



## NEWS

### **N.B. lawyer told to leave hotel room while meeting clients**



Fredericton lawyer Jael Duarte says she was asked to leave a Moncton hotel room by a federally-funded security guard while meeting with a refugee client.

Photo: Submitted

A New Brunswick lawyer says she was told to leave a Moncton hotel room by a security guard hired by the federal government.

Fredericton lawyer Jael Duarte said she was there to meet a family of Roxham Road asylum seekers who needed to file legal paperwork by April 9 or face the risk of deportation. These family members are among the 187 asylum claimants the Canadian government has so far relocated to New Brunswick following the mass crossing of refugees at Quebec's Roxham Road border over the last few months.

Asylum seekers have been put up in hotel rooms guarded by Xpera security officers in Moncton and Fredericton.

On March 19, as she visited a client inside his family's hotel room, Duarte said an Xpera guard told her "that I couldn't continue to be there and my client wasn't allowed to have a lawyer in his room."

"He suggested that I could meet elsewhere with my client but not in the room," she said.

"I suggested to him that the only one who can tell me where I can meet and who can be at the appointment is my client, according to the law society rules."

Duarte ultimately relented and left the hotel room, but she questions why she was asked to leave what is essentially a client's home at this point in time and why security guards are stationed at these hotel rooms to begin with.

Michelle Carbert, spokesperson with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), said guests aren't normally allowed in these hotel rooms to ensure the "safety and protection" of asylum seekers.