



Introduction

Afghan individuals who have been granted humanitarian parole may be eligible for cash assistance, medical assistance, employment preparation, job placement, English language training, and other services offered through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

Although benefits websites may not specifically list humanitarian parolees as being eligible for these services, typically they are eligible for benefits as if they had come into the US with refugee status.

Afghan humanitarian parolees 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).

Best Practices

- Apply for benefits as soon as possible after arrival. If you are unable to apply due to an I-94, Employment Authorization Document (EAD), or Social Security card issue, please be in contact with your CWS point of contact.
- Apply through the office or website application noted in your Basic Service Plan. If unsure how/where to apply, please be in contact with your CWS point of contact.
- When applying, be sure the client has or brings proof of their humanitarian parole status. This may be found on an I-94 form, or on a foreign passport with a DHS/CBP admission stamp noting “OAR” or “OAW.” Each person in a family applying for benefits should use their own documentation and the date their humanitarian parole status was granted.
- Save a PDF copy of the application submitted for benefits and submit this to the Afghan's case file (via the “Upload Documents” link on the Guidance tab of your Case Workbook).
- If working through an online portal, save the new account and login password created for the application. Make sure the client has access to this information.
- If given an application number or confirmation code, make sure to save this information.
- Note that some cases will be eligible for certain benefits due to specific family makeup or vulnerabilities, which may include disability status, pregnancy or young children. Your CWS point of contact can help direct you toward these benefits.



Food Assistance

SNAP

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits—which some people may refer to as “food stamps” —are available to humanitarian parolees. To get SNAP benefits, they must apply in the state in which they currently live, and they must meet certain resource and income requirements which are described on the linked page below. SNAP income and resource limits are updated annually, so make sure to communicate these changes to the client.

Link: [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Link: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP Eligibility | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

WIC

WIC (pronounced “wick”) is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. WIC provides nutritious foods (primarily through retail grocery stores), nutrition counseling, and referrals to health care and social services. WIC serves low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, as well as infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk.

Link: [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\) | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

Healthcare

Afghan evacuees arriving in the United States will be eligible for health insurance. Afghan evacuees can access health insurance through Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Health Insurance Marketplace, or Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA or other health coverage provided by the Office of Refugee Resettlement). Eligibility for each coverage program depends upon the state where a humanitarian parolee is residing and the eligibility criteria for the respective program.

Medicaid

Medicaid provides health coverage to millions of Americans, including eligible low- income adults, children, pregnant people, elderly adults and people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by states, according to federal requirements. The program is funded jointly by states and the federal government.

Link: [Medicaid.gov: the official U.S. government site for Medicare | Medicaid](#)



Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)

Afghans who are ineligible for Medicaid or CHIP may be eligible for Refugee Medical Assistance for up to 8 months following the date of entry in the community (i.e., the date on which the Afghan evacuee departs the military base), if they meet the RMA income and eligibility requirements. RMA is provided through ORR and administered in most cases by state Medicaid programs. RMA benefits will generally offer the same coverage as Medicaid.

Because RMA is time-limited, clients should apply for this benefit as soon after arrival as possible. If a client was placed in a community before October 1, 2021, 10/1/21 is their date of eligibility for RMA benefits. If a client is placed in a community after 10/1/21 (i.e., they were staying on a military base and recently left), their date of eligibility is the date they arrive in their local community.

Link: [Refugee Medical Assistance | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)

Cash Assistance

TANF

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF; pronounced "tan-eff") program is meant to help low-income families with children become economically self-sufficient.

TANF provides monthly cash assistance payments and a wide range of additional support services (i.e., SNAP, Medicaid, WIC, rental assistance).

Humanitarian parolees must apply for TANF in the state where they live, and all adults in the family must meet the resource, income, and employment requirements. Proof of eligibility (i.e. resources and income) must be submitted annually for benefits to continue. There is a five-year limit of assistance during a person's lifetime, but these years do not have to be consecutive.

Link: [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\) | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)

Like refugees, humanitarian parolees may be eligible for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA). RCA provides cash benefits to Afghans for up to 8 months following the date that they arrive in their new community after leaving the military base. In order to receive RCA, humanitarian parolees must meet income and resource eligibility standards that demonstrate financial need. Additionally, for families,



they must first apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF; description above). If they are determined to be ineligible for TANF, the family can use their denied TANF application to qualify for RCA.

Because RCA is time-limited, clients should apply for this benefit as soon after arrival as possible. If a client was placed in a community before October 1, 2021, 10/1/21 is their date of eligibility for RCA benefits. If a client is placed in a community after 10/1/21 (i.e., they were staying on a military base and recently left), their date of eligibility is the date they arrive in their local community.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal program that provides monthly payments to people who have limited income and few resources. SSI is for people who are 65 or older, as well as for those of any age, including children, who are blind or have disabilities.

To receive SSI, an adult client must meet at least one of these requirements:

- Be age 65 or older
- Be totally or partially blind
- Have a medical condition that keeps them from working and is expected to last at least one year or result in death

There are different rules for children. For more information, read [Benefits for Children with Disabilities](#) (SSA Publication No. 05-10026).

Link: [You May Be Able to Get Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\) \(ssa.gov\)](https://ssa.gov)

Employment

Refugee Support Services (RSS)

Afghan humanitarian parolees may be eligible to access Refugee Support Services (RSS) programs to receive employability services, available for up to five years from their date of arrival in the community. 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. Please contact your agency point of contact to inquire about employment services.