

Information for people in Afghanistan or other countries seeking visa information or other help



Information for people in Afghanistan or other countries regarding limited humanitarian visas to travel to Australia

- Afghan citizens outside Australia (including those in Afghanistan) can apply for Australia's Humanitarian Program for a permanent visa to live in Australia.
- However it is important to know that there are only 3000 visa places at this stage for Afghan refugees and less than 10% of applications are successful. Also, the processing of these applications is slow and even if successful, take a year or more.
- Further information about humanitarian visas is available on the Australian Government's website: [Refugee and humanitarian visa options](#) or by calling **+61 2 6196 0196**.
- Afghan citizens can access [Form 842 Application for an Offshore Humanitarian visa](#). There is no application fee to apply for this visa.
- If you cannot apply yourself, another person can apply on your behalf if you appoint them by completing and lodging a: [Form 956 Appointment of a registered migration agent, legal practitioner or exempt person](#). They can be a "proposer", a close family member, an Australian parliamentarian or other Australian official, a member of an international organization or an Australian registered migration agent or legal practitioner.

The Australian Government has said that applications received for these visas **will be processed in accordance with Government priorities**, giving higher priority to certain categories such as those who assisted the Australian Defence Force in Afghanistan or those who have an Australian citizen or permanent resident (need not be a family member) to "propose" them. Below are some further general guidelines about which humanitarian visa applications are considered higher or lower priority by the Australian Government.

- Those applicants who have a relative in Australia who hold Temporary Protection Visas or Safe Haven Enterprise Visas can still apply, but unfortunately their relative is not eligible to propose their application. These applicants will need to apply either with another eligible proposer (see guidelines below) or with no proposer, which will result in the application being de-prioritised
- Applications where the proposer currently holds a subclass 866 Protection visa get the lowest priority.
- If the proposer lives in a regional area of Australia, the application will get much higher priority.
- The closer the family relationship between the applicant and the proposer, the higher priority it will have. For example, applications proposed by spouses and children are given relatively high priority; applications sponsored by cousins, aunts and uncles are given much lower priority etc.
- The more serious the persecution and/or discrimination the person faces in Afghanistan, the higher priority they will have. Examples of those in higher risk categories include: Hazara people and others from ethnic minorities; other Shias or minority religious groups; people who worked for the US or other western military services; women, especially those who advocated for women's rights or held positions in the Afghanistan Government or NGOs; gender/sexuality diverse people (eg people who are gay, lesbian bisexual, transsexual, intersex or queer (GLBTIQ)); people who worked for the Afghanistan Government; journalists, writers, as some examples.
- The more dangerous the applicant's situation where they are currently living, the higher priority they will have, however even if the person applying is in a very dangerous situation, their application may still be refused, as this is just one of many prioritisation factors.
- The less support the applicant is likely to need from the Australian government if they come to Australia, the higher priority they will have.
- The more connection the applicant has with Australia and the Australian community [such as through, for example, having a lot of family in Australia or having the support of community groups in Australia], the higher priority they will have.

- Applications from people who are still in their home country are likely to be given lower priority than people who have had to leave their home country

For people in Afghanistan who have an Australian spouse, fiancé or child (who is an Australian permanent resident or citizen).

- Your relative in Australia may be able to sponsor you through either the “split family” provisions under the Humanitarian Visa Program or alternatively, the most reliable way to get a visa may be through the Family Stream. Further information about the Family Stream can be found on the Home Affairs website [here](#).
- Visas under the family stream can cost thousands of dollars to apply (eg a application fee for a partner visa is around \$8000 and for a child around \$2700 as the base fee and extra fees for extra applicants)
- The waiting time to apply can be many months and often years.
- If you are seek advice about applying for a family stream visa or if you already lodged an application a long time ago and your application has not been finalised, you/your Australian relative should get individualised advice from an immigration lawyer as these kinds of applications are complex. See [here](#) for a list of recommended private immigration lawyers.

For people in Afghanistan or other countries who already hold an Australian visa or who have already applied for an Australian visa

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is planning to track the location of Australian visa holders and visa applicants, to assist with ongoing visa processing. For those who already hold visas, DFAT may potentially be able to help coordinate assistance for travel to Australia.

DFAT will track the whereabouts of visa holders and applicants through the DFAT Smartraveller registration portal. **While this is ordinarily only used for Australian citizens or permanent residents who are overseas, other visa holders and visa applicants from Afghanistan are now also advised to register their details and keep them up to date so that DFAT knows their current location and situation at any given time.**

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/COVID-19/trying-get-home/COVID-19-registration#who>

Alternatively, call DFAT on +61 2 6261 3305.

Other help for people in Afghanistan

- People in Afghanistan can contact **Awaaz Afghanistan** which provides a toll-free, countrywide hotline number (410) which anyone with access to a mobile phone in Afghanistan can call for free to access information on and register feedback about the humanitarian response. The line is open seven days a week. Female and male agents available | Agents speak Dari, Pashto, Urdu, English, and **more**. For more information, see: <https://awaazaf.org/>
- People seeking protection and other help in Afghanistan can also seek help from the **UNHCR Afghanistan** through the ‘HELP’ website that is also now live and available here: <https://help.unhcr.org/afghanistan/>
- The UNHCR Afghanistan protection team **can be reached on their protection hotline 0790691746 and 0704996168 (open on all working days) or on email afgkaprt@unhcr.org**. Due to the high volume of queries and the impact of the security situation, responses may be delayed.