

INFORMATION GUIDE

FOR OLDER PERSONS

**2020**

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INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the policies for the elderly in our country is to set policies and strategies at national level in order for them to participate into social life without any discrimination and enjoy their human rights; to set the principles, procedures and standards on the social service and social assistance activities for the elderly and to provide cooperation and coordination between the relevant public institutions and organizations and non-governmental organizations in this field. Within this framework, it is significant to make policies and strategies more effective in order to ensure the participation of the elderly in all areas of social life with dignity.

Elderly individuals are covered in all aspects of life by various international instruments and national regulations, especially in our constitution. Services for the elderly in Turkey are provided by different public institutions, civil society organizations and private sector both at the central and the local level. Within this structure, the main priority of our Ministry is to ensure coordination by undertaking the main responsibility, to provide service in line with the needs and demands of our elderly by making the necessary arrangements in the field. Based on this priority, we care to support the work being done, and to initiate and develop the work that needs to be done.

The Ministry continues its efforts to protect and promote the human rights of the older persons. This guide has been prepared to provide information on the rights and services currently available for older persons.

**SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Who Can Benefit From Old-Age Pension Within the Context of Law No. 2022?**

Within the context of Law No. 2022 on Retirement Pension Pays for Elderly Turkish Citizens Who Are Aged 65 Or Over, In A Dependent Capacity With No Relatives And No Financial Income, old-age pensions are provided to persons who are;

• To be 65 or older,

• Not receiving alimony or cannot be entitled to alimony,

• Not receiving pocket money within the scope of Law No. 2828,

• Not benefiting from an income aid or allowance from social security institutions,

• Not working as subject to long-term insurance branches,

• Turkish citizens whose average monthly income per person considering himself and his wife is less than 1/3 of the net minimum wage.

**How Can One Benefit From Old-Age Pension?**

* Applications for old-age pension under the Law No. 2022 are made to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation (SYDV) in the province or county where the person resides.
* The income, wealth and expenditure status of the applicants and the people they live with in the same household are questioned through the Integrated Social Assistance Information System and a social study examination is carried out by home visit. Applications are evaluated and decided by the Board of Trustees of Foundation in accordance with the provisions of the legislation along with this data.
* Allowances in these periods are deposited in PTT (Turkish post office) between the 5th and 9th of the relevant month based on the last digit of the rightholder's birth year.
* Persons whose payments are deposited are notified via SMS.
* Payment information can be queried via e-government portal.
* Payment can be received from the PTT tolls with the social card or can be delivered to the home on demand via the "Home Delivery" service without any additional fee and without any age restrictions. Social cards can also be used for shopping.
* Reserving the right related the alimony, allowances paid under Law No. 2022 cannot be seized, assigned or transferred to someone else, even if the person consents.
* The allowances of those who have a disability rate between 40-69% and below age 65 continue to be paid in the same way.
* The allowances of those who have proved that they have a disability rate of 70% and above while taking the old-age pension are converted into “Disability Allowance for disability rate of 70% and above” if other conditions are met as well. However, applications of persons with a disability rate below 70% are not accepted for this purpose.

**Who Can Benefit From Assistance for Women Whose Husbands Are Dead and How?**

Older women can also benefit from regular cash assistance program provided by Social Assistance and Solidarity Fund for Women Whose Husbands are dead. In order to benefit from this assistance program, the application is made to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation of the province or county of residence by presenting an identity card. Women who are decided to benefit from the assistance program by the Board of Trustees of the relevant Foundation are granted cash assistance if they meet the requirements. In order to benefit from this assistance, the last official marriage partner must have passed away. According to the Law No. 2022, there is no obstacle for persons with disabilities and/or receiving 65 years old-age pension to benefit from the cash assistance for widow at the same time.

The applicant is not eligible for the assistance if a person in the household is covered by social security system. In addition, those who receive home care allowance for a person with a disability (those who are care givers) cannot benefit from this program either. However, if there is a person with a disability taken care of in the applicant’s household and all other requirements are met, there is no obstacle for that person to benefit from widow allowance.

**How One Can Benefit From Assistances Provided By Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations?**

There are regular assistance programs with special requirements by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations within the governorships and county governorships, which are carried out within the scope of the Law on Social Assistance and Solidarity Promotion (Law No. 3294). Elderly citizens, who fulfill the requirements provided below, can benefit from the following periodical assistance programs under the Law No. 3294.

In-kind benefits such as food, fuel, shelter etc. are available to those who do not have a socially-assured individual in their households and are considered to be needy by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation Board of Trustees, or those with a household income of less than 1/3 of the monthly net minimum wage even if there a socially-assured individual in the household. In order to benefit from the assistance, it is necessary to apply to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation at the place of residence.

**Who Can Benefit From Home Care Services Provided By Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation?**

In order to provide home cleaning, personal care, basic and essential needs of the elderly citizens who are in need, projects called "Home Care Services for Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities" are implemented by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations.

In accordance with the additional article 7 of the Social Services Law No. 2828, persons who don’t benefit from home care allowance for persons with disabilities and cannot fulfill their own basic and essential needs including personal care, and citizens aged 65 and over and citizens who cannot perform their own self-care due to their severe chronic disease can benefit from these projects. In order to benefit from the services, it is necessary to apply to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation at the place of residence.

**HEALTHCARE SERVICES**

**What is the Content of the Medical-Social Service Provided by the Ministry of Health?**

The Ministry of Health provides the following services for patient groups, including older persons:

* Patient transfer service,
* Social study and evaluation,
* Patient education and occupational training,
* Psycho-social training with the patient,
* Placement in institutional care,
* Psycho-social training of the patient family,
* Social events etc.

**What Kind of Rights/Priorities Do Older Persons Have in Hospitals?**

Older persons has an order of priority in receiving healthcare services. Older citizens aged 65 and over can get service primarily by making appointments from hospitals.

**Is Accompanying Support for Elderly Patients Available in Healthcare Facilities?**

Accompanying staff (stewardess service) is provided to elderly patients to assist them with the procedures in the healthcare facilities.

**Can Older Persons Individuals Benefit from Palliative Care Services?**

The Directive on the Procedures and Principles on the Implementation of Palliative Care Services entered into force on 09/10/2014 in order to diagnose and evaluate pain and other symptoms in early stages of patients experiencing problems arising from life-threatening diseases, to alleviate or prevent their pain by providing medical, psychological, social and spiritual support to these people and family members and to improve the quality of their life.

Palliative care services are carried out by palliative care centers in inpatient health facilities. They are also provided by family physicians and home health service units in places other than inpatient health facilities. Palliative care services can also be provided by inpatient healthcare facilities for those living in a nursing home, provided that a palliative care protocol is made.

Life-threatening diseases such as cancer, COPD at end-stage, stroke (at least 50% of the functions must be lost), end-stage renal failure, advanced heart failure, other life-shortening diseases (motor neuron and progressive neurological diseases), ALS, Alzheimer, other advanced stage organ failure (KC, brain), HIV/AIDS and genetic/congenital, progressive diseases in children, etc. are treated in palliative care centers.

If the patients who are discharged need subsidiary treatment, they are transferred to the Home Health Units and their follow-up and treatments are provided in the home environment.

In this context, older persons who need palliative care can also benefit from these services.

**Are There Free of Charge Vaccine Services for Older Persons?**

The flu vaccine, which is within the scope of preventive health services, for people aged 65 and over is covered once a year without seeking any medical report and the pneumococcal (polysaccharide) vaccine is covered once every 5 years by the SSI (Social Security Institution) within the scope of General Health Insurance.

**HOME HEALTHCARE SERVICES**

**What are the Contents of Home Healthcare Services?**

Services offered within the scope of home healthcare are as the following:

* Examination and consultation service within the scope of healthcare service,
* Preparing the health board reports- renewing the expired reports,
* Prescribing the drugs whose long-term use is documented with a health report, without prejudice to special regulations in the prescription of the drug,
* Examination and treatment (dressing, wound care, probe applications) services,
* Rehabilitation, education and support services,
* Oral and dental health services
* Patient transport services from home to hospital, from hospital to home,
* Informing the patient and the family about the tasks they can undertake in the home care process and the disease and care processes,
* Allocating the medical devices that are needed by the patients, which can help the treatment, and that are in fixtures, for the purpose of embezzlement during the service,
* Determining the needs of patients for social services and ensuring the necessary coordination with relevant institutions and organizations,
* Integration of home healthcare and palliative care services.

**Can Older Persons Benefit from Home Health Care?**

Older persons who have the following diseases can also benefit from the following home healthcare services provided by the Ministry of Health.

* Individuals with disease that impairs their quality of life at an advanced level and/or having difficulties in accessing healthcare services due to their old age,
* Bedbound patients,
* Respiratory system patients such as COPD etc.,
* Patients with muscle disease at advanced stage,
* Palliative care treatment for end-stage cancer patients,
* Phototherapy applications at home.

**How Can One Benefit From Home Healthcare Services?**

In order to benefit from home healthcare services, it is necessary to follow the process below.

* Elderly patients or family members who want to receive home healthcare services can apply by calling the national call center 444 38 33 within the Ministry of Health.
* The staff of the call center starts the necessary procedures by interviewing the person requesting service.
* Following the first call, the healthcare personnel in the Coordination Center contacts the person requesting service and directs the patient to the related hospital teams.
* The person who will receive home healthcare services is visited at home by a team of physicians and assistant health personnel.
* The status of the person receiving the service and the service to be provided are determined.
* A home healthcare treatment plan is created after consultation with other physicians planning the treatment of those who will receive home healthcare services by the physician.

**HOME CARE SERVICES**

**What is Home Care Allowance?**

Home care social assistance, paid by the Provincial Directorate of Family, Labor and Social Services to people who provide care to persons with a disability to allow them to continue living at their own home, is called home care allowance. Home care allowances are not paid to the person with the disability, but to third parties such as their relatives or guardians who take care of them.

**Can Older Persons Benefit from Home Care Allowance?**

Older persons with disabilities who fulfill the conditions are also eligible for home care allowance within the context of the Law No. 2828. Older people with disabilities must fulfill the following three criteria in order to be eligible for home care allowance.

* The statement of a 50% or more disability rate and "yes" in the severely disabled/fully dependent status section must be shown in the disability health board report to be taken from the hospitals that provide committee report,
* By basing the total of all kinds of income under any name or title, the monthly average income for themselves and according to the number of individuals s/he is liable to look after must be lower than the 2/3 of the monthly net minimum wage,
* It should be determined with the report of the Care Services Assessment Committee within the Provincial Directorates that the person with disability is in need of care at a level where s/he cannot survive without the help of someone else.

**CARE SERVICES FOR OLDER PERSONS**

**What are the Care Services?**

Care service refers to the personal care and psycho-social support services of older persons who is in need of care during their daily life. As a Ministry, the primary goal is to enable the older persons to live in their own family and home environments, meeting their needs when necessary, without leaving their own social environments. However, if this is not possible, long-term institutional boarding care services are offered for older persons.

**Who Can Benefit From Long Term Care Services Provided to Older Persons?**

From the institutions that provide care services for older persons; the nursing homes provide care services to independent older persons who can manage their own basic needs while rehabilitation centers or elderly care centers provide services to older persons who are in need of care. The residential care services in these institutions are provided indefinitely.

**What are the Long Term Care Institutions Provided for Older Persons?**

The institutional long-term care services for older persons by the Ministry are provided in “Nursing Homes” and “Nursing Home Elderly Care Rehabilitation Centers”, and “Living Homes for the Elderly” which supports the approach of community based care.

**What Kind of Services Are Provided in “Nursing Homes” and “Nursing Home Elderly Care Rehabilitation Centers” Affiliated to the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services?**

Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers, which are affiliated with the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services, are boarding social service institutions that provide continuous care and psychological, social and physical rehabilitation of persons aged 60 and over.

Nursing homes offer services such as shelter, individual self-care, health, social support-counseling, psychological support-counseling, rehabilitation, social activity, nutrition, cleaning.

**Which Age Groups Can Benefit From Public Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers?**

Nursing Homes provide services to persons who are aged 60 years and over and socially and/or economically deprived and in need of protection, care and assistance.

**Are the Services Provided in the Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care And Rehabilitation Centers Paid?**

Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care Rehabilitation Centers affiliated to the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services are chargeable. The monthly fees vary based on the features of the institution and the room.

However, older persons with insufficient economic status can benefit from the services at a discount or free of charge.

**What are the Conditions of Acceptance to the Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers?**

Older persons must meet the following conditions in order to be accepted to the Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers?

**a) Conditions of acceptance to the nursing homes:**

1) To be 60 or older,

2) Not having any disorders which prevent the person from meeting his/her own needs, being capable of carrying out daily life activities such as eating, drinking, bathing, toilet etc. independently,

3) Having a sound mental health,

4) Not having any contagious diseases,

5) Not being addicted to drugs or alcohol,

6) Demonstrating with a social examination report that the person is in social and/or economic deprivation.

**b) Conditions of acceptance to the Care and Rehabilitation Centers:**

1) To be 60 or older,

2) To be in need of non-continuous or continuous special care, support, protection or rehabilitation due to decline in physical and mental functioning,

3) Having a sound mental health,

4) Not having any contagious diseases,

5) Not being addicted to drugs or alcohol,

6) Demonstrating with a social examination report that the person is in social and/or economic deprivation.

**Where to Apply for the Placement in the Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers?**

Applications can be made to the following places to be placed in a Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers.

* Applications can be made to the nursing home and/or center directorates and/or the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Social Service Centers in the provinces and counties, or the General Directorate of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly.
* The admission process can be initiated for the older person who are in an emergency and are reported to the provincial directorates by the Administrative Chiefs, Local Authorities, Law Enforcement, Mayors, other public institutions and organizations and citizens.
* The news in the media organs and the notifications made on the “Alo 183” line are also accepted as notifications/applications.

**What are the Requirements of Temporary and Day (Guest) Care Service?**

If there is a vacancy in the Nursing Homes and the Nursing Home, Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers, an older person can be considered for boarding or day care temporarily.

The requirements for this type of care are as the following;

* Presenting the related documents showing the person meets the admission requirements to nursing homes and care centers,
* Complying with the existing rules of the institution during their stay,
* Benefiting from the daily services provided to the older persons,
* Those, who benefit boarding care for a temporary period, pay the fee of the room they stay in and those, who benefit day care, pay 75% of the single room fee for the days they receive service,
* It is essential that the transportation of the older persons who receive day care is provided by themselves or their relatives.

A resident of a Nursing Home and the Nursing Home Elderly Care and Rehabilitation Centers can stay in the status of guests without paying for a maximum of 20 days in another institution for health and visiting purposes.

**What is the Elderly Living Homes?**

These are the houses or apartments opened as an additional unit to a nursing home where 3-6 older persons, who meet the conditions of staying in the nursing homes, live together. They can also stay with their spouses. Preferably, each person gets a separate room along with the kitchen, bathroom and toilet within the home. The living homes are managed by the directorate of the nursing home to which it is affiliated.

Elderly living homes are opened as a detached house or an apartment, preferably in city centers and public areas, taking into account the needs and socio-cultural characteristics of the elderly.

The services provided in nursing homes are also provided in elderly homes.

**What are the Conditions for Staying in the Elderly Living Homes?**

Older persons who would like to stay in the living homes should meet the conditions of staying in nursing homes. In addition, the older persons who meet the following conditions are expected to stay in a living home.

* To be 60 or older,
* Having social and/or economic deprivation,
* Being in need of care and protection,
* Demanding for a change of environment that has been experiencing adaptation problems for various reasons while staying in an institution,
* Being in need of a protected environment due to the health condition,
* Having lost his/her spouse while staying in an institution,
* Being able to do daily life activities independently after retirement,
* Those who are looking for a safe and peaceful environment and have not yet placed in a nursing home or who are waiting in line for nursing home care, can be accommodated in the elderly living homes by evaluating their or their relatives' demands.

**What are the Conditions for Application and Fee for the Elderly Living Homes?**

Application conditions for the elderly living homes are the same as those for nursing homes, and applications are made to the nursing homes or Provincial Directorates of Family, Labour and Social Services. The fees are the same as the nursing home fees.

**Who and Which Services are Provided in the Private Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care Centers?**

Private boarding care institutions provide continuous care and social, physical and moral support to older persons who are aged 55 years and over. Services such as shelter, individual self-care, health, social support-counseling, psychological support-counseling, rehabilitation, social activity, nutrition, cleaning are provided in these institutions. In the case of emergency, the acceptance of persons aged 55 and below is evaluated upon the proposal of the responsible manager of the institution and the approval of the provincial directorate based on the result of the social examination report.

**Are Private Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care Centers Paid?**

Care services provided in both private nursing homes and public nursing homes and elderly care centers are paid services. The fees of private institutions are determined by the institution so as not to exceed the floor and ceiling prices determined each year by the governorates of the province in which they are located, and it is paid by the older persons and/or their relatives.

In addition, each institution (except the Darussafaka Societies’ institutions) is obliged to take care of older people free of charge at the amount of at least 3% of its capacity. The older person must meet the same conditions as the ones who are cared for in the public nursing homes and nursing home elderly care centers, however they are elected and evaluated by the Provincial Directorates of Family, Labor and Social Services.

**Where to Apply for the Placement to Private Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care Centers?**

The persons or her/his relative applies to the nursing home where s/he wishes to stay with a petition. The older persons are required to be 55 years old or older. However, the admission of persons under the age of 55 to the institution in emergency cases is made with the proposal of the responsible manager and the approval of the provincial directorate based on the result of the social examination report.

**Which Documents Are Required to Apply to Private Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care Centers?**

The following documents are required in the application process of the placement in a private institution.

* Petition,
* Turkish ID number declaration,
* A report demonstrating that the older person does not have any contagious disease or in the case of the older person has a contagious disease, a report demonstrating that the disease doesn’t prevent him/her from staying in public places given by infectious diseases and clinical microbiology physician,
* Medical report demonstrating that the person has a sound mental health or in the case of the person has a mental health problem, medical report obtained from psychiatric clinics of health institutions demonstrating that it doesn’t prevent him/her from staying in nursing homes and elderly care centers and does not create any negative situation against other older persons within the institution,
* A report showing the health status of the person obtained only from the respective departments of private or public health institutions, proving that the person is not addicted to drugs and alcohol, and it is appropriate for him/her to benefit from nursing home or elderly care center services,
* If the older person has a chronic disease that requires medical follow-up, medical report obtained from the related department’s specialist or related clinics,

No distinction is made between the older persons to be admitted to the institutions in terms of race, color, gender, language, nationality, religion, political thought, philosophical belief and education and the past convictions are not taken into account.

**What are the Day Care Centers and Which Services are Provided?**

Day care centers are social service institutions for older persons who live in their home environment or with their family and especially for individuals with dementia such as Alzheimer etc. where various activities are carried out to assist individuals with psychological, social and health needs in order to increase their quality of life and contribute to their leisure time as well.

Day care services are foreseen to be offered as a priority in the care of older persons. In addition to the daytime institutions, day care services support older persons and their families, along with the home care support services. It also envisage to reduce the need for long-term boarding institutional care services.

**What are the Day Care Centers that Provide Service to Older Persons?**

In our country, it is envisaged that day care services are to be provided in independent day care facilities with the restructuring of Active Life Centers in addition to the Nursing Homes and Nursing Home Elderly Care Centers. Furthermore, day care services for older persons are offered under the names of various institutions and services by local administrations, non-governmental organizations and private organizations.

**What are the Active Living Centers?**

In our country, the provision of day services for persons with disabilities and older persons under the name of "Active Living Centers" is envisaged by the amendment made in the Social Services Law No. 2828. Active Living Centers, affiliated to the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, are day-to-day institutions established to provide guidance and support services to persons with disabilities and older persons and their families, as well as home day care services in order to increase the quality of life and contribute to their active participation in social life.

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**What is Elderly Support Program (YADES)?**

"Elderly Support Program” (YADES) aims to protect and support the older persons aged 65 and over, living in Turkey, and to make the lives of those who need bio-psycho-social care easier by providing necessary care to these persons in their living environment by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, General Directorate of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly. Within this program, in order to support ageing in place and home care services, resource/budget transfers from the ministry to the municipality are realized to develop the execution of home care and home support services by the local administrations.

As part of the program, home care services and day care services are offered to the older persons by the metropolitan municipalities.

**Who Can Benefit from the Elderly Support Program (YADES)?**

The Elderly Support Program is currently being implemented in 13 metropolitan cities whose projects have been accepted by the Ministry, and it is aimed to be expanded to all municipalities in the coming years.

Within this context, individuals aged 65 and over living in Sakarya, Kayseri, Kahramanmaraş, Şanlıurfa, Trabzon, Antalya, Gaziantep, Kocaeli, Malatya, Samsun, Ordu, Erzurum and Diyarbakır provinces can benefit from the day care services offered within the scope of YADES Program by applying to the metropolitan municipalities.

**EDUCATION**

**Are There Training Programs for Older Persons?**

Course based educational activities for various age groups, including the older persons, are offered by central and local public institutions, primarily the Ministry of Education as well as non-governmental organizations.

In addition, higher education programs for older persons have been implemented in our country under the name of Refresher University, widely known as the University of the Third Age in the international literature, in recent years within the framework of active aging and lifelong learning.

**What is the Refresher University?**

The Refresher University allows individuals to undergo aging process fully and meaningfully like other stages of the life and provides personal development of the older person in a comprehensive manner within the framework of the lifelong learning concept. Refresher University is a significant part of lifelong learning. For this reason, education provided to older persons is expected to improve the health awareness, intellectual and physical activities and artistic capacities of them and to encourage supportive active participation in the local environment. Refresher University is seen as an opportunity for older persons to integrate with the society and maintain their productivity.

**What Kind of Training is Provided at a Refresher University?**

Within this educational system; besides courses such as philosophy, psychology, communication, archeology, public health, lifelong health, rights of older persons in the legal system, legal copywriting, microbiology, geriatrics, cosmology, mythology, hobby course are also provided such as cooking, psychodrama, yoga, aikido, folk dance, knitting. The courses are designated in line with the relevant universities programs and the demands of the participating older person.

**Who Can Apply to Refresher University?**

Although the age groups are flexible, in general, every individual who turns 60 can apply to '60+ Refresher University'. In this context, “Refresher Universities” have been established in various provinces in our country in recent years and it is envisaged to be expanded to other provinces. Older persons can benefit from these universities free of charge.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

**Why is Accessibility Important for Older Persons?**

Definition of accessibility in Turkish Disability Act refers to independent and secured access and use of physical environment, transportation, information and communication technologies and systems by persons with disabilities. Older persons might experience problems in accessing social life and services for various reasons such as disability over time. Accessibility studies carried out within this context will facilitate the access of persons with disabilities and older persons to services and the participation in social life.

A complaint can be filed with the Accessibility Monitoring and Supervision Commissions established within the governorships in 81 provinces regarding incorrect accessibility practices. Complaints on all kinds of structures and open spaces publicly available and inspection of public transportation vehicles can be filed through the Provincial Directorates of Family, Labor and Social Services.

**What is the Scope of Accessibility? Which Places Should Be Accessible?**

It is legally mandatory to organize urban life in accordance with the accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities. According to the provisions of Turkish Disability Act, Law No. 5378, compliance with accessibility standards shall be met in planning, design, construction, manufacturing, licensing and supervision processes to ensure the accessibility of persons with disabilities in the built environment.

Within the scope of this Law;

The existing official buildings of the public institutions and organizations,

All existing road, pavement, pedestrian crossing, open and green areas, sporting areas and similar social and cultural infrastructure areas and all kinds of structures built by the natural and legal persons serving to public,

Private and public transportation systems and vehicles with 9 passenger seats apart from driver’s seat used for public transportation by public or private sector,

Accessibility of information systems and information and communication technologies must comply with the accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.

**TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

**What are the Rights of Older Persons in Transportation?**

* Citizens aged 65 and over benefit from free the urban public transportation services of railways and seaways, and free public transportation services that belong to municipalities, companies established by municipalities, unions, institutions and businesses or private individuals or companies authorized by municipalities. It is sufficient to present an identity card to benefit from this service.
* Citizens aged 65 and over benefit from intercity lines of railways and seaways with %50 discount. It is sufficient to present an identity card to benefit from this service.
* %20 discount for passengers aged 60 and over and %50 discount for passengers aged 65 and over are offered on high-speed trains (YHT) and main line trains.
* Passengers aged 65 and over travel free of charge on the suburban lines of Başkentray (Ankara) and Marmaray (Istanbul), which are operated as urban passenger transportation.
* In suburban trains, the seats near the doors are offered for the priority use of older persons, persons with disabilities and pregnant passengers, and warning signs are placed inside the vehicles.
* In Ankara, Konya, Eskişehir, Pendik High Speed Train (YHT) stations older persons and passengers with disabilities, who have difficulty in walking, are provided with necessary support and assistance by carrier personnel.
* On the domestic and international flights, some airline companies occasionally provide discounted/campaign tickets to older persons.

**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE, ART ACTIVITIES**

**What Rights Do Older Persons Have in Protected Areas and National Parks?**

In the activities carried out in protected areas, designs are made for older persons to provide easy access to services in all buildings and facilities. By having an accessible toilets and designing platform, steps, handrails etc. on tour routes to facilitate walking for older persons, it is aimed to provide older visitors to spend time safely on the fields.

There is no entrance fee for citizens aged 65 and over in the protected areas.

**In Which Historical Areas There are Services for Older Persons?**

There are wheelchairs in historical areas such as Martyrs' Monument, Çanakkale Epic Promotion Center, Conk Bayırı, 57th Infantry Regiment Martyr, Seyit Corporal Monument and Mecidiye Bastion for older persons.

**Can Older Persons Benefit from the National Library Services?**

Retirees, professionals who are registered to a professional chamber or bar, members of the written or visual press, university and college students or graduates, visually impaired citizens who have a disability ID card or a health report documenting that they are visually impaired from full-fledged hospitals and foreign researchers with a research permit can benefit from the places used in librarianship services. Apart from this, there is no restrictions on service provisions. Older citizens who meet the above conditions can benefit from the services of the National Library as they wish.

**Can Older Persons Benefit from the Museums and Ruins for Free?**

Turkish citizens aged 65 and over can benefit free of charge from the museums and historical sites (Topkapi Palace Harem Section, Goreme Ruins, Karanlik Church, The Hagia City Memorial Museum, Ephesus Ruins except Yamaçevler) affiliated to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism by presenting ID card.

Müzekart, which is valid for 1 (one) year for 5 (five) Turkish Liras, can be issued to our citizens aged 65 and over. Müzekart is obtained from Müzekart printing stations or museums and archaeological sites affiliated to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the provinces.

**Is It Possible for Older Persons to Have Free Access to Opera and Ballet?**

Persons who receive social assistance within the scope of “Law No. 2022 on Retirement Pension Pays for Elderly Turkish Citizens Who Are Aged 65 and Over, In a Dependent Capacity with No Relatives and No Financial Income” are provided with the opportunity to watch the representations free of charge.

**Can Older Persons Benefit from the Theater for Free?**

There is no entrance fee for the persons who receive social assistance within the scope of “Law No. 2022 on Retirement Pension Pays for Elderly Turkish Citizens Who Are Aged 65 and Over, In a Dependent Capacity with No Relatives and No Financial Income”.

**OTHER CONCESSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS PROVIDED TO OLDER PERSONS**

**Is There any Convenience in Income Tax for Older Persons?**

Taxpayers aged 60 and over, who only earn rental income and cannot go to the tax office, can request an appointment from the call center of Tax Communication Center (444 0 189) affiliated to the Revenue Administration of the Ministry of Treasury and Finance in order to fill in the immovable property tax declaration that they must submit each year in March. Appointment requests of the taxpayers received by the call center are forwarded to the relevant tax office and their declarations are filled at their place of residential addresses.

**Is There a Convenience Provided to Older Persons for Acquiring Housing?**

Housing Development Administration (TOKI) occasionally allocates a certain part of the planned housing to older citizens within the scope of the projects they prepare.

**Is There a Discount on Monthly Consumption Bills for Older Persons?**

In general, there is no discount or exemption on electricity, water, telephone/communication or natural gas bills. However, municipalities may provide discount or exemption on bills such as water for older persons in line with the decisions taken in the municipal councils. Companies producing these goods and services can do similar applications.

Some GSM operators occasionally apply special rates to older individuals.

**What are the Municipal Services for Older Persons?**

Various services are offered to older persons by the municipalities. In this context, while some municipalities provide boarding institutional care services for older persons, some municipalities provide services to them such as home care support (self-care services etc.), home healthcare, cleaning, repair and maintenance of home, soup kitchen/food, social assistance, social and cultural activities, consultancy etc.

**RIGHTS AND VIOLATIONS**

**What is the International Assurance of the Rights of Older Persons?**

There is no specific national or international Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. However, the rights of older persons have been included in various international instruments. The rights of older persons are a matter of human rights. Human rights are based on the respect for human dignity. All people are equal in dignity and rights. Older persons also have equal rights and freedoms with other people in the society.

As an international regulation, the United Nations Principles for Older Persons provide guidance to the rights of older persons. These principles are:

* Independence,
* Participation,
* Care,
* Self-fulfilment,
* Dignity.

**What is the National Assurance of the Rights of Older Persons?**

In Turkey, the principle of positive discrimination to the older persons is guaranteed by Article 10 of the Constitution. Accordingly: “Measures to be taken for children, the elderly, disabled people, widows and orphans of martyrs as well as for the invalid and veterans shall not be considered as violation of the principle of equality.”

The protection of older persons and the rights to be provided to them are guaranteed by Article 61of the Constitution. Accordingly: “The aged shall be protected by the State. State assistance to, and other rights and benefits of the aged shall be regulated by law.”

Within this framework, there are also various laws and regulations for older persons in Turkey.

**What are the Measures Taken for Respecting the Private Life and Privacy of Older Persons in Turkey and Protecting Personal Data?**

In Turkey everyone, regardless of age, has the right to protect the privacy of their private life, to grant permission to collect, process and share their personal data, to request erasure or anonymization of their personal data.

In this regard, regulations have been made in the legislation of many institutions such as Law on the Protection of Personal Data and its related by-laws, Patient Rights Regulation and etc. In general, personal data relating to the race, ethnic origin, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion, sect or other belief, clothing, membership to associations, foundations or trade-unions, health, sexual life, convictions and security measures, and the biometric and genetic data are deemed to be personal data of special nature and it is prohibited to process the personal data of special nature without explicit consent of the data subject unless they are anonymized.

**Do Older Persons Have the Right to Refrain from Accepting to Undertake Guardianship?**

In the Turkish Civil Code, upon request, people who are 60 years old have been granted to the right to refrain from accepting to undertake guardianship upon proving that they are hardly able to fulfil the position due to old age, disability or severe illness.

**Does Abandonment of Older Persons or Failure in the Duty of Assistance to Them Constitute a Criminal Act?**

According to the Turkish Criminal Code any person, holding the duty of protection or observation of an individual who cannot care for himself (on account of age or illness), who abandons that individual so that they are alone, shall be sentenced to a penalty of imprisonment for a term of three months to two years. If the victim suffers an illness, injury or death due to the abandonment, the penalty shall be imposed according to the provisions relating to an aggravated injury on account of its consequences.

Any person who fails to assist, taking into account his position and circumstances, an individual who is incapable of caring for themselves (on account of age, illness, injury or any other reason), or immediately notify the relevant authority of the circumstances of such individual, shall be sentenced to a penalty of imprisonment for a term of up to one year, or a judicial fine.

**Can the Punishment of Imprisonment to Older Persons Be Suspended?**

The punishment of imprisonment for thirty days and less and the punishment of imprisonment for 3 years or less imposed to persons who completed the age of 65 on the commission date of offense may be suspended provided that the person has no previous conviction.

**Is There an Implementation for Older Persons in Occupational Health and Safety?**

The employer is obliged to make or have a risk assessment for older workers in terms of occupational health and safety.

**Are Older Persons Included in Consumer Rights?**

According to the Law on Consumer Protection, commercial advertisements that deceive older persons, endanger the safety of life and property of older persons, encourage the acts of violence or the commission of a crime, derange public health, abuse older persons shall not be produced.

**What are the Measures Taken for Ensuring the Participation of Older Persons in Political Life in Turkey?**

In Turkey, older persons have the right to elect, be elected and participate in political life on an equal basis with other citizens. Various measures have been put in place to ensure this. Older voter with visual impairments can vote with the help of a companion, they are allowed to vote through the voting template, the place of voting for those who cannot climb stairs are selected suitable for their situation upon request and they vote without getting in line. If an older voter is not able to go to vote due to his/her disability or illness, a mobile ballot box is sent to his/her location upon request.



**ALO 183 SOCIAL SUPPORT LINE**

**What is ALO 183 Social Support Line?**

Guidance and counseling services are provided by evaluating calls for family, women, children, persons with disabilities, **older persons,** relatives of martyrs, veterans and relatives of veterans via the Alo 183 Social Support Line from the Call Centers of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. Services are provided on a 24/7 basis.

In order to provide more effective services, the citizens are provided to send free text messages (SMS) to Alo 183 line.

Turkish citizens living abroad can reach the Call Center via the phone number +90 312 253 92 00 and receive guidance on the services rendered by the Ministry.

 

**DIRECTORATE OF SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE ELDERLY**

[www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr](http://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr)