



Afghan evacuees were recently reunited with friends in Bloomington. Read more [here](#).

Operation Allies Welcome Minnesota: Progress Update (12-17-21)

Thanks to your generous support, Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Minnesota is providing a coordinated strategy to ensure the successful resettlement of Afghan nationals in Minnesota. This public/private partnership is providing safe short-term housing for new Afghan arrivals, legal assistance to help secure permanent immigration status, and connections to ongoing services to aid their transition into our communities.

Afghan arrivals are increasing, and OAW resources are filling a critical need:

- As of this week, **482 Afghan evacuees have arrived in Minnesota**. More families arrive each week.
- 55% of arrivals to date are children.
- Based on the success of OAW so far, this week **Minnesota increased its goal for new Afghan arrivals from 800 to 1500**. This means more families will get to leave U.S. military bases and fully begin their new lives in America,
- **358 individuals - 77% of all recent Afghan newcomers - have received transitional housing at a local hotel funded by your OAW donations**. While at the hotels, families also receive three meals a day and begin working with resettlement case managers to transition to permanent homes.
- **Transitional hotel housing is working!** Families stay an average of 16 days before moving to permanent home.
- A local nonprofit has stepped forward to provide daily meals to Afghan evacuees in transitional hotel housing. This incredible contribution helps stretch OAW funding even farther.
- **Roughly \$1.2 million of the \$1.5 million raised to date has already been expended** to pay for hotel costs and immigration legal services.

By the Numbers

Anticipated arrivals to Minnesota (individuals)	1500
Number of Individuals who have arrived in Minnesota	483
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of families: 	138
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children under 18 	266
Number of Afghan arrivals receiving transitional housing to date	63 families (358 individuals)
Number that has moved to permanent housing	52 families
Average stay at hotel before moving to permanent housing	16 days

Operation Allies Welcome Coordinated Response

OAW is a public/private partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services, multiple refugee and immigrant-serving organizations, and generous donors. This effort includes:

- **Coordinated airport receptions** including on-site health assessments at the airport using medical services volunteers. MSP airport has provided a private space for all arrivals and coordinates with airlines for each arrival.
- **Transitional lodging and basic needs at coordinated hotel location.** Hotel rooms are prepared for each arrival based on family size and composition. On site provisions include:
 - Three meals/day plus all day snacks
 - Access to a donated clothing “shop”
 - Tea and other hospitality basics for guest rooms
 - Activities for all children
 - Baby items
 - Weekly visits from the “shoe bus”
- **On-site services include:** An array of social services is also being provided at the transitional housing hotel, including:
 - Individual legal services appointments
 - Cultural orientation classes
 - Tenant rights/responsibilities workshops
 - Meetings with resettlement case managers
 - Enrollment in health care
 - Enrollment in county assistance/benefits
 - On-site health services, including vision and mental health appointments
 - Employment services
 - Permanent housing search.

Paid staff are on site 12 hours a day. Volunteers also provide site supports during the days and weekends.

- **Partners in OAW coordinated services include:**
The Minnesota Department of Human Services helps coordinate a leadership team of state agencies, other governmental organizations, and nonprofits to ensure that OAW continues to meet the needs of Afghan newcomers. Key partners in this work include:
 - Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans
 - ZACAH
 - Hennepin County
 - Hotel Chain (name and location kept confidential for safety of new arrivals)
 - Advocates for Human Rights
 - Good in the Hood
 - Afghan Cultural Society
 - Feeding our Futures
 - Tasho

- [American Red Cross](#)
- [Salvation Army](#)
- [Al Maa'uun](#)
- Local resettlement agencies:
 - [Arrive Ministries](#)
 - [Minnesota Council of Churches](#)
 - [International Institute of Minnesota](#)
 - [Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota](#)
 - [Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota](#)

Fundraising Update

OAW is grateful to have the Minnesota Council on Foundations and GiveMN as partners in our effort to raise \$6 million to fund this array of critical services. Donations have slowed but the need has not. **New donations are needed to continue supporting this welcoming work.**

Amount contributed by foundations, corporations, and individuals to date:
\$1,503,779.

How to Give

- Give MN: [Operation Allies Welcome in Minnesota | GiveMN](#)
- Minnesota Council on Foundations Coordinated Fund: Susie Brown, President, Sbrown@MCF.org
- The Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans has created a website page with information for Minnesotans who want to donate or get involved.
 - <https://mn.gov/capm/afghanevacuees/>

News Coverage

- <https://www.womenspress.com/collective-effort-resettling-afghan-refugees-in-minnesota/>
- <https://sahanjournal.com/immigration/afghan-refugee-resettlement-minnesota/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/afghan-refugees-housing.html>
- <https://www.startribune.com/bloomington-refugee-family-welcomes-friends-who-fled-afghanistan/600119416/>
- <https://www.startribune.com/bloomington-family-helps-newer-afghan-arrivals-as-they-build-life-in-u-s/600096244/>

Learn More

- Local: www.mn.gov/dhs/afghan-evacuees
- Federal: <https://www.dhs.gov/allieswelcome>