

Information about the reception centre



This information package gives you general information about what the reception centre does and the services it provides as well as instructions and advice for living at the reception centre and for looking after yourself.

The reception centre and the Finnish Immigration Service will also give you other information and instructions that concern you. They contain important information for you. You should read them carefully.

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Information about what the reception centre does

Reception centre staff will help you

In particular, you will find social welfare, health care and guidance and counselling service staff working at the reception centre.

The reception centre staff are there for you, and you can always ask them if you need help or if you have any concerns.

The reception centre employees are impartial and treat all clients equally.

The staff at the centre do not make decisions about residence permits, and they cannot influence the granting of residence permits or asylum decisions. These decisions are made by the Finnish Immigration Service.

- ◆ You should always follow the instructions the reception centre staff give you.



Be active and take part in handling your affairs

Take part in handling your affairs as much as you are able to and have the resources for. The idea is that you should manage your affairs as independently as possible.

Always work well together with the reception centre staff.

Keep your contact information up to date at all times

Make sure that the reception centre always has your current contact information (phone number, address and email address) so that its employees can contact you if they need to.

Always behave correctly at the reception centre

The reception centre must be a safe place for everyone to live and work at.



Respect other clients, the reception centre staff and the centre's property.

The reception centre has rules that you must follow. Any form of violence and disruptive behaviour at the reception centre are strictly prohibited. If you notice violence or other types of harassment at the reception centre, tell a staff member about it.

Some shared areas of the reception centre have CCTV surveillance systems. There is no surveillance in your room or in the toilet and shower rooms.





You can give feedback to the reception centre.

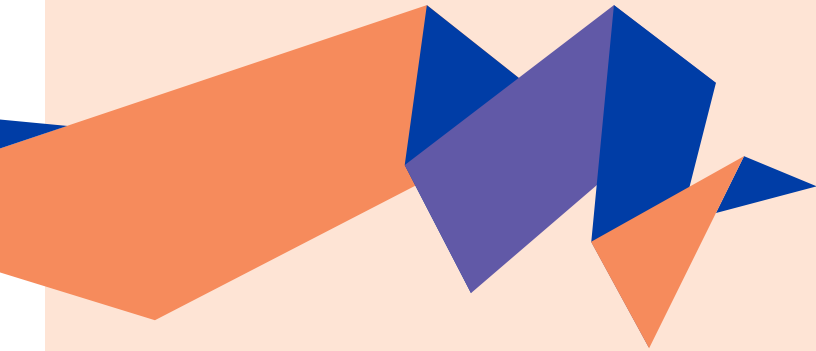


Giving feedback

Tell a reception centre employee if you are not satisfied, if something bothers you or you have any suggestions. Your feedback will help the reception centre and the Finnish Immigration Service to evaluate and develop their work.

You can file an administrative complaint with the Finnish Immigration Service if you believe that the reception centre or one of its employees have broken the law or not fulfilled their obligations. Before you make an administrative complaint, first talk to the reception centre or its employee if possible. If they have made a mistake, the discussion may help to resolve and correct the problem more quickly.

The Finnish Immigration Service website contains instructions for making an administrative complaint. If necessary, the reception centre can help you with making the complaint.



Accommodation at the reception centre

You will stay in shared accommodation with other people at the reception centre. The reception centre will organise for you a room or apartment that you share with other clients. You may be moved to a different room or apartment at the reception centre while you are staying there.



Follow the common rules of living at the centre

People from many different countries, cultures and backgrounds live at the reception centres. There are rules for living at the centre that everyone must follow. Respect other people and their religions, cultures and customs.

- Everyone has the right to profess and practise a religion, to express their beliefs and to belong or not belong to a religious community. To avoid disturbing others, do not practise your religion in the shared facilities of the reception centre.
- You may not keep or use weapons or drugs at the reception centre. Using drugs or having them in your possession is illegal in Finland. If you have any items in your possession that could be used to harm others or put them in danger, they may be taken away from you.
- The items and furniture in your room belong to the reception centre. You may not sell, replace or dismantle them or take them out of the room. If any items or furniture in your room or apartment are broken, tell the staff at the centre. If you want to bring your own furniture to the reception centre, you need to ask an employee's permission.
- Keep to the times agreed with the reception centre and the people you live with when cooking, washing clothes and using the shared facilities, for example.



- Do not smoke indoors. You can only smoke outdoors in the area intended for smoking.
- Take care of fire safety. Keep an eye on any electrical appliances. If the electricity or an appliance is not working, ask an employee at the centre to help you. Do not keep any objects on the cooker.
- The reception centre will give you bedding, cleaning equipment, toilet paper and similar items. Do your share to keep the apartment or room tidy. Always tidy up after yourself and, for example, clean the kitchen after cooking. Take your rubbish to the waste collection point.
- Use water sparingly. Keep your showers short, turn off the water while you are soaping yourself, and adjust the water to a suitable temperature.
- Look after the keys to your room and apartment.
- During the hours of silence, usually between 22:00 and 07:00, you may not talk in a loud voice, play music or make other noise that disturbs other people.
- Visitors may not stay overnight at the reception centre.
- The reception centre staff may check the condition of your room or apartment regularly and as needed.



Staying in private accommodation

If you want, you can also find yourself a place to live in outside the reception centre. This is called private accommodation. For example, you can stay with your relatives, spouse or acquaintances. You can also rent an apartment yourself or live as a subtenant in an apartment rented by someone else.

Please note the following when you live in private accommodation:

- The accommodation must be a place intended for living that has an address where you can receive your mail.
- You must be living at the address you give.
- Submit a notification of move in which you give your new address. You can get the form at a post office or in the information system of Posti.
- Inform the reception centre in writing of the address of the accommodation you have arranged yourself. Always tell the reception centre about any changes.
- This is important in order to ensure that you maintain your rights to other reception services and that the Finnish Immigration Service can contact you about your application.

Moving to another reception centre

You are a client of the reception centre on a temporary basis. You may not be able to live at the same reception centre throughout the period during which you are a client of the reception system.

Your possibility of staying at or moving to a certain reception centre depends on how much space the centres have. The centre at the location where you would like to live may not have any space available. This means that you cannot pick and choose the centre where you stay.

You may be transferred to another reception centre if this is necessary because of your situation, the activities of the reception centre or the authorities, or the processing of your application. You may also be transferred to another centre if your reception centre closes down or, when you arrive in Finland, you are first placed in a transit centre that is intended for short-term accommodation.

You can also ask at your own reception centre whether moving to another centre is possible if:

- you have found a job in another location
- you have a place in studies leading to a qualification in another location, or
- your close family members live at another reception centre. Your close family includes your father, mother, spouse or child under the age of 18.

The reception centre will take care of the practical tasks and arrangements needed for transferring you.



Information about the reception centre's services

The reception centre will arrange for you the reception services you need. The services which you have a right to use are laid down in the law.

Reception centre services include

- accommodation
- social services
- health care services
- reception allowance
- work and study activities
- interpretation, and
- assistance for voluntary return.

The reception centre will also give you information about:

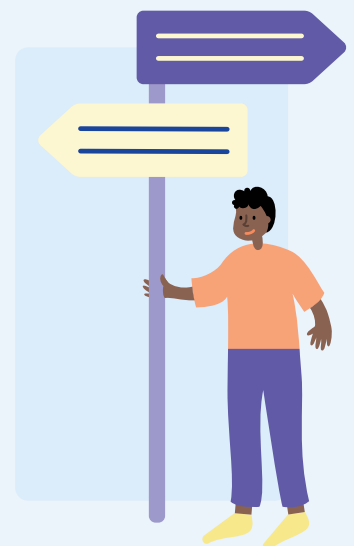
- your rights and obligations as a reception centre client
- the rules of the reception centre, and
- Finnish society.

The reception centre will also give you other types of guidance and advice relating to different everyday things.

If you live in private accommodation your accommodation costs, which include your rent and electricity and water bills, will not be reimbursed to you. You will not receive financial support for finding or staying in private accommodation.

General guidance and advice

The reception centre counsellor will give you guidance and advice for various everyday situations and for practical questions related to staying at the reception centre.





Social services

The social worker or social counsellor at the reception centre can give you guidance and advice as well as support for:

- bringing up children and young people and parenting
- going to school and studying
- your coping and improving your well-being
- life management and managing on your own
- mental health problems, problems with drugs or alcohol abuse
- special needs that arise from ageing
- special needs that arise from disability.

If you need help, contact the social services employees at the reception centre.

Health care services

The nurse and public health nurse at the reception centre will help to organise health care services for you.

The reception centre nurse will assess your need for treatment, treat you and guide you to health care services outside the centre if needed.

When you first arrive at the reception centre, you will be offered an initial health examination, which is voluntary. The purpose of the initial health examination is to find out about your health and the services you may need. Bring any documents with health information that you may have to the health examination or give this information to the nurse. The nurse may guide you to further examinations, including certain screening tests for infectious diseases.

If you need help, contact the health care staff at the reception centre.


Fee for reception services

If you are staying at a reception centre and you have a paid job, you may be charged a fee for reception services. The fee may also be charged if you have other funds. Tell the reception centre if you are working or if you have other funds.



Reception allowance

You can receive reception allowance if you or your family members do not have enough income and funds for necessary daily expenses, such as food and clothing. You can apply to the reception centre for reception allowance.

 The reception allowance is intended to cover your essential basic needs.

Reception allowance will not be granted to you automatically, which is why you must apply for it. If you apply for reception allowance, you must inform the reception centre about your income and funds. Any income and funds you receive from abroad and that you can use in Finland also affect the amount of your reception allowance.

The reception allowance consists of a basic part and a supplementary part. The basic part of the reception allowance is intended for such purposes as clothes, minor healthcare costs, local transport tickets and telephone bills.

The basic part of the reception allowance is also intended for food costs when the reception centre does not give you meals.

In addition to the basic part of the reception allowance, you can apply for supplementary reception allowance for special needs, such as studying outside the centre or child care supplies.



Payment card

The reception allowance and any money you earn by working will be paid to a payment card issued by the Finnish Immigration Service or to a Finnish bank account. The reception allowance for the whole family is paid to a single card. The payment card of the Finnish Immigration Service only works in Finland. The reception centre will explain to you how you can use the card.



Work and studies

The reception centre organises work and study activities for the clients staying at the centre. If you refuse to take part in work and study activities or do not turn up, your reception allowance may be cut.

The purpose of the studies is to learn Finnish or Swedish. The work activities consist of cleaning your room or apartment and keeping it tidy, in particular.

Finnish society course

The reception centre will organise a course about Finnish society for you. On this course you will get important basic information about Finnish society, legislation, history and customs.

The course includes material that you study yourself and an online course. Every reception centre client is expected to take this course.



Interpretation

The reception centre staff can arrange an interpreter to help you when matters that are important for you are discussed.

Interpretation is usually arranged for meetings with such persons as the reception centre's social worker, social counsellor or public health nurse and when seeing a doctor. Interpretation may not always be provided in your mother tongue if you also understand some other language well enough.

An effort is made to handle everyday situations at the reception centre without an interpreter.



The interpreters always have a duty to keep secret anything they hear at the meetings.

Assistance for voluntary return

The reception centre will regularly inform you about voluntary return and give you advice relating to it. Voluntary return means that you get help and support for returning to your home country. If you would like to know more and get information about voluntary return, contact a reception centre employee.



The reception centre will process your personal data

The processing of personal data is associated with the statutory duties of the reception centre. The reception centre will process your personal data securely and lawfully.

Your data may only be shared with parties outside the reception centre that have a legal right to process your data as part of their work or to whom you have given your consent to this.

If you move to another reception centre, your data will be transferred there automatically.



You have the right to ask to see any records and information that concern you.



Moving to a municipality

If you receive a residence permit and the right to apply for a municipality of residence (home municipality), you are expected to do so, and you will no longer be a client of the reception centre.

The reception centre staff will guide you in moving to the municipality and help you find somewhere to live there.

Instructions and advice for living at the reception centre and taking care of yourself

Using the reception centre's services

Check the opening hours of the reception centre office as well as find out where and how you can contact the employees at your centre.

A reception centre employee will explain how you can book an appointment with the centre's social or health care services and use these services.

Always come to your appointment on time. If you cannot come, you should let the person you are meeting know as soon as possible. If the reception centre books for you an appointment with health care services provided outside the centre, such as a doctor, you should always come to those appointments on time, too. Always tell the centre as soon as possible if you cannot come to such appointments.

Some reception centres have a staff member on call, especially in the evenings and at night. You can contact this employee in urgent cases. They will help you with acute problems, for example with opening the door if you have left your key inside, or if there is a serious problem with the apartment. For example, repairing a door handle or replacing a light bulb are not acute issues that are dealt with at night.



What to do in an emergency

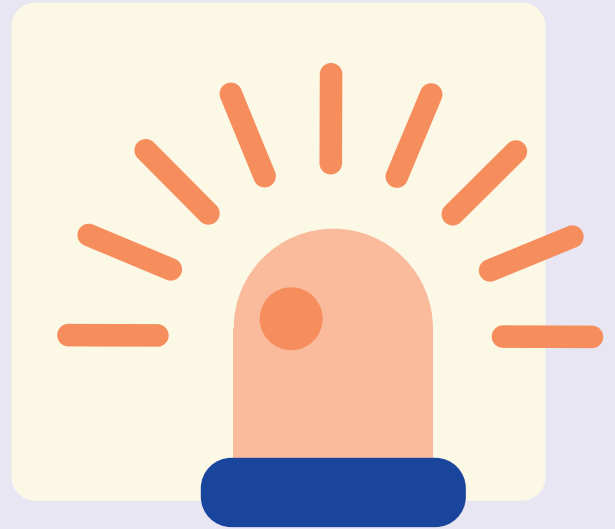
The reception centre staff will tell you what to do if there is a fire. If alarms or smoke detectors go off, make sure there are no other people in the room or apartment, close the door and leave the building.

If there is a risk to your life, health or safety, call the Emergency Response Centre directly at 112. The universal emergency number 112 (ambulance, fire brigade and police) is only intended for emergencies.

If you need urgent treatment and cannot contact your reception centre, call the Medical Helpline at 116117. At this number, health care professionals will tell you in Finnish, Swedish or English if you should visit an emergency clinic. The call is free.



Emergency Response Centre 112
Medical Helpline 116117



Tell the reception centre if you leave Finland

The reception centre will check at times if you are still in Finland and need reception services. If the reception centre cannot reach you, you may no longer receive reception services and your client relationship with the centre may be ended.

Let the reception centre know in advance if you are going to leave Finland permanently. You must do this even if you are not living at the centre.

If you leave Finland permanently, you must also cancel your application for temporary protection, your residence permit or your asylum application.

You should not leave Finland if your asylum application is being processed. If you leave Finland, your asylum application will expire (its processing will end).



Children and families with young children

Parents also have a duty to bring up and care for their children at the reception centre.

◆ All forms of physical punishment of children are prohibited by law.

Children are free to use the play areas of a housing company and public playgrounds without a charge. You must not leave young children alone at home or outdoors without adult supervision.

You can apply to the municipality for a place in early childhood education and care (day-care centre) for your child if you are working or studying full time or your child has special needs.

Children aged 6 years have the right to pre-primary education, and children aged 7 to 17 to basic education. Young people of compulsory education age, or aged between 7 and 17, participate in preparatory or basic education as far as possible. It is worthwhile for children to go to school. The aim is that all children in Finland go to school.

The reception centre staff will help families to apply for a place in early childhood education and care and schools.



Maintaining your functional capacity, independence and well-being

You can do a lot to improve your functional capacity, independence and well-being. You can leave the centre and spend time outside it. Knowing your surroundings, being active and doing meaningful things that support your self-development will improve your life management and well-being.

Studying, working and having hobbies will help you learn new things and support your well-being. They will give you something meaningful to do to fill your days. You can also earn your own living by finding a paid job.

- Get to know the surroundings of the reception centre.
- Contacts with other people will improve your mood.
- Make sure you have a healthy lifestyle.
- Get enough sleep and make sure you have regular daily rhythms.
- Take exercise regularly.
- Eat a varied diet and drink enough water every day.
- Choose your clothes according to the weather.
- Wash your hands carefully with soap when you enter the centre, after going to the toilet and before meals.
- Plan how you use your money.
- Take part in organisations' activities.





Studying outside the reception centre

It is possible for you to study outside the reception centre. You can apply for a study place and accept it if the educational institution's regulations and instructions allow this.

You do not have a general right to benefits for students, such as student financial aid. If necessary, you can apply for supplementary reception allowance to support your studies.



Just because you get a study place, this does not necessarily mean that you will be able to stay in Finland.



Employment

If you want to find a paid job, make sure that you have the right to work in Finland. If you are an asylum seeker, you cannot work as an entrepreneur.

If you are receiving temporary protection, you have a right to use employment services. The reception centre will direct you to the services of the nearest employment area. Asylum seekers do not have the right to use these employment services provided by the municipalities.

◆ You must not do undeclared work. Undeclared work is an illegal activity where taxes and other statutory payments are not paid.

The same terms of employment apply to everyone who works in Finland. Employees have a right to the following:

- a written employment contract and terms of employment
- the pay, working hours and paid holidays set out in the collective agreement and employment contract
- the breaks during your working day set out in the law
- overtime pay
- a safe working environment
- occupational health care and sick leave
- work orientation
- the right to organise and the right to join a trade union
- the possibility of reporting any problems you have at work to the employer or the occupational safety and health authorities.



Hobbies

Your reception centre will tell you about the hobbies and sports facilities available in the area.

Some reception centres have their own exercise, hobby or leisure facilities or equipment that you can use.

If you need to, you can apply for supplementary reception allowance especially for children's hobby fees or equipment.

Planning your finances

You should plan how you use your money to make sure you have enough. You should also plan your spending if you have a job.

Work out how much money you have and what you need to spend it on. Plan your spending, compare prices, consider if you really need the thing you are thinking of buying, check how much money you have left and for how long you need to manage with it.

Make use of special offers and discounts. Supermarkets sell many food products cheaper in the evening. Larger stores are usually cheaper than smaller shops. Select the supermarket's own brands.

Buy used goods. You can find cheap clothes and other items in second-hand stores and at recycling centres.



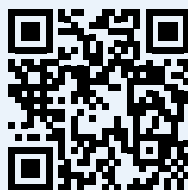
Further information



**Daily life in a
reception centre**
(Migri.fi)



**Reception
centres**
(Migri.fi)



**Your guide for
living in Finland**
(Infofinland.fi)