

Afghan Refugee Advocacy:

Pass the Afghan Adjustment Act!

In August 2021, the U.S. withdrew its military forces from Afghanistan after a 20-year conflict. As part of the Doha agreement, signed by then-President Trump in February 2020, the U.S. agreed to a complete withdrawal of military forces by September 2021. As the Afghan government collapsed, the Taliban quickly seized control of the Kabul and instituted martial law. Thousands of Afghans – those who worked alongside the U.S. military or other forces, as well as ethnic and religious minorities already under threat – have been forced to flee their homes in fear of kidnap, torture, and execution.

Applicants are facing burdensome travel to Arkansas, where few resources exist.



Since September 2021, Oklahoma has accepted over 1,800 Afghan parolees, who are now settling in as our neighbors, colleagues, and friends. Their families are growing, and the adults are joining the workforce as contributing members to society. Slowly, they are rebuilding their lives.

However, in order to secure their status here, they must adjust their status after arrival, by applying either for asylum or a special immigrant visa. Both processes are expensive, lengthy, and time consuming, and the outcome is uncertain.

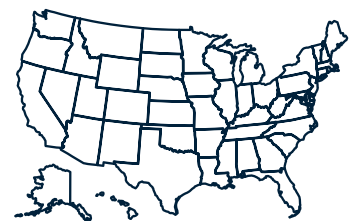
The SIV system is backlogged by over 70,000 cases, and the asylum system has over 1.4 million cases in its queue. Forcing these families to wait means they risk losing jobs, homes, and their legal status in the U.S. – they could be sent back into the war zone they fled.

Oklahoma accepted more refugees per capita than any other state, but we do not have an asylum office to handle these applications.

In July 2023, a bipartisan Afghan Adjustment Act was reintroduced in both the House and the Senate with support from a wide group of legislators. If passed, it would prevent thousands of Afghans from losing their jobs or being deported as their cases get through the backlogged immigration system. Now, we need our federal delegates, particularly our Senators, to act with courage and integrity by voting for the Afghan Adjustment Act, helping our new neighbors secure a clearer pathway to permanent residency and a brighter future as new Oklahoma neighbors.

Similar adjustment acts have helped thousands of Cubans, Vietnamese, and Iraqis who fled violence in their homelands to establish thriving communities in the U.S.

We need our delegates to vote for the Afghan Adjustment Act and help our friends secure their new lives in Oklahoma!



Oklahoma has accepted over 2,000 Afghan arrivals – the third largest number in the nation, and the highest number per capita of any state.

Contacting your Senator

Who to Call and What to Say

Sample Script:

"Dear Senator, I am calling today to respectfully urge you to work with your colleagues in the Senate and vote for the Afghan Adjustment Act, which would help Afghan arrivals secure their permanent legal status in the United States and start new lives in Oklahoma. These people risked their lives to help the U.S. in Afghanistan, and our current immigration attorneys and legal system are severely overburdened. Oklahoma stepped up to show the Oklahoma standard in welcoming 2000 Afghan arrivals – more per capita than any other state – and now we need to ensure that these families can secure their status and become part of the fabric of the Oklahoma community. Thank you."

Your Senators' contact information:

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Storytelling for Advocacy

Have you personally sponsored, volunteered with, or been friends with an Afghan refugee family?

Share your experiences with your Senator! Personal stories help our leaders connect with what's really happening in our community. Make them understand the human impact of their decision.

Not sure of your district?

We can help you locate your district and decide who is the best federal delegate to call. Email info@ok.cair.com for help.