



DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEE SERVICES (DRS)

Website: <https://refugee.go.ke/>
 E-mail: refugeeaffairs@refugee.go.ke
 Tel: +254 020-434-348-143/5, +254-020-4405057
Facebook: Refugee Affairs Secretariat-RAS,kenya
Twitter: @refugeeaffairs

Corporate Place, Kiambere Rd, Upper hill
 P.O. Box 42227 -00100
 Nairobi, Kenya

APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR PERMIT TO VISIT REFUGEE CAMPS

Introduction

Refugee designated areas in Kenya are protected areas where refugees reside in. Refugees are vulnerable people under the protection of the Government of Kenya and therefore, all visitors to these areas must be vetted before the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) in Nairobi permits them to visit.

Section 8(r) of the Refugee Act 2021 mandates the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs to issue visitor permits for entry into refugee camps in accordance with regulations to the Act. Vide this section, the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs (CRA) has the authority to approve or deny any person/s access to refugee designated areas to protect refugees and asylum seekers as well as for the interest of national security. Any person found visiting or conducting any business in those areas without permission will be arrested and prosecuted.

Categories of visitors and the requirements for a permit to visit refugee camps in Kenya:

1. Researchers:

Any person wishing to conduct research is required to have:

- A research permit from NACOSTI (<https://www.nacosti.go.ke/>),
- Official request letter addressed to the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs requesting permission to visit a particular refugee camp (i.e. either Dadaab or Kakuma refugee camp).

- Purpose of visit, dates, and period of visit must be clearly stated in the letter.
- Copies of passports/Identification cards of all persons traveling to the camps must be attached.

2. Journalists:

For any journalist (local or international) wishing to visit a refugee camp, he/she is required to have:

- Media Council of Kenya accreditation. More information can be found on (<https://www.mediacouncil.or.ke/en/mck/>).
- Copies of passports/Identification cards of all persons traveling to the camps must be attached.
- Official request letter/form (signed) addressed to the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs requesting permission to visit a particular refugee camp (i.e. either Dadaab or Kakuma refugee camp).
- Purpose of visit, dates, and period of visit must be clearly stated in the letter.

3. Film-makers

Filming companies and individuals must attach:

- A copy of a Filming Permit from the Kenya Films and Classification Board (KFCB). More information can be found on <https://kfcg.co.ke/>.
- Copies of passports/Identification cards of all persons traveling to the camps must be attached.
- Official request letter/form (signed) addressed to the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs requesting permission to visit a particular refugee camp (i.e. either Dadaab or Kakuma refugee camp).
- The purpose of visit, dates and period of visit must be clearly stated in the letter.

4. Refugee Visitors

Any refugee that would like to travel to and from any refugee camp is required to obtain a Movement Pass from the camp manager or urban offices. In Nairobi, a Movement Pass can be obtained from our General Mathenge road office in Westlands.

5. Other Visitors

For any other visitor (other categories), you will only be required to have:

- Official request letter/form (signed) addressed to the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs requesting permission to visit a particular refugee camp (either Dadaab or Kakuma refugee camp).
- Purpose of visit, dates, and period of visit must be clearly stated in the letter.
- Copies of passports/Identification cards of all persons traveling to the camps must be attached.

Note: These particular visitors are not allowed to do any screening, research, interviews, filming or photography work anywhere within the refugee camps.

How to apply

Attach scanned copies of:

1. The signed official letter/form (in PDF if you send via email),
2. The permits (from NACOSTI, Media Council of Kenya etc.) and other documents mentioned above in PDF format (where applicable) and passports or IDs.

The application can be sent through email to: refugeeaffairs@refugee.go.ke , by Post to the address above or hand-delivered at our offices on the address above. You may also send a copy to snyale.dra@gmail.com (mobile: +254720761682) for follow-up. If you apply via email, you must present yourself with the original documents you used to apply to the DRS Head office at the Corporate Place Upper Hill Nairobi during collection of your permit. **The permit is free of charge and processing takes at least 5 working days so you are advised to apply earlier.**

Caution: Do not book a flight before securing your permit.