



WS 22-02
Release Date: June 16, 2022
Effective Date: Immediately
Basic/Expanded Service
Expires: Continuing

To: All Contractors

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SUBJECT: Providing Services to Afghan Refugees

Purpose

To provide information on services available to Afghan refugees who are resettling in the Gulf Coast region.

Background

Workforce Solutions upholds the highest standard of equal opportunity and access to service for all its customers, including but not limited to evacuees, refugees, and noncitizen individuals.

Congress recently passed language to assist Afghan refugees. Specifically, effective September 30, 2021, the federal Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 states that Afghans who are admitted to the United States as humanitarian parolees between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022, are now eligible for public assistance, which includes Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) child care assistance.

Afghan evacuees who are relocated to the United States will fall under one of the following four categories:

- Special Immigrant Visa (SIV)—formerly employed by the US government or government contractor
- Refugee—generally victims of persecution
- Special Immigrant (SQ/SI) Parolee—pending application for SIV
- Humanitarian Parolee—do not qualify as any of above categories

Most Afghan evacuees are expected to be humanitarian parolees.

Many parolees are also eligible to work in the United States. Afghan parolees may have Form I-94, a passport, or another travel document with a parole notation such as Operation Allies Refuge (OAW) or Operations Allies Welcome (OAR). Parolees eligible to work may present a US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)-issued employment authorization document or a Social Security Number card.

Several organizations in the Gulf Coast area, including the YMCA, the Alliance, Catholic Charities, and others, have contracted to assist Afghan parolees resettle by helping them obtain housing and medical care, enroll children in school, and find work. The primary Workforce Solutions services they expressed an interest in are child care and youth services.

Action

Ensure all staff are aware of the following information related to providing Workforce Solutions services to Afghan parolees:

1. **Child Care**

Citizens or nationals of Afghanistan paroled into the United States between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022 are eligible for CCDF child care assistance until March 31, 2023, or until the end of their parole term, whichever is later.

Citizenship of the child is considered when determining child care eligibility. The designation as a humanitarian parolee fulfills the child's citizenship requirement only if the child was paroled into the United States between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022. In addition to determining the child's eligibility, all other eligibility requirements must be met for the family to receive child care services.

2. **Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Services**

The Adult Education providers are required to provide English language acquisition programs. These programs are designed to help English Language Learners (ELLs) achieve competency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. English language acquisition programs must also help ELLs with:

- Attaining a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
- Transitioning to postsecondary education and training or employment

Workforce Solutions career offices must coordinate with Adult Education providers by helping the customer complete the [Workforce Solutions Interest Form](#) to enroll Afghan parolees in any of the following services, as appropriate:

- English language acquisition
- Civics education
- Digital literacy
- High school equivalency (TxCHSE) examination preparation, which may include subsidized vouchers for GED exams
- Integrated education and training programs for ELLs, including internationally trained professionals
- Credential evaluation, authentication, and verification services for those interested in pursuing a career in the field in which they received their degree from their home country.

In addition, The US Department of Education provides general information on the [Recognition of Foreign Qualifications](#) web page for individuals with foreign degrees or other credentials seeking to work or further their education.

3. Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) does not exclude, deny benefits, limit participation, or otherwise discriminate against any individual who is otherwise qualified in the administration of services based on national origin. Staff should refer customers who are interested in applying for VR services to the appropriate VR office and/or staff within the career office where VR staff will complete an application and make an eligibility determination. At the time of application, VR staff will ask the customer to provide original unexpired documents that prove his or her identity and show that the customer can legally work in the United States.

4. WorkInTexas.com

Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, such as WorkInTexas.com registration, must be made available to all Afghan parolees. Workforce Solutions staff must not screen for employment authorization for Afghan parolees seeking self-services only.

5. Non-Discrimination in Workforce Solutions Services

Workforce Solutions staff must not refuse services to any individuals based solely on status as a noncitizen. Individuals determined eligible for programs with available funding should be served by that program in priority order, as practicable.

- WIOA §188(a)(5) prohibits discrimination against certain noncitizens, including lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, parolees, and other immigrants authorized to work in the United States.
- WIOA §188 nondiscrimination protections apply to all programs and activities operated by local Boards and partners, whether required or additional, if these programs or services are provided as a part of the workforce system.

6. Working with Community Organizations Providing Services

If staff are contacted by organizations serving parolees from Afghanistan, staff should work with them to provide services as discussed in this issuance.

7. Selective Service

All males residing in the United States must register for Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday, or within 30 days of arrival for those age 18 to 25. This includes evacuees, refugees, parolees, and other noncitizen individuals.

8. Refugee Assistance Services

Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Medical Assistance, and Refugee Support Assistance programs may be available to Afghan evacuees. These services are provided federally through the Office of Refugee Resettlement and in Texas through the organizations listed below:

- [Church World Service \(CWS\)](#)
- [Episcopal Migration Ministries](#)
- [Ethiopian Community Development Council](#)
- [Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)

- [Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service \(LIRS\)](#)
- [Refugee Services of Texas](#)
- [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#)
- [US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants](#)
- [World Relief](#)

9. Houston Refugee Consortium

In the Houston area, there are affiliate organizations that form the Houston Refugee Consortium providing services to refugees within our region. They consist of:

- Alliance for Multicultural Community Services
6420 Hillcroft Ave., Houston, TX 77081
Tel: 713-776-4700
www.thealliancetxt.org
- Bilingual Education Institute
6060 Richmond Avenue, Suite 180
Houston, TX 77057
Tele: &13-789-4555
www.bei.edu
- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
2900 Louisiana St., Houston, TX 77006
Tel: 713-526-4611
www.catholiccharities.org
- Refugee Services of Texas
6065 Hillcroft St., Suite 513, Houston, TX 77081
Tel: 713-644-6224
www.rstx.org
- YMCA International Services
6300 Westpark Dr., Suite 600, Houston, TX 77057
Tel: 713-339-9015
www.ymcahouston.org
- Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston
3303 Main St., Houston, TX 77002
Tel: 713-533-4900
www.imgh.org

For information about federally-funded refugee serving affiliate organizations in other parts of Texas contact:

Jeff Demers
State Refugee Coordinator
Catholic Charities Fort Worth
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Questions

Staff should ask questions of their supervisors first. Direct questions for Board staff through the [Submit a Question](#) link.