follow up on your behalf. We suggest that you first double check that you have sent the form to the correct email address with the correct spelling. Secondly, we suggest you check your junk or spam folders. It may take a few weeks to receive a reply from Home Affairs. Please do not send multiple emails to the Home Affairs email as this may only delay the process further.

I CANNOT FILL IN THIS PDF FORM. WHAT CAN I DO?

You can print the form and fill it out by hand, then scan and upload it as an attachment. You should be able to do this at an internet cafe if you are not able to do this at home. If you have a PDF viewer/editor on your browser you can fill out the PDF online and save it, and then upload it as an attachment.

I RECIEVED A NEW DOCUMENT, BUT THERE IS AN ERROR ON IT. WHAT CAN I DO?

You will need to follow up with Home Affairs using the same email address to let them know.

MY EMPLOYER/BANK/SCHOOL WANTS TO VERIFY MY DOCUMENT. WHAT CAN I DO?

To verify your asylum or refugee document, your employer/bank/school must email the verification email addresses which are at the bottom of the refugee/asylum document itself.

HOME AFFAIRS REPLIED BUT THERE WAS NO TEMPLATE FORM ATTACHED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Home Affairs should reply to your first email with a template form attached. However, if you were not sent the form in that email, you can download this form [here](#), or by clicking on the icon on the right hand side.



DOWNLOAD FORM

IF YOU STILL HAVE QUESTIONS...



Please make sure that you have read this document thoroughly. If you still have questions or problems, you can contact our Advocacy Team. However, please note that we are limited in the assistance we can give with online renewals. To contact the Advocacy Team, you can send a WhatsApp to 078 260 3536. Or you can call or SMS or send a please-call-me to 083 433 5062.