

Benefits for Afghan Humanitarian Parolees

Are you an Afghan individual who has been granted humanitarian parole?

You may be eligible for cash assistance, medical assistance, employment preparation, job placement, English language training, and other services offered through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). You may also be eligible for federal “mainstream” (non-ORR funded) benefits, such as cash assistance through Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), health insurance through Medicaid, and food assistance through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This document focuses on the benefits and services funded by ORR.

Some Afghan humanitarian parolees can also receive Afghan Placement and Assistance (APA) services from local refugee resettlement agencies. To find a local refugee resettlement agency, visit: <https://www.wrapsnet.org/rp-agency-contacts/>.

Where do I apply for ORR benefits/services after I arrive in the U.S.?

ORR provides funding to state governments, resettlement agencies, and other nonprofit community-based organizations to provide benefits and services for eligible individuals. You can apply at the state government benefits office or closest resettlement agency in your state beginning on or after the date that you received humanitarian parole. For a list of state contacts go to: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/grant-funding/key-state-contacts>.

When should I apply for ORR benefits/services?

Now. Do not wait. Your benefits and services are only available for a limited time. ORR-funded cash and medical assistance are limited to a maximum of eight months from your date of eligibility. For most employment services and other services aimed at economic self-sufficiency, the eligibility period is five years from your date of eligibility.

Who are Afghans with humanitarian parole?

Certain Afghan individuals have been or will be granted humanitarian parole by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in response to their need for rapid evacuation and relocation under Operation Allies Refuge/Operation Allies Welcome. Afghan humanitarian parolees paroled into the U.S. between July 31, 2021, through September 30, 2022, are eligible to apply for mainstream benefits, resettlement assistance, and other benefits available to refugees, until March 31, 2023, or the end of their parole term, whichever is later. Spouses or children of these individuals paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2022, are also eligible to apply for these benefits.

What should I bring with me?

You should bring proof of your humanitarian parole and the date you received it. Types of proof include a Form I-94 noting Humanitarian Parole (per INA section 212(d)(5)(A)), a foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting “OAR,” or a foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting “OAW.” Each individual in a family applying for ORR benefits and services should bring their own proof and the date their humanitarian parole (or other ORR-eligible status) was granted.

What are some of the benefits and services I can receive as an Afghan humanitarian parolee?

Some Afghan humanitarian parolees are eligible to apply for federal mainstream benefits in their state, such as cash assistance through Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), health insurance through Medicaid, and food assistance through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Initial ORR Benefits (up to 8 months from eligibility date)

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)

Those not eligible for SSI or TANF may receive Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA). Counting from their date of eligibility, individuals may receive up to eight months of RCA to help meet their most basic needs, such as food, shelter, and transportation.



ORR Matching Grant Program

Some may participate in the ORR Matching Grant (MG) Program, an early self-sufficiency program. Enrollment slots are limited in number and by location. The MG Program provides cash assistance, intensive case management, and employment services to help clients immediately find and maintain employment. The goal of the program is to assist clients to become economically self-sufficient within 180 days. Clients should enroll in the MG Program as soon as possible after their date of eligibility.



Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)

Those not eligible for Medicaid may receive up to eight months of RMA from their date of eligibility. RMA provides the same health insurance coverage as Medicaid.



Services (up to 5 years from eligibility date)

Employment Assistance: Refugee Support Services

Afghan humanitarian parolees may be eligible to access the Refugee Support Services (RSS) program to receive employability services, available for up to five years from their date of eligibility. RSS helps provide employability services; job training and preparation; assistance with job search, placement, and retention; English language training; childcare; transportation; translation and interpreter services; and case management.



Specialized Programs

Some clients may be eligible for specialized programs such as health services, technical assistance for small business start-ups, financial savings, youth mentoring, or other targeted support programs.

