



## Volunteer Essentials: What You Need to Know Before Volunteering

*The following highlights key resources on what you need to know before volunteering with refugee resettlement agencies and partners to support the relocation and resettlement of Afghan humanitarian parolees under Operation Allies Welcome.*

*To access and learn more about other resources as they become available, subscribe to the [CORE newsletter](#) and [Switchboard newsletter](#), and register for a Switchboard account [here](#).*

### About Refugees and Afghan Arrivals

- [About Operation Allies Welcome](#), Department of Homeland Security (2021): This webpage offers a broad overview of Operation Allies Welcome, including descriptions of the various operational phases and fact sheets that may be helpful for volunteers.
- [About Refugee Populations](#), CORE (2021): This webpage helps resettlement staff and volunteers learn more about refugee populations resettling in the United States, including general information along with specific population backgrounders. Note: There are not backgrounders for every population resettled in the United States.
- [Afghan Backgrounder](#), CORE (2021): This backgrounder contains historical, political, and cultural information intended to cultivate a general understanding of Afghans who are arriving to the U.S.
- [Who are the Afghan Newcomers?](#) Switchboard (2021): This webinar provided an overview of events leading to the displacement of Afghan newcomers to the U.S. It also covered the social and cultural aspects that distinguish this population from other refugee groups in the United States.
- [A Round-Up of Resources for Serving Afghan Evacuees](#), Switchboard (2021): This blog post lists resources you may find helpful in serving Afghan clients, including resources in Dari and Pashto.

### Case Management

- [Tips for Getting Started with Safeguarding and Protection](#), Switchboard (2022): When it comes to preserving safety for both clients and staff, there are many terms you might hear. This blog post reviews two key terms, safeguarding and protection, that relate to service providers' roles in ensuring the safety of clients and staff.
- [Introduction to Case Management for Refugee Service Providers](#), IRC (2021): This interactive e-learning course includes seven modules relating to best practices and service delivery techniques to effectively engage with and support refugees as they adjust to social and economic life in their new community. It covers how to use a strengths-based case management approach which emphasizes the inherent resources each individual has to achieve their goals and to become self-reliant.
- [Trauma-Informed Care: Movement Toward Practice](#), Switchboard (2020): This information guide describes some of the common principles and guiding practices of trauma-informed care that can inform resettlement and integration practices. [Click here](#) to stream the accompanying webinar recording.
- [Cultural Competence in Refugee Service Settings](#), Switchboard (2020): This information guide highlights key culturally competent approaches in refugee service settings, based on an [original literature review](#) conducted by Switchboard in 2020. [Click here](#) to stream the accompanying webinar recording.

### Language Access

- [Introduction to Working with Interpreters](#), Switchboard (2019): This e-learning course includes key terms related to interpretation, describes the interpreter's role, and explains why quality interpretation is important when providing services to limited English proficient (LEP) clients.
- [Working with Interpreters](#), CORE (2021): This webpage was developed to assist resettlement staff and interpreters to successfully collaborate and streamline the delivery of [key Cultural Orientation messages](#).

Resources include a multilingual Cultural Orientation glossary of common resettlement terms that can be used by resettlement staff and interpreters.

## Cultural Orientation

- [About Cultural Orientation](#), CORE (2020): This webpage provides an overview of Cultural Orientation, a service refugees receive to acquire vital knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to adapt to their new lives and achieve self-sufficiency. [Sign-up here](#) to receive updates and resources for Cultural Orientation delivery.
- [Cultural Orientation Objectives and Indicators](#), CORE (2022): This document provides list of required CO topics, objectives, and indicators to be covered as a part of the Afghan Placement and Assistance Program.

## Mental Health and Wellness

- [Strategies for Staff and Supervisors to Mitigate Burnout, Vicarious Trauma, and Other Occupational Hazards](#), Switchboard (2020): This webinar describes practical ways that agencies and individuals working with refugees can address occupational hazards including burnout, secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue.

## Employment

- [Employment Authorization Documents: Reference Guide for Refugee Service Providers](#), Switchboard (2021): This reference guide covers the most important and commonly used authorization documents required for employment in the United States. It includes information on the form I-9, accepted documents typically held by ORR-eligible clients, possible combinations of documents based on immigration status, FAQs, and a list of resources to share with employers.
- [A Roadmap for Employers Hiring Afghan Newcomers](#), Switchboard (2022): The guide contains essential information specifically geared towards human resources teams related to the recruitment and employment of Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders, refugees, and parolees.

## Housing

- [OAW: Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) Programs & Resources](#), HUD (2021): This resource list includes information that clients can use if they need help with housing. Available assistance will depend on their immigration status; their income level or other eligibility criteria; and availability of the housing or assistance in the area.
- [USDA Rural Housing Service Program](#), USDA (2021): The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides direct financial rental assistance for qualifying tenants under short-term (6-12 months) and long-term (12 months+) housing programs. This downloadable tip sheet and interactive dashboard provide more information. Resettlement agencies and their affiliates, as well as state refugee coordinators, may reach out the USDA points of contact listed in the tip sheet to access housing assistance.

## Education

- [Toolkit: Supporting Afghan Students in Schools & Youth Programs in the United States](#), Switchboard (2022): While many schools and communities have a long history of welcoming refugee and immigrant students; given the large number of arriving Afghan students and recent traumatic events, educators and school districts may want to do additional preparation. This toolkit is designed to help educators support Afghan students as they enter the education system in their new communities.