



OPERATION SACRED PROMISE

P-1/P-2 APPLICATIONS

The rules and regulations relevant to P-1/P-2 applications are constantly evolving. OSP recommends that applicants consult with an attorney for additional assistance and guidance.

If you require an immigration attorney, you may search for one [here](#).

P-1 AND P-2 PROGRAMS: OVERVIEW

The P-1 (“Priority 1”) and P-2 (“Priority 2”) programs¹ provide avenues for certain Afghan citizens to be considered for resettlement as a refugee² in the U.S.

These applications do not guarantee refugee status. Instead, they open a path for the applicant to more quickly be considered and interviewed for refugee status. P-1/P-2 designation also allows the individual to interview with U.S. Customs and Immigration (USCIS) to present their case for refugee status.

****Afghan citizens cannot directly apply (i.e., self-refer).** They also can’t be referred by their U.S.-based affiliates (including family, friends, or attorneys).

Instead, applicants **MUST** be referred by:

- A U.S. government official or U.S.-affiliated company; or
- The U.S.-affiliated company or organization that employed the Afghan citizen in Afghanistan.

¹ These programs are unrelated to the nonimmigrant P visa program.

² U.S. law defines a refugee as someone who: (1) Is located outside of the U.S.; (2) is of special humanitarian concern to the U.S.; (3) demonstrates that they were persecuted or fear persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group; (4) is not firmly resettled in another country; and (5) is admissible to the U.S.

P-1 ELIGIBILITY

P-1s are intended for Afghans who are “well-known” to the U.S government, but are currently ineligible for a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV). Individuals must be appointed to this program by a government official who can advocate for the individual’s relationship to the U.S. government.

P-1 referrals can be made by: US embassies; a Department of State-designated non-profit organizations (NGOs); or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The referrers must be current or former Chief of Mission or Department of Defense employees, who also served in Afghanistan.

These referrals are EXTREMELY rare.

P-2 ELIGIBILITY

Applicants are eligible if they worked in Afghanistan for a:

- (1) U.S. government-funded program or project supported through a U.S. government grant or cooperative agreement;
- (2) U.S.-based media organization; or
- (3) U.S.-based non-governmental organization.

Note: For media and non-profits, P-2 eligibility does not require a minimum length of employment on the relevant project, grant, or contract; recommendation letters describing the value of the individual’s service; or that a specific percentage of the individual’s employment was connected to U.S. funding.

Afghans may ALSO be eligible if their work would qualify for an SIV, but they did not work for the required period of time. This includes work in Afghanistan:

- (1) As employees of U.S. government contractors for less than one year;
- (2) For the U.S. government as locally-employed staff for less than one year;
or
- (3) As interpreters/translators for the U.S. Government, United States Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), or Resolute Support for less than one year.

Employees of subcontractors and subgrantees are NOT eligible for P-2.

If you are no longer in contact with your employer in Afghanistan, you may still be referred by a U.S. official who was aware of your work and the U.S. contract that employed you.

If you are eligible for referral, your employer may also refer your spouse and children (of any age, married/unmarried).

LOCATION REQUIREMENTS

Although you can be referred for P-1/P-2 status while you remain in Afghanistan, processing will not begin until after you have left.

This is largely because an individual is not considered a “refugee” until they have left their country of origin.

If an individual arrives in the U.S. (1) before submitting their P-1 application; or (2) before the U.S. has approved their application for refugee status, they will no longer qualify for refugee status.

P-1 AND P-2 REFERRALS

To maintain the integrity of the referral process, explicit instructions for referrers are not included herein. If you have questions about how to properly refer an applicant, please contact OSP directly at opsacredpromise@gmail.com.

Information that may be required by your referrer include:

- Name as it appears on your passport/*tazkera*;
- Passport/*tazkera* number; and
- Date of birth.

Documents that may be required by your referrer include copies/images of:

- Passports;
- National IDs;
- Marriage certificates; and
- Birth certificates for the referred individual and their family members, if available.

FOLLOWING REFERRAL FOR P-1/P-2 STATUS

After a referral is made, the Department of State will email the applicant with instructions on how to proceed once they have left Afghanistan.

When the individual leaves Afghanistan, they MUST email the Department of State at USRAPAfghanReferrals@state.gov. The email must be titled: "Request from [Last Name] to Confirm Afghan P1 or P2 Referral and Begin Processing" (ex: Request from Doe to Confirm Afghan P2 Referral and Begin Processing). The body of the email must include the following information:

- Full name (LAST, First), include possible spelling variations;³
- Date of birth (DD-MMM-YYYY);⁴
- Afghan Referral Record Number (if known);
- Passport number;
- National identification (*tazkera*) number;
- Principal applicant's phone number at time of referral;
- Principal applicant's email address at time of referral;
- Which U.S. government agency and/or individual referred you;
- Current phone number (if different from above);
- Current email address (if different from above); and
- Current location (including address).

Applicants who have left Afghanistan should also contact UNHCR to register as a refugee. At that time, they will likely be asked questions about their P-1/P-2 application and status. You can find the closest UNHCR office to you [here](#). Once UNHCR determines that the individual qualifies as a refugee, they will be referred to the U.S. for further processing.

P-2 APPLICATION TIMELINE AND PROCESS

Keep in mind that earning P-1/P-2 status is only the first step to determining if an individual may permanently relocate to the U.S. as a refugee. The overall process will look like this:

- (1) **Applicant referral** to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) by a U.S. government official or the senior-most U.S. citizen employee of the organization where the individual worked;

³ This information is mandatory.

⁴ This information is mandatory.

- (2) The Department of State **approves the initial petition** and notifies the applicant of their successful referral;
- (3) The applicant and family must **leave Afghanistan** on their own and reach a third country, where they can contact the Department of State to begin the refugee resettlement process;
- (4) The Resettlement Support Center conducts in-depth **pre-screening interview** with the applicant, including the collection of biographic information;
- (5) USCIS conducts **additional screening interviews** to determine eligibility of individual for resettlement;
- (6) The applicant undergoes **medical screening** and numerous additional biometric and biographic **security checks**, matching data with national and international databases; and
- (7) **Sponsorship assurance** is provided by a refugee resettlement agency in the U.S., **travel arrangements** are coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and applicants are **resettled to the U.S.** with refugee status.

The last page of this guide includes a 2018 document from the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) which sets out the various paths to obtaining refugee status.

HELPFUL TIPS

You CAN apply for P-1/P-2 status and other immigration programs at the same time (such as SIV or humanitarian parole).

Most non-profits monitoring this program believe that applications will take years for final approval. In the interim, resettlement benefits are not available to applicants; in other words, those who leave Afghanistan prior to P-1 or P-2 approval will not receive financial support from the U.S. or United Nations while their application is pending.

Currently, there are no options for resettlement processing from inside Afghanistan. The U.S. has not yet announced where P-1 and P-2 interviews will take place, although it has reported that it will not process applications in Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, Syria, Turkey, or Yemen.

The Department of State has not clarified whether a spouse/children may apply for P-2 status without the eligible employee (for example, if the employee has died).

The Department of State has provided P-2 guidance for referrers [here](#).

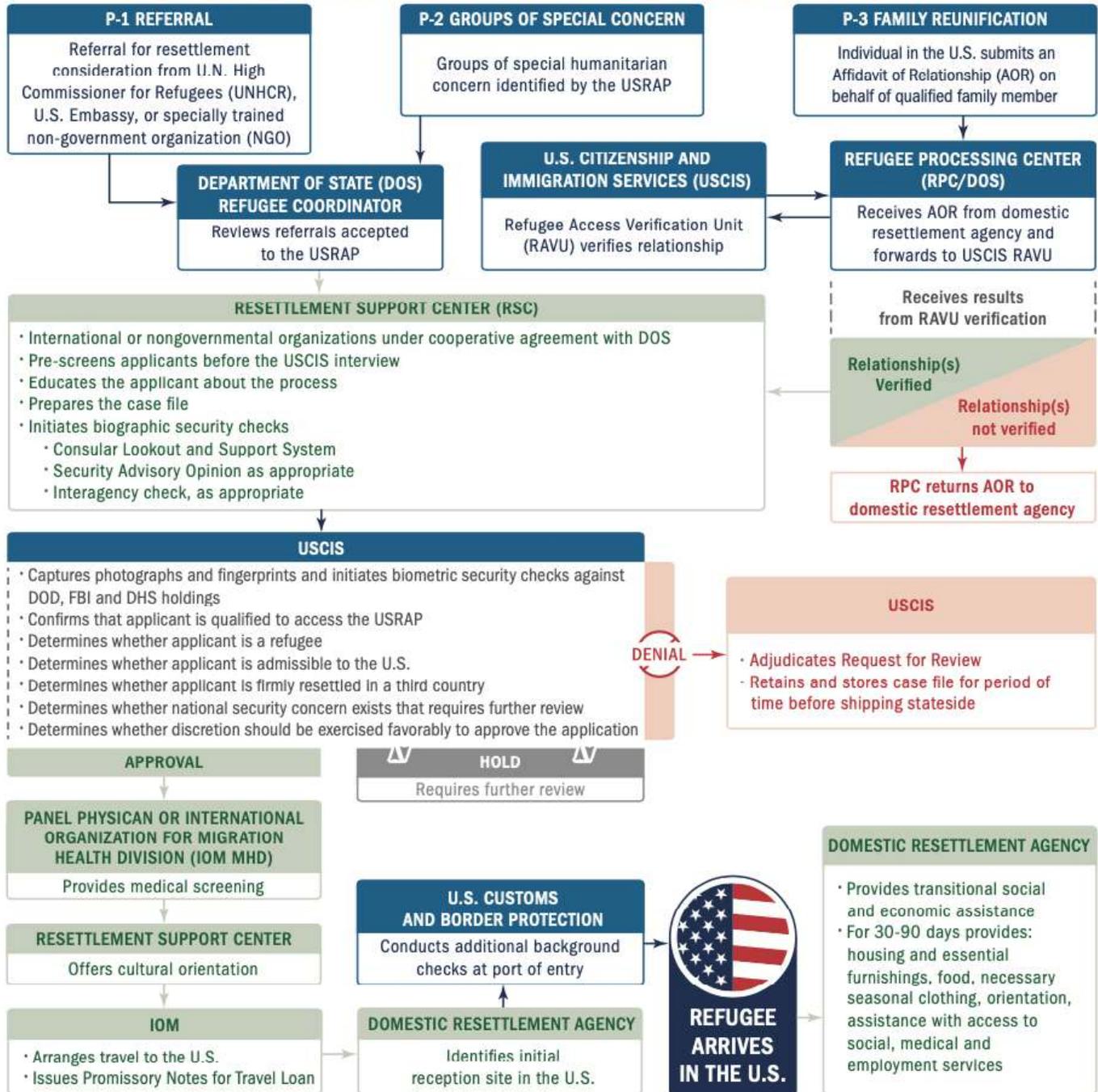
Following resettlement, P-2 refugees are eligible for public benefits including:

- Lawful permanent residence (green card status) after one year of residence in the U.S.;
- Work authorization;
- Refugee Support Services, including employment services, English language classes, transportation support, and childcare;
- Healthcare via Medicaid or Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA);
- Federal financial assistance including Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Refugee Cash Assistance if ineligible for SSI or TANF; and
- Nutritional assistance through Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP).

UNITED STATES REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM (USRAP)



REFUGEE IS OVERSEAS AND MUST BE IN ONE OF 3 CATEGORIES:



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services



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Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration