

ACF's Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) 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 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.

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, 2023, 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, 2023, are also eligible to apply for these benefits. Humanitarian parole authorizes only temporary residence in the United States, but Afghans with humanitarian parole may be eligible to apply for asylum (a permanent status) as well as Temporary Protected Status, which may authorize their residence in the United States beyond the expiration date of parole.

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 state-by-state listing of local resettlement agencies, view the ORR state program directory, which also includes a link to ORR state contacts:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/map/find-resources-and-contacts-your-state>.

When should I apply for ORR benefits/services?

Immediately. Your benefits and services are only available for a limited time. ORR-funded cash and medical assistance (including medical screening) are limited to a maximum of 12¹ months from your date of eligibility. For most employment services and other services aimed at economic self-sufficiency, the eligibility period will be up to March 31, 2023, or the end of your parole term, whichever is later.

What should I bring with me?

You should bring proof of your humanitarian parole and the date you received it. 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. 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."

¹ Only Afghan humanitarian parolees whose date of eligibility is on or after October 1, 2021, are eligible for up to 12 months of ORR cash and medical assistance. For those Afghan humanitarian parolees with dates of eligibility prior to October 1, 2021, their eligibility period remains up to eight months.

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). If you are not eligible to receive these mainstream benefits, you can be screened for eligibility at a state government benefits office or the closest resettlement agency in your state for the following ORR benefits and services:

Initial ORR Benefits (up to 12 months from ORR 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 12 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 the 240-day service period. 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 12 months of RMA from their date of eligibility. RMA provides the same health insurance coverage as Medicaid.

Medical Screening

From their date of eligibility, Afghan humanitarian parolees may be eligible for a domestic medical screening examination funded by ORR. The screening supports client resettlement by identifying health conditions that threaten their well-being, providing vaccinations required for school and work, and referring them to primary care providers or specialists for ongoing health care. ORR recommends that medical screenings are completed soon after arrival in the U.S.

Services (up to March 31, 2023, or until the end of the individual's parole term, whichever is later)

Employment Assistance: Refugee Support Services

Afghan humanitarian parolees may be eligible to access the Refugee Support Services (RSS) program to receive employability services. 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.

Immigration-Related Legal Assistance

Afghan humanitarian parolees may be eligible for immigration-related legal assistance and other related activities to help them on their pathway to obtaining a permanent status, such as acquiring asylum, in the United States.

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.