MN Council on Foundations Member Briefing:
Afghan Resettlement in Minnesota

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Background: “Operation Allies Welcome”

All Afghan Arrivals to Minnesota:

- Complete **security vetting** prior to travel to the United States.
- Are transferred to military base upon entry to complete health screening, vaccination, and other immigration processing.
- Are **assigned a final destination**, such as MN.
  - First priority is reunification with any family members already in the US.
  - Placement in a community with capacity to provide initial supports to families.
- Receive initial services administered by US Dept. of State through **five MN resettlement affiliates**: Arrive Ministries, Minnesota Council of Churches, International Institute of MN, Lutheran Social Services of MN, Catholic Charities (Metro, Rochester, St. Cloud).

Background: “Operation Allies Welcome”
Evacuees fall into three categories

- Repatriates: U.S. Citizens of Afghan descent
- Special Immigrant Visa (SIV)
- Humanitarian Parole
Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Status

Afghan citizens who worked with U.S. Armed Forces as a translator or interpreter for 1 year or more or worked as employee of the U.S. Embassy or International Security Assistance Force for 2 years or more.

Experiencing ongoing, serious threat because of this employment. Can include spouses and minor children.

Once approved, granted Lawful Permanent Residence (green card) and on path to U.S. citizenship.
Apply outside U.S.

Typically process takes 2 to 3 years

Up to 34,500 visas allocated since 12/19/2014

Eligible for federal and state benefits

Huge backlog of pending SIV cases. U.S. allowing some applicants in final stages of processing SIV into U.S. under Humanitarian Parole.
Humanitarian Parole

Temporary protection for vulnerable Afghans. Must demonstrate need to enter U.S. for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit.

Rapid processing at Kabul airport and then evacuated to military bases in third countries for additional screening.

After security and medical screening, sent to U.S. with conditional parole.

Customs and Border Protection and the FBI conduct additional screening at U.S. airport. Grant full parole and send parolees to U.S. military bases for additional processing.
More on Humanitarian Parole

- Granted for 2 years and includes work permit.
- Does not lead to permanent immigration status. If in final stage of SIV process, can complete process in U.S.
- If not SIV eligible, must apply for political asylum within 1 year of entry into U.S. or apply for a different visa.
- Not eligible for federal benefits but eligible for state benefits after 30 days Minnesota residency.
- Approximately 52,000 parolees in the U.S. on the military bases; 75,000 to U.S.
Why Minnesota?

| Welcoming people seeking safety is a part of Minnesota’s tradition and history. | Welcoming newcomers is an investment in our state’s economic future | Minnesotans are seeking ways to engage in this historic effort of welcome |
Minnesota Context

Assets

- Strong Employment opportunities and outcomes
- State law that allows people with parolee status to access benefits while seeking employment after 30 days (MFIP, MNCare)
- Infrastructure and tradition of strong resettlement to help people integrate over time
- Minnesotans want to get involved!
- Current Refugee arrival numbers lower than historic average of 2,000 people/year:
  - Total combined arrivals last 4 years = 2,077 as compared to 2,634 arrivals in 2016 alone (118 YTD first 10 months of this FFY).
- Estimated 500-600 Afghan people currently reside in MN
- Strong networks of expert legal service providers.

Challenges

- 30-day residency requirement to access state-funded benefits
- Legal services – Ongoing supports needed to transition to permanent status over time
- Housing: Transitional hotel housing is expensive, and it may take time to secure permanent options.
## The Model:

### Public-Private Partnership

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Federal Investment:</th>
<th>Philanthropic Investment:</th>
<th>State Investment:</th>
<th>In-kind Investment from Minnesotans:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>$2,275 per person allocated to local resettlement agencies for initial 30-90 days of case management and to secure long-term housing.</td>
<td>One-time investment for rapid, flexible response to meet immediate needs upon arrival including <strong>hotel stay</strong>, <strong>resource coordination</strong> and <strong>legal services</strong>.</td>
<td>Employment supports and vocational training resources MFIP, MN Care, GA, GRH, to ensure stability for MN residents <strong>after 30 days</strong> while they secure employment and work towards self sufficiency.</td>
<td>Volunteer time and material donations as families transition to long-term housing and integration into communities.</td>
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Initial investments needed to rebuild wellbeing for Afghans in Minnesota

Additional philanthropic investment is needed to:

- Support short term hotel stay while permanent housing is secured and allow resettlement funds to be invested in long term housing solutions.
- Invest in coordination of community resources to support integration and stability over time and build community advocates for this effort.
- Ensure people are able to secure permanent legal status to stay in Minnesota through investment in legal services.
Maximize the community capacity to welcome Afghan evacuees through a coordinated community response and strategic investment of resources.

Ensure every new arrival has access to the supports they need to rebuild their family’s wellbeing and contribute to Minnesota communities.
State Task Force: Planning between state agencies, non-profits and community grassroots efforts to implement a coordinated response.

Front-loaded, coordinated supports laying a strong foundation for self sufficiency and family stability

Current Afghan Placement and Assistance Program (APA) Partners:

- Minnesota Council of Churches (Metro)
- Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota (Metro and St. Cloud)
- International Institute of Minnesota (Metro)
- Catholic Charities of Southern MN (Rochester)
The Opportunity:

$6 million in investment will allow Minnesota to welcome 1,500 Afghan evacuees

Hotel stay and transitional support:
To meet basic needs met while permanent housing is secured. This allows federal resettlement funds to be invested in long term housing solutions.

**Estimate:** $5,280,000

*Food@ $21/Day; hotel @ $55/night/room for 60 days; laundry service; shelter site management & on site interpretation*

Collaborative Response Resources:
To stand a short-term, coordinated community response operation to efficiently and rapidly respond to needs as people arrive across five statewide resettlement agencies.

**Estimate:** $120,000

*3FTE * 6mo*

Legal Services:
To support services needed to secure and maintain permanent legal status in Minnesota.

**Estimate:** $600,000

*7.5FTE * 1 year*

*Note: There is Federal legislation pending that, if passed, may decrease this initial cost*
For More Information:

**Partners in Philanthropy**

- Joel Luedtke, Program Director-Education, Minneapolis Foundation and Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Minnesota: jluedtke@phillipsfamilymn.org
- Pahoua Yang Hoffman, SVP, Community Impact, Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation: pahoua.Hoffman@spmcf.org

**MN Coordinated Resettlement Efforts for Afghan Arrivals:** [mn.gov/dhs/afghan-evacuees](mn.gov/dhs/afghan-evacuees)

- Rachele King, State Refugee Coordinator, MN Department of Human Services: Rachele.king@state.mn.us

**Legal Services or Immigration Status Questions**

- Jenny Stohl Powell, Legal Director, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota: jenny.stohlpowell@ilcm.org
- Michele Garnett Mckenzie, Deputy Director, The Advocates for Human Rights: mmckenzie@advrights.org

**Coordinated Fund Contributions: “Operation Allies Welcome in MN”**

- Susie Brown, President, Minnesota Council on Foundations: Sbrown@MCF.org

**Federal Program Information and FAQs:** [https://www.dhs.gov/allieswelcome](https://www.dhs.gov/allieswelcome)