



Report to Congress on An Update to the Status of the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program

Section 7019(e) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. F, P.L. 118-47) and House Report 118-146

The Department of State (State), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other U.S. government (USG) departments and agencies involved in the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) process continued to review applications submitted under Section 602(b) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009, as amended.

I. Status of Afghan SIV Processing

Since the enactment of the Afghan Allies Protection Act in 2009 which created a special immigrant status for certain Afghans, the Department of State has issued approximately 160,000 Afghan SIVs, including both principal applicants and derivatives, through January 31, 2026. More than 50 percent of these issuances occurred since September 2021, following the suspension of operations at Embassy

Kabul. The deadline to apply for Chief of Mission (COM) approval, which is required before an alien may apply for an Afghan SIV, was December 31, 2025.

In FY 2025, State issued 18,319 Afghan SIVs (4,391 to principal applicants and 13,928 to eligible family members). The Fiscal Year 2024 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, signed into law on March 23, 2024, authorized an additional 12,000 SIVs for Afghan principal applicants, bringing the total authorized since December 19, 2014, to 50,500. As of December 31, 2025, State and DHS had used 44,530 of the 50,500 SIV numbers for Afghan principal applicants through visa issuances and adjustments of status, leaving 5,970 SIV numbers for future principal applicants.

Effective January 1, 2026, Presidential Proclamation 10998 fully suspended entry to the United States and visa issuance to nationals of Afghanistan. The Proclamation removed a prior exemption for Afghan SIVs. While COM processing, visa interviews, and visa adjudication continues for Afghan SIV applicants, no Afghan SIVs have been issued to applicants applying with Afghan passports to-date in CY 2026.

As of January 31, 2026, approximately 23,431 COM-approved principal applicants are undergoing processing at the National Visa Center (NVC). Of the 23,431 total, 9,310 have designated a post outside of Afghanistan for their interview, and the remaining 14,123 have not designated an alternate interviewing post. In addition, approximately

67,225 principal applicants are undergoing pre-COM review at NVC and 64,711 are with COM for review. NVC will not create new COM cases for SIV applications received after the December 31, 2025, application deadline.

II. Efficiency Improvements to Afghan SIV Processing

At the COM stage, State's Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Unit (ASIV) issued 44,380 COM decisions to principal applicants in FY 2025, its second-highest case completion total on record. Continued refinements to ASIV's case management system improved data quality, automated manual processes, and strengthened the Department's ability to identify and deter fraud in the overall Afghan SIV process in FY 2025. For example, the expanded use of advanced analytics increased output by 36 percent at the most time-intensive COM-processing step while reducing the amount of time staff spend on administrative tasks. As a result, ASIV was able to dedicate additional resources to fraud detection and prevention while continuing to process a near-record number of COM applications.

At the visa processing stage, national security is the top priority in State's Bureau of Consular Affairs' adjudication of SIV applications. Consular officers maintained extra vigilance in comprehensively reviewing and screening every SIV applicant for potential security- and non-security-related ineligibilities, including to assess whether the applicant poses a threat to U.S. national security. To further these

efforts, CA enhanced lines of communication with critical vetting partners and refined instructions to officers referring cases for security-related concerns. The Department of State and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) completed the full transition from a paper-based to electronic process to facilitate issuance of lawful permanent resident cards to SIV recipients upon arrival in the United States.

III. Update on conditions described in Sec. 7076(b) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2019

In response to Section 7076(b)(1) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 (Public Law 116-6), enacted on February 15, 2019, the Department of State developed tiers of prioritization for applicants seeking Afghan SIVs. This prioritization plan was implemented in January 2020 at the COM review stage.

The Department met the reporting requirements described in Section 7076(b) by submitting the following reports to the appropriate Congressional Committees:

- The Implementation of Processing Improvements for Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Applications,
- Threat Determination Procedures and Processes for Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Applications, and

- Procedures for Background and Security Checks in the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program.