

The more formal evacuation process [for Afghan SIVs] that had been occurring over the last few weeks has ended and the last evacuation flight arrived early Monday morning (August 16th). All commercial flights are suspended until further notice. We understand that the U.S. military is coordinating with the Taliban while accelerating the airlift of Americans and Afghan allies, including a small number of Afghan SIVs, from the Kabul airport. A small cohort of SIVs remain in the Dulles and Fort Lee areas undergoing further processing and are expected to travel to their final destinations in the next few days.

The U.S. is trying to plan for a larger-scale evacuation. Defense Secretary Austin has approved requests for assistance from the State Department to provide air transportation, temporary housing and support for up to 22,000 Afghan SIV applicants, their families, and other at-risk individuals. The majority will be transported to the United States to complete their processing before proceeding to their final destinations. Others who are in the earlier stages of the SIV application process will be transported to a third country for processing. These plans are in the early stages of development and we will keep you updated as we learn more.

Three military bases were announced for those on military flights: Fort Lee in Virginia, Fort Bliss in Texas and Fort McCoy in Wisconsin.

<https://www.wusa9.com/mobile/article/news/national/military-news/evacuations-afghanistan-us-military/291-e514744b-9a38-455c-a7d8-8b6f1d092c87>

Commercial flights:

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/bidens-vow-airlift-afghan-allies-meets-ticking-clock-risky-rescue-2021-08-17>

Are Afghan Refugees Coming to Maine?

We do not yet have any information about when more Afghan families may be coming to Maine. When and if families arrive, we will be responsible as a resettlement agency for providing resettlement services including housing, medical, employment etc.

Families can still choose to migrate to Maine after initial resettlement but SIVs are largely being resettled in 10 states:

- California
- Georgia
- Pennsylvania
- Washington
- Colorado
- Maryland
- Texas
- Connecticut
- New York
- Virginia

What Are We Doing to Help?

As a refugee resettlement program, we can assist families with processing family reunification requests — the U.S. government has not yet laid out a process for us to follow so the timeline of reunification at this moment is not known yet, but we can let families know as soon as we get more information. For clients looking to reunify with family in Afghanistan, please contact Carolyn Graney, Immigration Legal Services, at (207) 560-7280 or cgraney@ccmaine.org.

Additional Resources

- If you – or someone you know – is currently in Afghanistan, please check the [U.S. Embassy website](#) regularly for information about relocation and repatriation. You may also contact the federal U.S. Department of State directly at: usrapafghaninquiries@state.gov.
- Individuals may be eligible for resettlement in the United States with family members under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). You may find additional information about the USRAP Priority 2 designation for Afghan nationals here: <https://www.wrapsnet.org/siv-iraqi-syrian-afghan-p2>.
- The [International Refugee Assistance Project \(IRAP\)](#) also has legal resources to help with visas and other information.
- This website is an excellent and reliable source for Afghan people looking to figure out options for their families, with regular updates from the U.S. Embassy: <https://support.iraplegalinfo.org/hc/en-us/articles/4404254275348-How-do-I-request-evacuation-from-Afghanistan>
- Maine families with loved ones in Afghanistan can email ILAP at info@ilapmaine.org (with “Afghanistan” in the subject line) or call (207) 699-4415 (be sure to mention Afghanistan if you leave a message) to get a consult with an attorney. Visit <https://ilapmaine.org/afghanistan> for more resources.

How to support refugees locally:

- Contribute financially to Refugee and Immigration Services. Donate online (be sure to designate your donation towards *Refugee and Immigration*): https://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/50949/p/salsa/donation/common/public/?donate_page_KEY=10581
- Organize a fundraiser to pool resources as a community for further support.
- Volunteer with Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Services (available positions listed online): www.ccmaine.org/volunteer/jobs
- Donate furniture and household items to Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Services to help refugees set up a household: www.ccmaine.org/refugee-immigration-services/support/donate
- Host an educational program about refugees and the resettlement process in your community
- Volunteer with other community organizations who support our resettlement work:
 - Portland Adult Education:* www.portlandadulthood.org/pae2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=234&Itemid=46
 - Portland Public Schools: Make it Happen Program:* <http://portlandmlc.ss3.sharpschool.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=7030267&pageId=7031186>
 - Portland Mentoring Alliance:* <http://blogs.portlandschools.org/phspma>

How to support refugees globally:

- Contribute financially to Catholic Relief Services: www.crs.org