

Leaving the Safe Haven On Your Own

In the United States, we respect your ability to make decisions about yourself. We also encourage being together with your family or friends and creating a community. If you have family or friends who can help you get settled, you may feel like you want to leave the safe haven (the base) soon.

It is very important that you stay on base until you finish with all your medical and immigration processing. Once this is finished, you have the option to leave the base and go directly to the community where you have friends or family to help you without waiting to be placed in a suitable location by a resettlement agency. After completing the independent departure procedures on base, you may leave the base if you decide this is the best decision for you and your family. **It's important that you have support from close family or friends to help you locate housing and get connected to services in the United States.**

Talk to the Departures Team on Base About Your Decision to Independently Leave.

- **Make sure we know where you're going**
If you decide to leave independently, give the departures team your new address so we can send your Employment Authorization and Social Security cards to you. Both are very important so you can settle and work in your new home.
- **You will need to arrange and pay for your own transportation for leaving the base and traveling to the location where you will resettle with family or friends.**

You may still ask for help from a local resettlement agency if you leave independently but it may take longer to receive services, particularly in locations such as Sacramento and Northern Virginia where the agencies are assisting large numbers of Afghans already placed in these locations. The services provided through the Afghan Placement and Assistance (APA) Program may also be more limited.

- [You may need to find your own housing and services](#)
You may be responsible for getting your needs taken care of. If you need housing, food, and clothes, you may have to provide them yourself, or get help from friends and family.
- [You may still be able to get APA assistance](#)
If you leave the safe haven on your own, you can still get help from a resettlement agency later — but it might be delayed. You can request help to:
 - Sign up your children for school
 - Find medical care
 - Teach you about the customs, culture, and laws in the U.S.
 - Get English language training
 - Find job training
 - Get legal aid for your remaining immigration steps
 - Apply for other benefits and services that you may be eligible for

When you arrive at your new town, find your local resettlement agency and meet with a case worker there. You may have to wait to get an appointment. They may not be able to serve you right away.

They can tell you about additional benefits or programs you may be able to get in addition to the APA Program.

Find the nearest resettlement office

Go to <https://www.wrapsnet.org/afghans-granted-humanitarian-parole/> to find APA resettlement agencies in each state. You can go to an agency to request assistance although you may have to wait.

Note: In Sacramento and Northern Virginia, you may not get the same level of service as you might in other areas, because so many people want to resettle there, and there is an extreme housing shortage.

For more information and to stay connected, please visit the Afghan SettleInUS Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SettleInUS>.

