

Safety, security and incident management

Security in migrant centres premises has a twofold connotation, as it concerns both beneficiaries' and staff, implementing partners and service providers' safety. The way facilities are designed and organized plays a crucial role in ensuring safety and security. IOM Security Officers shall be involved in the discussions at a very early stage, as soon as a potential location, nature, and expected caseload to be assisted in the facility are identified. IOM Security officers can provide recommendations on **physical security of the premises** to the benefit of beneficiaries, IOM staff, implementing partners, and other personnel alike. Beneficiaries shall only have limited access to designated areas in the facility, the perimeter should be fenced and separate entrances for IOM staff and for beneficiaries provided. Lightening shall be ensured at key locations such as sanitation facilities, entrance/exit, main meeting points, dorms, and infirmary. If accommodation is provided, the design and disposition of the rooms should allow privacy and respect for cultural and gender sensitivity, including through the provision of specific accommodation and sanitary facilities options for individuals at risk.

Security staff – either security personnel employed directly by IOM or contractors, usually referred to as “**security guards**” – must be permanently present in facilities accessed by IOM beneficiaries. Security staff are usually the first individuals that beneficiaries encounter when reaching IOM premises, so they may have contact with individuals who have experienced difficult circumstances and/or trauma. From the perspective of the beneficiary, security personnel represents the Organization, so they shall receive training on IOM values for standards of conduct concerning the **prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)** as well as **ethics and malfeasance**. In normal circumstances, the only interaction allowed between security staff and beneficiaries concerns their access to the premises and the provision of information on directions and security-related guidelines. If the beneficiary expresses specific needs, security personnel shall contact the IOM designated focal point for assistance. Security staff must not disclose the full names or contact details of IOM staff members to beneficiaries at any time, and they shall not use IOM resources or premises unless authorized.

Inclusivity, information sharing, participation, and feedback mechanisms are sometimes not sufficient to prevent tensions among beneficiaries and towards caseworkers, implementing partners, and service providers. As soon as an **incident** occurs with a beneficiary, the staff involved should immediately alert the guard service and inform the facilities' manager and the security focal point.

Depending on the severity of the incident, UNDSS may be immediately called upon. In the event of an incident, all necessary measures must be taken to ensure the protection of personnel and non-aggressive beneficiaries (the gathering in the safe room) but also equipment protection (evacuation of aggressive visitors and doors closed). If an incident occurs in the facility, security staff shall intervene immediately. Their primary function is to ensure the protection of IOM staff, and then to prevent the agitator(s) from harming others. The **use of force** should be made only in cases of self-defense and always according to the proportionality principle of the response to the attack. Prior to recruitment, contractors should have received specific training in self-defense techniques and control of the use of force when managing security incidents. In the event of an incident, host country security forces shall be notified, and their intervention will be required when IOM or private security services are not able to handle the incident.

Some **key points and actions** to be considered when managing beneficiaries' access and stay in migrant centres are:

- Contingency and staff evacuation plans shall be elaborated in coordination with IOM Security Officer b

- Beneficiaries shall be widely informed about the **facilities rules** and how they are held accountable (see that national law and IOM procedures shall be respected by all beneficiaries. Furthermore, the document shall include rules for waste management, on the prohibition to use drugs and other substances (e.g. alcohol), on the prohibition of sex work and on the impossibility to receive external visits (in a quiet area and far away from children), on the prohibition of sex work and on the impossibility to receive external

- If the facility works upon **appointment**, a list of beneficiaries should be given prior to any visit to the security

- Beneficiaries' **belongings** must be inspected at the entrance and any material or equipment that can be damaged or stored;

- Staff in charge of registering, counselling or interviewing beneficiaries must ensure that their **desk table** is safe and that can cause injury;

- Any beneficiary visiting the facility must first be **identified at the entrance** by security guards upon presentation of the logbook. Beneficiaries shall receive a badge or card to be using during their visit/stay;

- Access to **waiting areas** shall be limited to their capacity and when full, beneficiaries will be asked to wait outside. Presenting specific vulnerabilities (persons with disabilities, elderly, families with children, unaccompanied o

References and Tools

- [Security rules: beneficiaries' reception. RO Dakar Internal security guidelines \(EN\)](#)
- [Renforcement de la sécurité, centres de transit Niamey \(report\)](#)
- [Report on field operations security: Arlit-Agades \(SSU report\)](#)

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- [RMM Security Staff induction checklist](#)
 - [Internal note on IOM incident report guideline \(Greece\)](#)
 - [TC SOPs \(SSA\) Annex 8. Incident reporting form, p. 57](#)

Category

Management of migrant centres