

Afghan Support & Resettlement

General Background

The withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan in August 2021 created the need to evacuate vulnerable Afghans before the U.S. exit on August 31, 2021.

Afghan Evacuees

The majority of Afghans evacuated fall into three categories:

1. **Afghan Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs):** Afghans who worked alongside U.S. forces during the war are particularly vulnerable to Taliban violence and retaliation. These individuals and their immediate family members are eligible to be evacuated from Afghanistan to continue their U.S. visa processing beyond the threat of immediate danger.

After their cases have been approved, SIVs receive resettlement services from a local resettlement office.

[Special Immigrant Visas for Afghans - Who Were Employed by/on Behalf of the U.S. Government \(state.gov\)](#)

2. **Afghan Priority-2 (P2):** “Priority-2” refers to one of the traditional refugee resettlement pathways. P2 designation means the group is of “special concern” to the U.S. government. Afghan P2 designation expands beyond the SIV program to include those who did not work with U.S. forces and for Afghans who worked for U.S. nongovernmental organizations or U.S. media companies.

After their cases have been approved, P2s receive resettlement services from a local resettlement office.

[Information for Afghan Nationals Regarding Priority 2 \(P-2\) Designation.pdf \(wrapsnet.org\)](#)

[SIV/Iraqi & Syrian P-2 — Refugee Processing Center \(wrapsnet.org\)](#)

3. **Humanitarian Parole (Parolees):** The majority of Afghans arriving in the United States will likely be seeking humanitarian parole, a temporary status allowing the parolee to stay in the United States up to 365 days while applying for a longer-term solution.

Under current law, parolees are only able to apply for work authorization; they can only access resettlement services or benefits once they have been granted a separate status (such as asylee, SIV, etc.).

[Information for Afghan Nationals on Parole Into the United States | USCIS](#)

What is a resettlement agency?

- The U.S. government, specifically The U.S. Department of State, works with nine national resettlement agencies to resettle refugees arriving in the United States.
- Each resettlement agency operates numerous and state and federal programs to support refugees, including a federal program called “**Resettlement & Placement**” (R&P).
 - All newly arrived refugees are enrolled in the R&P program which provides services for up to 90 days after arrival. *Afghan SIVs and Afghan P2 refugees are eligible for R&P.*

U.S. Resettlement Agencies

- [Church World Service \(CWS\)](#)
- [Ethiopian Community Development Council \(ECDC\)](#)
- [Episcopal Migration Ministries \(EMM\)](#)
- [Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society \(HIAS\)](#)

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- [International Rescue Committee \(IRC\)](#)
- [U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants \(USCRI\)](#)
- [Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services \(LIRS\)](#)
- [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops \(USCCB\)](#)
- [World Relief Corporation \(WR\)](#)

Each resettlement agency has a national network of offices and affiliates that provide direct services to refugees. To find an office/affiliate in your area: [Affiliate Directory](#) or [R&P Agency Contacts](#), [National Map of Agencies](#)

How many Afghans are arriving?

At this time, it is estimated:

- SIVs - 20,000
- P2s - Unknown (*based on P2 application which opened in early August 2021*)
- Parolees - 50,000

When and where are Afghans arriving?

- Afghan evacuees have been arriving since late July and will continue to arrive until the U.S. government operation has ended.
- There are military bases set up across the country to provide initial welcome to Afghans and to assist with their processing before traveling to their final destination.

Where are Afghans settling?

- Afghan evacuees with family and friends already living in the United States will most likely choose to live near their relatives.
- Current, established Afghan communities in the United States include **Seattle, Washington; Sacramento, California; Washington D.C.**, and **Houston, Texas**.
- Afghan parolees who do not have family or friends in the United States will be resettled near, and supported by, a local resettlement agency.

Employment Eligibility for SIVs and P2 refugees

- Afghan refugees are granted **Employment Authorization** and are able to work immediately upon arrival.
- Afghan P2 refugees are granted **Employment Authorization** and are able to work immediately.
- Afghan parolees are granted **Employment Authorization** and are able to work immediately.
- SIVs are granted **green cards** and are eligible to work immediately.

What are the needs of Afghan refugees?

- Housing – permanent and temporary
- Beds and bedding, blankets, pillows
- Clothing for all seasons
- Daily material goods (e.g., cookware, cooking utensils, dish soap, laundry detergent, broom, vacuum, garbage cans)
- Furniture (couch, chairs, kitchen table, dresser)

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- Hygiene items
- Feminine products
- Baby products (diapers, wipes, formula)
- Transportation for shopping
- Food
- Employment
- Access to affordable health care (parolees)
- Access to affordable immigration legal services (parolees)

Ways to Help

The most efficient way to help as an individual volunteer or as a church/community group is to contact the nearest resettlement agency. Each resettlement agency has a volunteer and donations program which streamlines the process of serving refugees.

The majority of the volunteer programs include an initial application and training. Many agencies have established partnerships with local churches.

Resettlement agencies typically offer service opportunities including:

- Hosting a refugee family
- Renting housing to a refugee/family
- Assisting in housing set-up
- Providing transportation to appointments, employment, and grocery shopping
- Providing material goods
- ESL teaching
- Friendship partnerships
- School tutoring
- Employment readiness assistance (résumé writing, job hunting, interviewing preparation, etc.)

Can I host a family?

This is a common opportunity that most resettlement agencies offer to volunteers. Please connect with your local resettlement agency to learn about their needs for host families. (See *What is a resettlement agency* for directory links)

What is a refugee resource location?

Depending on the community, common resources for refugees are food banks, clothing closets, staffing agencies, donation centers, ESL classes, community colleges.

Resources

[Refugee Council USA](#)

[Switchboard](#) (One-stop resource hub for refugee service providers and volunteers)

[Signpost](#) (Community-led, vetted information service for refugees & immigrants in crisis)

[CORE](#) (Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange)

[World Relief](#)