

## States Pave the Way for Welcome: Executive Action to Support Afghan Arrivals

Governors across the United States have eagerly expressed support for arriving Afghan refugees. Below is an at-a-glance guide for states standing up a unified response to welcome our new Afghan neighbors.

### GOALS OF UNIFIED STATE RESPONSE

To meet this critical moment, your state's response should:

- Ensure appropriate service provision across state and local agencies for newly arrived Afghans. Respond to emerging needs throughout the resettlement process.
- Support refugee resettlement agencies, state departments, community-based organizations, and immigrant communities to welcome and serve Afghan arrivals.

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Afghans arriving in your states will have a variety of immediate needs, including:

- Short-term housing and cash assistance options, including the use of hotels and rental assistance.
- Immediate support for physical and mental health resources.
- Food assistance options for individuals ineligible for other services like SNAP.
- Staffing for resettlement agencies to meet the needs of new arrivals.
- Streamlined enrollment processes and resolutions for children entering school.

### LONGER-TERM NEEDS

As Afghans in your state begin to restart their lives, they will have a variety of longer-term needs, including:

- Longer-term housing support and stability.
- Ongoing physical and mental health resources.
- Employment services, including training opportunities and investments in English language bridge programs.
- Legal services for parolees seeking asylum

## 10 ACTIONS FOR ORGANIZING A UNIFIED RAPID RESPONSE

In order to stand up a unified emergency response, your office should consider the following ten actions:

- Convene impacted organizations and state departments
- Coordinate services across inter-agency partners and community-based organizations
- Manage internal efforts among executive branch departments and agencies
- Coordinate and streamline communication with representatives from the federal government
- Assess short-term housing and cash assistance options
- Incorporate Afghan and other resettled refugees in discussions and proposals for longer-term housing support aimed at stability
- Propose support for immediate and long term physical and mental health needs
- Expand training and workforce opportunities through increased partnerships with workforce centers and other partners
- Support resettlement agencies with additional staffing needs to meet the needs of parolees
- Support legal services providers with additional resources for parolees seeking asylum

## PARTNER CHECKLIST

In order to create a response that draws on the critical resources and expertise of your state and local communities, ensure involvement from the following partners:

- Federal partners
  - Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, U.S. State Department
  - Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response, U.S. State Department
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - Department of Homeland Security
- [Leads from local refugee resettlement agencies](#)
- [State refugee coordinator](#)
- Afghan community members and organizations
- Governor and governor's team
- Office of New Americans/Immigrant Affairs
- Municipal liaisons from impacted municipalities
- Philanthropic community
- State departments

- Human services
- Labor and employment
- Local/community affairs
- Public health
- Public safety
- Emergency management/security and preparedness
- Attorney general
- Children and families
- Department of motor vehicles

The Refugee Advocacy Lab is available to answer questions and provide support building a unified response. Please email [Genevieve@refugeadvocacy.org](mailto:Genevieve@refugeadvocacy.org).