



Special Immigrant Screening Guide for Afghan Nationals Who Entered the United States with Parole

This document is intended as a resource for those seeking to screen Afghan parolees for special immigrant status eligibility. Please note that Afghan nationals already present in the United States are not eligible for a visa, which allows someone to enter the country, but they may still be eligible for special immigrant status. With special immigrant status, an individual is able to apply for permanent residency (a “green card”) and would not apply for asylum. Ultimately, however, the decision to apply for special immigrant status, asylum, or any other status is subject to an individual’s discretion, and he or she should consult with an immigration attorney to determine the best way forward.

INITIAL QUESTIONS

- 1. Did the individual begin the process of applying for a special immigrant visa (SIV) outside of the United States?**

If yes, continue to “In-Progress Applicants”; if no, continue to the next question.

- 2. Was the individual employed by, or on behalf of, the U.S. government in Afghanistan for at least 12 months?**

If yes, continue to “New Applicants”; if no, the individual is not eligible for special immigrant status—see “Other Options”.

IN-PROGRESS APPLICANTS

1. For those who began the process of applying for an SIV outside of the United States, the first step would have been to seek Chief of Mission (COM) approval. The approval letter is sent to the same email address used to submit the application. Those who have not received a COM approval letter, are unsure if they received COM approval, or are unable to access the email address where the letter was sent should email AfghanSIVapplication@state.gov.
2. Once COM approval has been received, the next step is to complete a [Form I-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow\(er\), or Special Immigrant](#).

3. Once the I-360 has been approved, the individual can apply for adjustment of status using [Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status](#).

NEW APPLICANTS

1. For an Afghan national to be eligible for special immigrant status, he or she must:
 - Be a national of Afghanistan;
 - Have been employed in Afghanistan for a period of at least 12 months between October 7, 2001, and December 31, 2023—
 - By, or on behalf of, the U.S. government; or
 - By the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), or a [successor mission](#) in a capacity that required the individual (1) to serve as an interpreter or translator for U.S. military personnel while traveling off-base with U.S. military personnel stationed at ISAF, or a [successor mission](#), or (2) to perform activities for U.S. military personnel stationed at ISAF, or a [successor mission](#);
 - Must have provided faithful and valuable service to the U.S. government, or ISAF, or a [successor mission](#), as applicable, which is documented in a positive letter of recommendation or evaluation from a senior supervisor (or, for the Section 1059 program, a general or flag officer in the chain of command of the U.S. Armed Forces unit that was supported by the individual or from the Chief of Mission); and
 - Must have experienced or be experiencing an ongoing serious threat as a consequence of such employment.

Spouses and unmarried children (under 21-years-old) of an eligible individual are also eligible for special immigrant status. These family members are referred to as “derivative applicants”.

2. Those who did not begin the SIV process can apply for special immigrant status from within the United States. There are two possible tracks:
 - [SIV Program](#): This program is intended for those who meet the requirements above.
 - [Section 1059 SIV Program for Translator/Interpreters](#): This program is distinct from the normal SIV program and intended for translators/interpreters who worked directly with the U.S. Armed Forces or under COM authority (i.e., for U.S. Embassy Kabul) as a translator or interpreter for a period of at least 12 months. A positive recommendation letter from a general or flag officer or from the Chief of Mission is required.

OTHER OPTIONS

There are other options for a parolee seeking to adjust to a permanent status, such as applying for asylum, through an immediate relative who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, or through an employer. See [Green Card Eligibility Categories](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. [Information for Afghans](#) (USCIS)
2. [Afghanistan Inquiries](#) (DOS)
3. [Toolkit: Assistance for Afghans](#) (CLINIC)
4. [Immigration Lawyer Search](#) (AILA)
5. [Legal Resources for Afghans](#) (IRAP)