



# What You Need to Know About the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Petition Change

Starting July 20, 2022, the Department of State and USCIS have combined two steps in the Afghan SIV application process: (1) the Chief of Mission approval, and (2) the SIV petition.

## **The old process, until July 20, 2022**

Until July 20, 2022, Afghan SIV applicants had to apply for Chief of Mission (COM) approval with the U.S. Department of State using the DS-157 form. Then after receiving COM approval, applicants had to file an I-360 petition for special immigrants with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as a separate step.

## **The new process, starting July 20, 2022**

Beginning July 20, 2022, new Afghan SIV applicants need to submit only a DS-157 form along with their COM approval application. The Department of State will process this form **both** for COM approval **and** as a special immigrant petition. New Afghan SIV applicants will no longer need to file an I-360 petition.

## **If you have not yet applied for an Afghan SIV**

**For new applications for Afghan SIVs, use the new DS-157.** Get the new form at [travel.state.gov/afghan](https://travel.state.gov/afghan). Fill it out, sign it, and attach the rest of the documents needed for COM approval. Email the signed form and your supporting documentation to the National Visa Center (NVC) at [AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov](mailto:AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov). If your application is approved, the NVC will send you an approval letter and instructions on how to continue the SIV application process.

## **If you have previously contacted the National Visa Center, but your application is not documentarily complete**

The National Visa Center (NVC) needs a signed DS-157 from you to consider your application documentarily complete and ready for Chief of Mission review.

**If you have already sent a signed DS-157 to the NVC, you don't need to do anything.** Your existing DS-157 will be used as your petition. If your application is approved, the NVC will send you an approval letter and instructions on how to continue the SIV application process.

**If you have not already sent the NVC a DS-157 with your signature,** then get the new form at [travel.state.gov/afghan](https://travel.state.gov/afghan). Fill it out, sign it, and attach the rest of the documents needed for COM approval. Email the signed form and your supporting documentation to the NVC at [AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov](mailto:AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov). If your application is approved, the NVC will send you an approval letter and instructions on how to continue the SIV application process.

## **If you received Chief of Mission approval before July 20, 2022**

**If you are outside the United States and:**

<b>You have submitted</b> an I-360 to USCIS	<b>You have not yet submitted</b> an I-360 to USCIS
<p>You do not have to do anything else.</p> <p>USCIS will continue to process your petition. After USCIS has approved your petition and sent it to the NVC, the NVC will send you instructions on how to continue your SIV application process.</p>	<p>If you received COM approval before July 20, 2022, you can choose to participate in the new process.</p> <p>Do that by emailing <a href="mailto:NVCSIV@state.gov">NVCSIV@state.gov</a> with your name, NVCSIV case number, COM approval letter, and (if possible) a copy of the DS-157 you previously submitted with your COM approval application. NVC will then send you instructions on how to continue your SIV application process.</p>

**If you are IN the United States and:**

<b>You have submitted</b> an I-360 to USCIS	<b>You have not yet submitted</b> an I-360 to USCIS
<p>You do not have to do anything else.</p> <p>USCIS will continue to process your petition. After USCIS has approved your petition and sent it to the NVC, the NVC will send you instructions on how to continue your SIV application process.</p>	<p>You must file an I-360 with USCIS.</p> <p>After USCIS has approved your petition and sent it to the NVC, the NVC will send you instructions on how to continue your SIV application process.</p>

**If you receive Chief of Mission approval dated July 20, 2022 or later**

The NVC will send you an approval letter and instructions on how to continue the SIV application process.