



MN Council on Foundations Member Briefing:
Afghan Resettlement in Minnesota
September 23, 2021

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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**)

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.

More on SIV

Apply outside U.S.

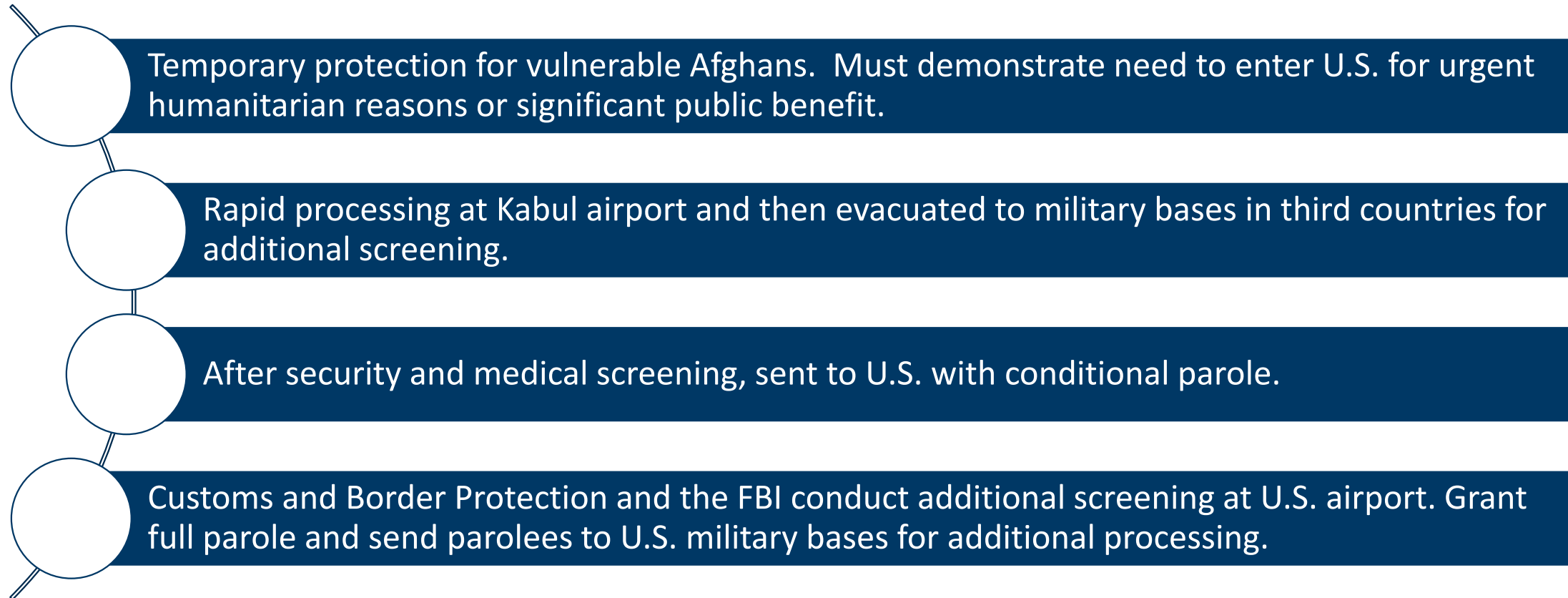
Typically process takes 2 to 3 years

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



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.

The Opportunity

Federal government is seeking locations with capacity to resettle evacuees quickly into communities



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.

Public-Private Partnership

Federal Investment:

\$2,275 per person allocated to local resettlement agencies for initial 30-90 days of case management and to secure long-term housing.

Philanthropic Investment:

One-time investment for rapid, flexible response to meet immediate needs upon arrival including **hotel stay, resource coordination and legal services.**

State Investment:

Employment supports and vocational training resources

MFIP, MN Care, GA, GRH, to ensure stability for MN residents **after 30 days** while they secure employment and work towards self sufficiency.

In-kind Investment from Minnesotans:

Volunteer time and material donations as families transition to long-term housing and integration into communities.

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.



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

- 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>