



RMSC Services A Reference Guide for Pro Bono Attorneys

In addition to providing asylum legal services to survivors of torture, the Rocky Mountain Survivors Center (RMSC) provides the following services:

- Interpreter and Translation Services
- Individual and Group Mental Health Counseling and Psychiatry
- Public Health Nursing
- Psychosocial Services

Some services are provided at the center by RMSC staff and other services are referred out to community providers after an assessment is completed at RMSC. All services are provided at no cost to participants.

All RMSC participants to whom you provide legal services have completed initial assessments with RMSC's main office establishing eligibility for services, assessing specific needs and developing a holistic plan of care.

Occasions may arise for which you desire specific services on behalf of your legal client, such as a mental or physical evaluation, translation, or other service related to developing your case. At times Pro Bono attorneys become concerned about the well-being of the asylum-seeker they serve and wish to speak to a member of RMSC staff about these issues. This guide is designed to lead you to the correct RMSC staff member and service you require to successfully handle your case.

The RMSC staff team is comprised of professionals providing services in a variety of languages, including Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, German, Swedish, Spanish, Norwegian, French, Bassa, Krou, Loma, Via, and Kpelleh. Translation and interpretation in a variety of other languages common to participants may be coordinated by contacting our Interpreter and Translation Bank described below.

RMSC Legal Office Contact Information

Physical Address: 1600 Downing St., Suite 490
Denver, CO
Mailing Address: 1547 Gaylord St., Suite 100
Denver, CO 80206
Phone: (303) 321-3252
Fax: (303) 643-5663
Bus Route: Both 15 and 15 Limited stop on Colfax one block from the
Legal Office

The RMSC Legal Office includes two conference rooms you may reserve for meetings related to your case by contacting the Legal Office Paralegal/Administrative Assistant, Kristi Disney, at kdisney@rmscdenver.org or (303) 321-3252 to confirm availability.

RMSC Main Office Contact Information

Physical Address: 1547 Gaylord St., Suite 100
Denver, CO
Mailing Address: 1547 Gaylord St., Suite 100
Denver, CO 80206
Phone: (303) 321-3221
Fax: (303) 321-3314
Bus Route: Both 15 and 15 Limited stop on Colfax one block from the
main office

Aside from legal services, all other RMSC services are coordinated by staff at RMSC's main office. Please refer to the descriptions below to determine the appropriate contact for your concern.

Interpreter and Translation Services

Contact: Izabela Lundberg
303-321-3221 ext. 203
ilundberg@rmscdenver.org

Services Provided: Interpretation and document translation

Advance Notice Required: **2-3 weeks** notice prior to need for translation or interpretation advised. *Please provide the following information to Ms. Lundberg upon request for translation or interpretation services:*

- participant name and nationality
- language needed
- date needed
- length of time needed
- relevant deadlines
- gender preference (if applicable for interpretation)
- detailed directions to your meeting location
- your name and contact information

Description of Services: Izabela Lundberg directs the interpreter and translation bank, a core of more than 50 professionally trained interpreters, translators, and culture brokers providing quality services in more than 35 languages in legal, health and psychosocial settings. Translators and interpreters are paid by RMSC on an hourly basis for their services. Please use their time conservatively and respectfully.

Individual and Group Mental Health Counseling and Psychiatry

Contact: Kerstin A. Palmer, MA, MAR, NBCC, LPC
303-321-3221 ext. 217
kpalmer@rmscdenver.org

Jill Thurman, MSW
303-321-3221 ext. 204
jthurman@rmscdenver.org

Services Provided: Mental health assessment, treatment, mental health reports and testimony, psychiatric evaluation, medication management, and group therapy programs

Advance Notice Required: **4-8 weeks** for forensic psychiatric evaluations, **2-3 weeks** for mental health reports or testimony, individual and group therapy by appointment according to participant's holistic plan of care. *Please note: you must contact a RMSC mental health provider directly to request mental health reports or testimony on behalf of your client.*

Description of Services: Kerstin Palmer directs the mental health team, a group of therapists who provide specialized psychotherapy for individuals and families who are survivors of torture and war trauma. Therapists help survivors recognize the consequences of extreme trauma on their bodies, feelings and minds. Specific evidence-based methods are used to calm the manifestations of trauma and to understand related cognitive impacts. Survivors develop an understanding that the results of their exceptionally traumatic experiences are normal reactions to abnormal experiences. Survivors also come to understand how these reactions are compounded by grief related to the loss of valued people, places, norms and traditions in their lives. Therapists at RMSC help survivors recognize and use their inherent strengths to manage a nearly unmanageable current experience. With these methods, therapists assist survivors in the crucial process of rebuilding their lives with hope and a clear vision of an attainable future.

Public Health Nursing

Contact: Sarah Combs, RN, MPH, Ph.D.
303-321-3221 ext. 207
scombs@rmscdenver.org

Emily Burke, RN, BSN
303-321-3221 ext. 216
eburke@rmscdenver.org

Services Provided: Health assessments; facilitation of access to affordable, high-quality care; and health education

Advance Notice Required: **4-8 weeks** for forensic physical evaluations, Intake health assessments and case management by appointment with nurse, according to participant's holistic plan of care

Description of Services: Sarah Combs directs the public health nursing practice, a collaboration between RMSC and the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center School of Nursing.

Survivors of torture and their families have multiple health care needs but have rarely received any health care since fleeing persecution. They suffer from the physical scars left by torture, as well as the physical and somatic complaints characteristic of post-traumatic stress disorder. They need care for neglected medical problems, screening for infectious diseases, preventive care, and health education. In order to access health care, they face the formidable barriers of language, cost, and an unfamiliar system.

New participants and their families can be seen by one of the public health nurses for a comprehensive assessment of their health status. The nurses then follow up on the participant's clinical concerns directly or facilitate referrals to community care providers, such as physicians, dentists, optometrists or audiologists. They continue as the case managers for the participant's care, seeking high quality, affordable and accessible services. The nurses provide health information to enable the participants to have healthy lifestyles in the United States. They are also educators for professional students, health care providers, and community groups on human rights and the care of survivors of torture.

Psychosocial Services

Contact: Frederick A. B. Jayweh, BA, LLB, LLM
303-321-3221 ext. 208
fjayweh@rmscdenver.org

Jill Thurman, MSW
303-321-3221 ext. 204
jthurman@rmscdenver.org

Services Provided: Social services assessments, bus passes, food cards, connections to housing and other basic resources

Advance Notice Required: Individual case management and group work by appointment, according to participant's holistic plan of care

Description of Services: Jill Thurman and Frederick Jayweh provide all social services assessments and related case management for RMSC participants. Acting as a cultural bridge for the organization, they help participants and their families access critically needed resources, including the basic needs of food, shelter, transportation, clothing and employment. Caseworkers work with participants individually as well as through groups focusing on work-readiness and credit development and management.

Most participants arrive in the United States with very limited resources, having escaped the conditions of their countries of origin with nothing more than their lives. Many participants do not speak English and find the local systems of accessing resources to be foreign and unmanageable. Caseworkers assist participants with locating and utilizing community resources to meet basic needs, working in collaboration with the mental health team and public nursing team in a holistic plan of care. When participants are granted asylum, they become eligible for a wider range of services and are referred to agencies mandated to serve asylees and refugees.

**For more information regarding RMSC Services, please contact
Operations Manager, Izabela Lundberg, at (303) 321-3221 ext. 203 or
ilundberg@rmscdenver.org.**