

PRESS RELEASE**For Immediate Release****8 April 2020****EMERGENCY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:
SUPPORTING THE REFUGEE COMMUNITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

HONG KONG – Covid-19 does not discriminate between age, gender, race, nationality, or legal status. After more than two months of society-wide efforts to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, it is clear that the health and well-being of everyone in Hong Kong is interdependent. Therefore, we must not leave any one behind in our public health response.

And yet, we are concerned that the Hong Kong Government's response to date risks overlooking the needs of the community of refugees, asylum seekers and other people with insecure immigration status* in Hong Kong who may be vulnerable. Many of those in need of protection are otherwise at risk of being refused critical access to healthcare and basic necessities such as food, amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rachel Li, Research and Policy Officer at Justice Centre, observed: "To be effective, Hong Kong's public health response to Covid-19 must not leave any community behind. Ensuring the safety and health of refugees, asylum seekers and other people with insecure immigration status* is in the best interest of everyone. We urge the Hong Kong Government to take active steps to safeguard public health and ensure the safety of the refugee community. We must uphold our human rights obligations to those who are seeking international protection in our city."

Justice Centre has produced a [list of key recommendations](http://tiny.cc/HKRefugeesCOVID19) (<http://tiny.cc/HKRefugeesCOVID19>) required to safeguard public health and ensure the safety of those seeking protection in Hong Kong during the pandemic. These recommendations cover: Access to healthcare for the refugee community; Access to food and other supplies for the refugee community; Access to revenues of asylum and international protection. We have also included policy examples, where relevant, from other jurisdictions and international organisations, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the World Health Organization (WHO). This list of policy recommendations has been endorsed by 17 civil society organisations and public interest lawyers.

As we appreciate the need for these recommendations to evolve with the latest developments, we maintain the list as a live document which would be updated with inputs from civil society.

***People with insecure immigration status** include people who need protection but have yet to instigate protection claims, people who are unable to register their Unified Screening Mechanism ("USM") claims, or people that have had their USM claims refused or are pursuing ongoing Judicial Review proceedings, for example.

DRIVING CHANGE FOR A FAIR AND JUST SOCIETY

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About Justice Centre Hong Kong

Justice Centre Hong Kong is a non-profit organisation focused on the promotion of human rights through our legal, psychosocial, research, policy and advocacy work. We are committed to driving change for a just and fair society.

Founded in 2007 as Hong Kong Refugee Advice Centre, over seven years we helped over 2,000 men, women and children on the road to a new life.

Building on our expertise in refugee issues, in 2014 we identified a clear need for an increased response to tackling forced labour and human trafficking in Hong Kong, and expanded our remit to fill this gap and rebranded as Justice Centre Hong Kong. We now help around 300 people each year through our direct services and aim to benefit many more through our research, policy and advocacy work.

新聞稿

即時發佈

2020年4月8日

緊急政策建議：在新型冠狀病毒疫情期間支援難民社群

香港 – 新型冠狀病毒不會對年齡、性別、種族、國籍或法定身份作出任何區分。經過兩個多月社會各界攜手力抗新型冠狀病毒疫情，香港每個人的健康和福祉明顯是相互依存的。因此，香港的公共衛生措施決不能忽略任何社群之需要。

然而，我們擔心香港政府至今的抗疫政策忽略了難民、尋求庇護者，以及其他在香港可能需要保護而未有適切身份人士*的需要。在新型冠狀病毒大流行之際，眾多需要保護的弱勢社群在使用醫療服務或者滿足生活基本所需（例如食物）等方面面對重重障礙。

Justice Centre 政策及研究主任李知樂指出：「香港的防疫措施不能忽略任何社群之需要。確保難民、尋求庇護者，以及其他未有適切身份人士*的安全和健康符合所有香港市民的最佳利益。我們敦促香港政府採取積極行動，保障公眾健康並確保難民社群的安全。香港必須履行我們對於在香港尋求國際保護社群的人權責任。」

Justice Centre 就此制定了一份有關在疫情下保障公眾健康及在香港尋求庇護人士的安全之**政策建議** (<http://tiny.cc/HKRefugeesCOVID19>)。這些建議包括：使用醫療服務、獲得食物及其他必需品，及尋求庇護和國際保護的途徑。我們亦列舉了其他地區和國際組織，例如國際移民組織、聯合國人權高級專員辦事處和世界衛生組織的政策範例供港府參考。此政策建議獲得 17 個支援在港難民的公民社會組織及公益律師支持。

由於我們意識到這些建議需要隨着最新的事態與時並進，因此我們將此清單保留為一份實時文件，並會持續徵詢公民社會之意見更新文件。

*其他未有適切身份人士：需要保護但尚未提出保護要求的人士、未能提出免遣返保護聲請（“USM”）的人士，或者他們的免遣返保護聲請被拒絕或司法審查程序。

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關於 Justice Centre Hong Kong

Justice Centre Hong Kong 是一所透過法律和心理支援、研究、倡議及政策工作推動人權的非牟利組織。我們致力令香港成爲一個公正和公平的社會。

Justice Centre Hong Kong 的前身為成立於 2007 年的 Hong Kong Refugee Advice Centre (HKRAC)。HKRAC 幫助了超過 2000 名難民男女及兒童踏上新的路途。

憑著我們在難民議題上的專業知識，我們意識到有急切需要打擊香港的強迫勞動和人口販運問題。故此，我們於 2014 年從新命名為 Justice Centre Hong Kong。Justice Centre 每年為約 300 名人士提供直接服務，並旨在透過我們的研究、政策及倡議工作使更多人受惠。