



Population, Refugees, and Migration

U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Instructions for U.S.-based Media Organizations/NGOs to Submit Priority 2 Referrals of Non-U.S. Government Funded Direct-Hire Afghan Nationals To the U.S. Refugees Admissions Program (USRAP)

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Attention: Effective January 31, 2022, 5 pm Eastern, the U.S. Department of State no longer accepts referral packages at USRAPAfghanReferrals@state.gov. Any referrals sent to that email address after that date will not be reviewed. To ensure data security, program integrity, and processing efficiency, as of that date the Department of State will accept referrals following the updated process described below.

Background

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is a joint program run by the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

The U.S. objective in Afghanistan remains a peaceful, secure country. A top priority is to ensure those affiliated with the U.S. government and U.S.-based NGOs or media organizations are identified and protected from potential retaliation or harm.

The [Priority-2 \(P-2\) program](#)* for Afghan nationals was announced on August 2, 2021. U.S. government departments and agencies, and U.S.-based NGOs or media organizations with operations in Afghanistan, may submit P-2 referrals for Afghans who fall into any of the following three categories:

- Afghans who do not meet the minimum time-in-service for a Special Immigrant Visa but who worked as employees of contractors, locally employed staff, interpreters/translators for the U.S. government, United States Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), or Resolute Support;
- Afghans who worked for a U.S. government-funded program or project in Afghanistan supported through a U.S. government grant or cooperative agreement**;
- Afghans who were employed in Afghanistan by a U.S.-based media organization or non-governmental organization. U.S.-based media organizations may also refer Afghan nationals who worked for them under stringer, freelance, and comparable arrangements.***

** The term "priority" relates to groups of special concern that can be referred for access to the USRAP; it does not indicate status or any hierarchical selection process.*

****Note:** Afghans who work/worked for sub-contractors and sub-grantees do not qualify for the P-2 designation, though they may qualify for P-1 referrals.

***** Under exceptional circumstances, PRM may accept referrals for third party contractors, particularly from U.S.-based media organizations, and for staff of U.S. NGO wholly- or majority-owned subsidiaries in Afghanistan.**

If your projects in Afghanistan **were funded by the U.S. government (#2 above)**, or if the Afghan nationals meet the criteria for **#1 above**, they must be referred by a U.S. government official from the U.S. government agency that funded the projects. There is an internal process at each agency for these referrals. Please contact the appropriate agency to proceed.

The following guidance is intended only for U.S.-based NGOs and media organizations that wish to refer Afghan national staff who worked on projects **that were not funded by the U.S. government (#3 above)**. Afghan nationals known to the U.S. government who meet the criteria of #3 above may be referred to the USRAP according to the instructions below.

Instructions

If your organization emailed referrals to USRAPAfghanReferrals@state.gov prior to January 31, 2022, 5 pm Eastern, the Department of State will continue to process these submissions. Do not attempt to re-submit those referrals using the instructions below. If you are concerned about the status of your emailed referrals, please complete [this form](#). We are working expediently to complete review of our backlog of referrals. Applicants with a complete referral will receive an email from noreply@wrapsnet.org or usrapprod@servicenowservices.com with their referral record number and further instructions; your organization will be included on this email.

Organizations who did not email their referrals to USRAPAfghanReferrals@state.gov prior to January 31, 2022, 5 pm Eastern, must follow these updated instructions to submit P-2 referrals:

- 1. Complete this [GovCloud Google form](#) to confirm your organization is eligible to submit P-2 referrals.**

This form must be submitted by, or with the approval of, the **current senior-most U.S. citizen employee** of your U.S.-headquartered organization.

- 2. After the USRAP reviews your form submission**, the senior-most U.S. citizen official, plus the form submitter in copy, will receive an email message from a wrapsnet.org email address with one of the following:
 - Request for additional information to determine eligibility.
 - Notice of ineligibility, based on 1) failure to meet eligibility requirements, or 2) a duplicate prior submission.
 - Confirmation that your organization is eligible to submit referrals.*
- 3. *The eligibility confirmation email will contain instructions to the senior-most U.S. citizen employee** to designate an individual from their staff to access the USRAP referral system.

The designated representative must generally use an email account that matches the organization's domain name (not a personal account).

4. The designated representative will receive detailed instructions on how to access the USRAP case management system and submit referrals.

Each referral must contain:

- All required fields, and non-required fields to the maximum extent possible. This [Guide to Referral Formatting \(Excel document\)](#) may be helpful to collect and organize applicants' required and non-required information. (Your organization will still need to type this information into the database. The Excel sheet can assist with collecting and organizing applicants' information.)
- A complete [Employment Verification form](#) signed by the senior-most U.S. citizen employee of the referring organization.
- Scans of the following documents (optional, but highly encouraged if available):
 - Documents to establish identity: passport; national ID; birth certificates
 - Documents to establish relationships: marriage, divorce, death, and/or birth certificates
 - Documents to establish employment history: employment badges, employer affidavits
- All referrals submitted on or after March 1, 2023 must contain employment verification documentation. Your organization must provide documentation to demonstrate that your organization has properly verified an applicant's eligible employment. Employment verification documentation will be accepted based on the tiered system below:
 - Tier 1: Employment contract: If your organization submits an applicant's fully executed employment contract with a referral, no further employment verification documentation is required. The employment contract must contain 1) the applicant's name, 2) the applicant's job title, and 3) the applicant's employment start date. If your organization has other employment verification documentation in addition to a fully executed employment contract, the additional documentation may be submitted as well.
 - Tier 2: Employment or HR letter, pay stubs or payroll record, or employee identification card: If your organization is unable to provide an applicant's employment contract as employment verification documentation, your organization must submit a minimum of two of the following three forms of documentation:
 1. Employment or HR letter: a signed letter from your organization on official letterhead that includes at a minimum 1) the applicant's name, 2) the applicant's job title, and 3) the applicant's period of employment.
 2. Pay stubs / payroll records: pay stubs, receipts, or payroll records from your organization that contain your organization's name and the applicant's name.
 3. Employment identification card: a scanned or photographed copy of the applicant's employment identification card that contains your organization's name, the applicant's name, and the applicant's job title.

If your organization has other employment verification

documentation in addition to two of three types of Tier 2 documentation described above, the additional documentation may be submitted as well.

- Tier 3: Justification for lack of employment verification documentation:
If your organization cannot provide employment verification documentation for an applicant from either Tier 1 or Tier 2, your organization must submit a justification that details the following:
 1. Why your organization is unable to provide proof of employment for the applicant: provide as much detail as possible on the circumstances that prevent your organization from providing the accepted forms of employment verification documentation.
 2. How your organization verified the applicant's employment in the absence of the accepted forms of employment verification documentation: provide as much detail as possible on the steps your organization took to verify the applicant's employment.
 3. The applicant's job title, employment responsibilities, and location of employment.Should your organization submit a justification for lack of employment verification documentation, it is highly encouraged that documentary evidence of the steps your organization took to verify the applicant's employment be submitted with the referral (e.g. email correspondence, photographs, organizational newsletters, etc.).
- Irrespective of the tier and type of the employment verification documentation submitted, your organization must be prepared to respond to any inquiries regarding the documentation or justifications provided. Delay or refusal in responding to inquiries regarding a referral may result in its closure.
- Please note that the submission of employment verification documentation does not eliminate your organization's responsibility to verify employment of applicants. It remains the responsibility of the referring organization to verify employment for all individuals they refer. The requirement to submit employment verification documentation for each referral serves to demonstrate that employment verification has been performed.

5. The referring organization will serve as the key contact for the applicant until they have a complete referral.

Please stay in contact with the applicant until they receive official email notification of a complete, accepted referral.

Once/if the referral is complete and accepted by USRAP, your organization will be included on a confirmation email to the applicant from noreply@wrapsnet.org or usrapprod@servicenowservices.com. Please be sure to whitelist that address in your email client.

The email will contain instructions for the applicant on how to inform the USRAP

of their location once they have left Afghanistan so that we can create a case to begin processing with the nearest U.S.-funded overseas Resettlement Support Center.

Note: As of December 2022, we have begun to re-email some applicants with an accepted referral who have not indicated relocation to a third country. This email requests applicants confirm their location is Afghanistan via a different form link. The State Department is contacting applicants as part of ongoing U.S. government efforts to potentially relocate vulnerable Afghans to a processing location.

Afghan nationals who believe they have been referred to the USRAP should seek status updates from their referring party, unless or until they have been notified via email from noreply@wrapsnet.org or usrapprod@servicenowservices.com that they have an accepted referral.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we launch this new process.

Other Issues to Consider

- There is generally no resettlement processing in Afghanistan. If/when Principal Applicants and their families make the difficult choice to leave Afghanistan, they will need to arrange and pay for their own travel to a third country where processing can begin.
- Case processing can be lengthy (potentially 12-18 months), so please ensure they are aware this process could require living in and supporting themselves in a third country for a substantial amount of time until case processing is complete. Even if an individual qualifies for the P-2 program and travels outside of Afghanistan, there is no guarantee that they will be approved for resettlement to the United States. In particular, applicants must pass extensive security checks.
- The United States is unable to provide protection or support to individuals while they await a decision on their refugee case. Those who leave Afghanistan can register for international protection and assistance as a refugee with the government of the country they are in, if the country has an established asylum process; or, they can register with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).