

Disaster, Displacement and Asylum: Finding Reliable Help

Practical communication and information-access guide · Republic of Korea and Japan

English → 日本語 → 한국어 | LANGLOBE · 2026

Reference date: 16 October 2026. Independent resource; not a government publication, legal advice, a live emergency feed, or a guarantee of assistance. Verify all procedures and contact details before relying on them.

Disaster response: actionable steps

Before moving

Check official alerts, evacuation instructions, location, blocked roads and accessibility. Avoid crossing floodwater or approaching unstable structures. If a building is unsafe, follow emergency responders rather than an old map.

At a shelter

Ask whether the site is operating, whether registration is needed, if people without identity papers may enter, what languages are supported, and whether medical needs, mobility aids, service animals, children and caregivers can be accommodated.

If you cannot travel

Give your precise location or nearby landmark, mobility/medical needs, number of people, and whether your phone can receive calls or only messages. Ask about a safe pickup method.

After immediate danger

Keep a record of official case/reference numbers, medications and doses, accommodation changes, contact persons, and family reunification requests. Keep sensitive protection stories out of public social posts.

Where to verify live disaster information

Country	Verified official route	Useful distinction
Korea	SAFE KOREA: https://eng.safekorea.go.kr/safekorea-eng/ ; Emergency Ready and 안전디딤돌 apps (Ministry of the Interior and Safety).	Use live alerts and shelter maps; check whether a location is operating before travelling.
Japan	Japan Cabinet Office: https://www.bousai.go.jp/index-e.html ; JNTO Safety tips: https://www.jnto.go.jp/safety-tips/eng/app.html	Disaster alert apps and municipal instructions complement each other; local evacuation notices control local action.

Asylum and displacement are not one process

“Displaced person”, “evacuee”, “asylum seeker”, “recognised refugee”, and “person receiving complementary or humanitarian protection” describe different situations and may involve different legal rights. A person displaced by a disaster is not automatically entitled to refugee status. The applicable test and filing procedure depend on the jurisdiction and circumstances.

Republic of Korea

Refugee status applications are decided by the Korean Immigration Service, not UNHCR Korea. UNHCR Korea explains that persons already in Korea normally apply in person through an immigration office; a different preliminary process applies at a port of entry. Ask an independent legal support organisation for help with a claim, interview, interpretation, evidence or appeal. Never assume a general immigration enquiry constitutes an asylum application.

UNHCR Korea provides information and referrals but does not register applications, issue refugee documents, or directly provide financial/material/legal aid. Available NGOs specialise in different stages: some focus on first applications, others on appeals. Confirm the organisation's scope before sending sensitive documents.

Japan

The Immigration Services Agency publishes multilingual application forms for refugee recognition and complementary protection.

Check whether you need the initial-application or re-application form, which office receives it, whether you need an interpreter, what documentary evidence is requested, and how your current residence status is affected.

Communication phrases: English → Japanese → Korean

English	日本語	한국어
I need urgent help. Please call emergency services.	緊急（きんきゅう）の助けが必要（ひつよう）です。救急（きゅうきゅう）・警察（けいさつ）に連絡（れんらく）してください。	긴급한 도움이 필요합니다. 긴급구조기관에 연락해 주세요.
Is this area safe right now?	今（いま）、この場所（ばしょ）は安全（あんぜん）ですか。	지금 이곳은 안전한가요?
Where is the nearest operating evacuation shelter?	現在（げんざい）利用（りよう）できる最寄（もよ）りの避難所（ひなんじょ）はどこですか。	현재 이용할 수 있는 가장 가까운 대피소는 어디 인가요?
I cannot use stairs. Is there an accessible route?	階段（かいだん）を使（つか）えません。バリアフリーの経路（けいろ）はありますか。	계단을 이용할 수 없습니다. 접근 가능한 이동 경로가 있나요?
I need medicine regularly and have run out.	定期的（ていきてき）に必要な（ひつよう）な薬（くすり）がなくなりました。	정기적으로 복용해야 하는 약이 떨어졌습니다.
English	日本語	한국어
I am separated from my child/family. Who can help?	子（こ）ども／家族（かぞく）とはぐれました。どこに相談（そうだん）できますか。	아이/가족과 헤어졌습니다. 어디에 도움을 요청할 수 있나요?
Is there a quiet place or accessible space for someone with special needs?	特別（とくべつ）な配慮（はいりょ）が必要（ひつよう）な人（ひと）のための静（しず）かな場所（ばしょ）や利用（りよう）しやすい場所（ばしょ）はありますか。	특별한 배려가 필요한 사람이 이용할 수 있는 조용하거나 접근 가능한 공간이 있나요?
Please explain this notice in plain language.	この通知（つうち）をやさしい言葉（ことば）で説明（せつめい）してください。	이 통지서를 쉬운 말로 설명해 주세요.
I need an interpreter before I sign anything.	署名（しよめい）する前（まえ）に通訳（つうやく）が必要（ひつよう）です。	서명하기 전에 통역이 필요합니다.
I would like to ask about applying for refugee protection.	難民認定（なんみんにんてい）などの保護（ほご）の申請（しんせい）について相談（そうだん）したいです。	난민 인정 등 보호 신청에 관해 상담하고 싶습니다.
English	日本語	한국어
Please tell me the correct office and the procedure.	担当窓口（たんとうまどぐち）と手続（てつづき）を教（おし）えてください。	담당 창구와 절차를 알려 주세요.

I am afraid of contacting my country's authorities. Can I speak to an independent adviser first?	本国（ほんごく）の当局（とうきょく）に連絡（れんらく）することが不安（ふあん）です。先（さき）に独立（どくりつ）した相談員（そうだんいん）に相談（そうだん）できますか。	본국 당국에 연락하는 것이 두렵습니다. 먼저 독립적인 상담자와 이야기할 수 있나요?
What proof will I receive when my application is submitted?	申請（しんせい）を提出（ていしゅつ）した証明（しょうめい）は何（なに）を受（う）け取（と）れますか。	신청서를 제출했다는 증명은 무엇을 받을 수 있나요?
I do not have my original documents. What alternatives are accepted?	原本（げんぽん）の書類（しゅるい）がありません。代（か）わりに認（みと）められる資料（しりょう）はありますか。	서류 원본이 없습니다. 대체할 수 있는 자료가 있나요?
Please write the deadline and required documents for me.	期限（きげん）と必要書類（ひつようしゅるい）を書（か）いてください。	기한과 필요한 서류를 적어 주세요.
English	日本語	한국어
I need a safe way to be contacted. Please do not leave a voicemail.	安全（あんぜん）な連絡方法（れんらくほうほう）が必要（ひつよう）です。留守番電話（るすばんでんわ）にメッセージを残（のこ）さないでください。	안전한 연락 방법이 필요합니다. 음성메시지는 남기지 말아 주세요.
Can you refer me to free or low-cost legal assistance?	無料（むりょう）または低額（ていがく）の法律相談（ほうりつそうだん）を紹介（しょうかい）してもらえますか。	무료 또는 저렴한 법률상담을 연결해 주실 수 있나요?
Does this service accept people without a permanent address?	定（さだ）まった住所（じゅうしょ）がなくても利用（りよう）できますか。	고정된 주소가 없어도 이 서비스를 이용할 수 있나요?
I cannot travel to the office. Can we speak remotely?	窓口（まどぐち）まで行（い）けません。遠隔（えんかく）で相談（そうだん）できますか。	기관에 직접 갈 수 없습니다. 원격 상담이 가능한가요?
What happens next, and when should I contact you again?	次（つぎ）はどうなりますか。いつ再（ふた）たび連絡（れんらく）すればよいですか。	다음 절차는 무엇이며 언제 다시 연락하면 되나요?

Practical request templates

DISASTER SHELTER REQUEST — “I am currently at [place/landmark] with [number] people. We need [shelter/medical help/accessible transport]. We can receive contact by [method]. Please tell us the nearest safe service that is operating now.”

避難所への支援要請 — 「現在、[場所／目印] に [人数] 人でいます。[避難場所／医療支援／移動に配慮した搬送手段] が必要です。[連絡方法] で連絡を受けられます。現在利用できる最寄りの安全な支援先を教えてください。」

재난 대피 지원 요청 — “현재 [장소 / 주변 지표물]에 [인원]명이 있습니다. [대피소 / 의료 지원 / 접근 가능한 이동수단]이 필요합니다. [연락 방법]으로 연락받을 수 있습니다. 지금 운영 중인 가장 가까운 안전한 지원 기관이나 시설을 알려주세요.”

REFUGEE/PROTECTION CONSULTATION — “I would like confidential advice about seeking protection in [country]. I need assistance in [language], and I am concerned about contacting authorities of my country of origin. Please tell me whether your organisation handles first applications, appeals, or referrals and what documents can be shared securely.”

難民・保護に関する相談 — 「[国名] で保護を求めることについて、秘密が守られる形で相談したいです。[言語] での支援が必要で、出身国の当局に連絡することに不安があります。貴団体が初回申請、不服申立て、他機関への紹介のどれに対応しているか、また、書類を安全に共有する方法を教えてください。」

난민·보호 관련 상담 — “ [국가] 에서 보호를 신청하는 문제에 관해 비밀이 보장되는 방식으로 상담받고 싶습니다. [언어] 지원이 필요하며, 출신국 당국에 연락하는 것이 우려됩니다. 귀 기관에서 최초 신청, 불복절차, 다른 기관 연계 중 어느 업무를 담당하는지와 서류를 안전하게 공유할 수 있는 방법을 알려주세요.”

Sources, scope and verification

Korea Ministry of the Interior and Safety — SAFE KOREA

<https://eng.safekorea.go.kr/safekorea-eng/>

Korea Ministry of the Interior and Safety — 2026 app update

https://mois.go.kr/frt/bbs/type010/commonSelectBoardArticle.do?bbsId=BBSMSTR_000000000008&nttId=126836

Japan Cabinet Office — disaster management

<https://www.bousai.go.jp/index-e.html>

Japan National Tourism Organization — Safety tips

<https://www.jnto.go.jp/safety-tips/eng/app.html>

UNHCR Korea — applying for asylum

<https://help.unhcr.org/southkorea/how-to-apply-for-asylum-in-korea-2/>

UNHCR Korea — legal assistance

<https://help.unhcr.org/southkorea/topics/legal-assistance/>

UNHCR Korea — role and limitations

<https://help.unhcr.org/southkorea/topics/about-us/>

Japan Immigration Services Agency — protection application forms

https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/refugee/procedures/nyuukokukanri03_00091.html