

HOW TO APPLY FOR CHIEF OF MISSION APPROVAL

Special Immigrant Visa Program for Afghan Nationals Embassy of the United States of America – Kabul, Afghanistan

GENERAL GUIDELINES

To apply for Chief of Mission (COM) approval for the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program, you must have access to email, the ability to scan and save all of the required documents from the list as PDF files, and be able to submit these documents via email.

After you have gathered all of the required documents listed below, attach them to an email and send it to AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov. The email must contain the principal applicant's name as it is written in the passport or tazkera, plus the applicant's date of birth using the following format: DAY-MONTH-YEAR.

We will send all communication and instructions related to this application to you via email. We recommend that you use the same email address to correspond with us throughout the process.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Applicants must submit the below seven (7) items in their document package. *Please do not submit anything other than what is listed below unless we ask you to do so.* Specifically, do **not** submit photographs, certificates of appreciation, training certificates, resumes, or academic transcripts. These documents have no bearing on your COM approval application and will not be considered.

Failure to submit all of the required documentation exactly as requested below may significantly delay review of your application for COM approval. While this list specifies the documents required of all applicants, we may request additional information and documentation should questions arise during processing.

1. Verification of Employment in Afghanistan

A) If you were employed by or on behalf of the U.S. government:

You must submit a letter from your employer's Human Resources (HR) department confirming that you were employed by, or on behalf of, the U.S. government in Afghanistan between October 7, 2001, and December 31, 2023, for at least one year.

The letter must contain all of the information below:

- Your full name
- Your date of birth
- Information on the U.S. government contract or subcontract held by your employer, if applicable. This should include project name, contract number, the period of performance of the contract, and the name of the prime contractor. If available, a copy of the contract between your employer and the U.S. government or a copy of the subcontract between your employer and the company that maintains a contract with the U.S. government should be provided.

- Your job title
- You job location
- The date you started working for the employer (DD-MM-YYYY)
- The date you stopped working for the employer (DD-MM-YYYY)
- The reason for separation (if you are no longer employed)
- The name of the author completing the letter, his or her signature, and his or her contact information including corporate email (or alternate email if he no longer works with the organization) and current phone number.
- A thorough description of your work duties and the location where you performed those duties. If applicable, this should include and explanation of how your position required you to:
 - Serve as an interpreter or translator for personnel of the Department of State or the United States Agency for International Development in Afghanistan, particularly if it included duties that required traveling away from the embassy with such personnel;
 - Serve as an interpreter or translator for U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan, particularly if this work required traveling off-base.

Note: If the U.S. government directly employed you, you may submit a copy of your employment contract for consideration.

B) If you were employed by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), or a successor mission:

You must submit a letter from your employer confirming that you were employed by ISAF, or a successor mission, between October 7, 2001, and December 31, 2023, for at least one year. If you were directly hired by ISAF, or a successor mission, this letter must be from ISAF Headquarters HR, or the successor mission HR, regardless of where you were stationed in Afghanistan. If you were hired by an ISAF member nation, or a successor mission member nation, this letter must come from the department or agency that hired you. **Note:** *Private contractors and subcontractors with ISAF or a successor mission or member nations other than the United States do NOT qualify.*

The letter must contain all of the information below:

- Your full name
- Your date of birth
- An English language copy (or English translation) of the contract between you and your employer. If you were hired on a personal services agreement (PSA) or a personal services contract (PSC), you must submit an English language copy of the agreement or contract
- Your job title
- Your job location
- The date you started working for ISAF, or a successor mission (DD-MM-YYYY)
- The date you stopped working for ISAF, or a successor mission (DD-MM-YYYY)

- The reason for separation if you are no longer employed
- The name of the HR representative completing the HR letter, his or her signature, and his or her contact information including corporate email (or alternate email if no longer with the organization) and current phone number
- A description of your work duties. If applicable, this should include how your position required you to:
 - Serve as an interpreter or translator for U.S. military personnel while traveling off- base with U.S. military personnel stationed at ISAF or a successor mission, or
 - Perform activities for U.S. military personnel stationed at ISAF, or a successor mission

2. Letter of Recommendation

A) If you were employed by or on behalf of the U.S. government:

You must submit a letter from a direct, senior supervisor who knew you personally. If your supervisor has left Afghanistan or is no longer employed by the employer, the author may also be the person currently occupying that position or a more senior person. In all cases, the author must be connected with the qualifying employment. The supervisory period should overlap with the period of employment noted in your employment letter. The letter should be dated and signed by your supervisor. It must contain all of the information below:

- Your full name
- Your date of birth
- Your badge number (if available)
- Your job title
- Your job location
- Confirmation that the recommender was/is your supervisor, or is a more senior person
- The date the author of the letter began supervising you (DD-MM-YYYY)
- The date the author of the letter stopped supervising you (DD-MM-YYYY)
- The supervisor's name, title, corporate or U.S. government/military email address and personal email address and current phone number
- Justification for recommending you for COM approval, i.e., that you provided faithful and valuable service to the U.S. government
- The supervisor's explanation of any ongoing serious threat you have experienced or are experiencing as a consequence of your employment by or on behalf of the U.S. government
- The supervisor's opinion on whether you pose a threat to the national security or safety of the United States
- The supervisor's description of your work duties. This statement should be personalized to the specific duties you performed, including a description of where you performed those duties. If applicable, your supervisor should also address how your position required you to:
 - Serve as an interpreter or translator for personnel of the Department of State or the United States Agency for International Development in Afghanistan, particularly if those duties required traveling away from the embassy with such personnel;
 - Serve as an interpreter or translator for U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan, particularly if those duties required traveling off-base.

You should try to obtain the above recommendation from a U.S. citizen supervisor who knows you personally, but if that is not possible, you should try to provide a letter of recommendation signed by your non-U.S. citizen supervisor and co-signed by the U.S. citizen who is responsible for the contract. The U.S. citizen who co-signs should indicate that, based on his or her relationship with your contract or sub-contract supervisor, he or she is confident that the information provided is correct. The U.S. citizen co-signer must also certify that, to the best of his or her knowledge, you present no threat to the national security or safety of the United States. The recommendation must contain the U.S. citizen co-signer's work and personal email address and phone number so he or she may be contacted if additional information is needed.

B) If you were employed by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), or a successor mission:

You must submit a letter from your immediate supervisor, the person currently occupying that position, or a more senior person. Preferably, the letter should come from a member of the U.S. military who personally supervised you. The letter should be dated and signed. It must contain all of the information below:

- Your full name.
- Your date of birth.
- Your badge number (if available).
- Your job title.
- Your job location.
- The date the author of the letter began supervising you (DD-MM-YYYY).
- The date the author of the letter stopped supervising you (DD-MM-YYYY).
- The recommender's name, title, rank, U.S. government/military email address (if applicable), personal email address and phone number.
- Justification for recommending you for COM approval, i.e., that you provided faithful and valuable service to the U.S. government.
- The supervisor's explanation of any ongoing serious threat you have experienced or are experiencing as a consequence of your employment by ISAF or a successor mission.
- The supervisor's opinion on whether you pose a threat to the national security or safety of the United States.
- The supervisor's description of your work duties, including, if applicable, how your position required you to:
 - Serve as an interpreter or translator for U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan while traveling off-base; or
 - Perform activities for U.S. military personnel stationed at ISAF, or a successor mission

3. Form DS-157, Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application

The form is available online at <https://eforms.state.gov/Forms/ds157.pdf>. You must complete the entire form and leave no fields blank. It is important that you follow the instructions at the bottom of this page when completing the DS-157.

4. Evidence of Afghan Nationality

You must submit a scanned photocopy of your tazkera with an English translation. Alternatively, the biographic data page of your Afghan passport is acceptable evidence of Afghan nationality, or a photocopy of your National Identity Card front and back.

5. Statement of Threats Received as a Consequence of Your Employment

You must write, sign, and date a brief statement describing the threat(s) you face or have faced as a result of your employment by or on behalf of the U.S. government in Afghanistan or by ISAF or a successor mission. Although statements provided by other parties may be included, you must provide your own statement. Please provide as many details as possible. **You must sign and date this statement for it to be acceptable.**

Section 1219 of Public Law 113-66 provides that a credible sworn statement depicting dangerous country conditions, together with official evidence of such country conditions from the U.S. government, should be considered as a factor in a determination of whether an applicant has experienced or is experiencing an ongoing serious threat as a consequence of employment by the U.S. government.

6. Employee Badge(s)

If available, submit a scanned copy of any identification badges you have held during any periods of employment by or on behalf of the U.S. government, or by ISAF or a successor mission.

7. Biographic Data

Provide the following biographic data for the principal applicant:

- First name
- Last name
- All other names/aliases
- Mother's name
- Nationality
- Passport number
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Gender
- Marital status
- Email address and phone number
- Work location (base or city and province)
- Residence location (base or city and province)

NEXT STEPS AND QUESTIONS

Once you have submitted your complete COM approval application packet via email to AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov, please allow NVC to review your submission. We will let you know if anything is missing or incomplete.

If you have further questions about the Afghan SIV program, please first review the information online at

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/special-immg-visa-afghans-employed-us-gov.html>. If you cannot find the answer to your question, please email AfghanSIVApplication@state.gov.

TIPS TO PREVENT DELAYS IN PROCESSING YOUR APPLICATION

Ensure that the scanned copies of documents you provide are clear. Print your documents in black ink on white paper before scanning them. **Make certain all uploaded documents are in PDF format.**

Use the same spelling of your name on all documents and email correspondence. The spelling should match how your name is written in your passport or tazkera. You should list aliases after your correct name.

Letters of recommendation are very important in the SIV application process. Please ask your supervisor to be as detailed and complete as possible in describing your work and to write a letter that is specific to your accomplishments and responsibilities. Make certain that the supervisor(s) contact information is active and current.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING FORM DS-157

Form DS-157 is the Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application. The form is available online at <https://eforms.state.gov/Forms/ds157.pdf>. Please read and follow the below instructions carefully when completing Form DS-157.

If the form does not provide sufficient space for your response, you may use additional sheets of paper. **Do not leave any boxes blank.** All questions must contain an appropriate response or your application will be delayed.

Below are instructions for each numbered question:

1. Enter your family name or surname as it appears in your passport or tazkera. Do not enter names that appear after d/o or s/o. If you have only one name, please enter that name here.
2. Enter your first name as it appears in your tazkera or passport (if any). If there is only one name, enter "FNU" (First Name Unknown) here and use the single name as a last name.
3. Write your full name in Dari exactly as it appears in your tazkera or passport.
4. Enter your clan or tribal name. If you do not have a clan or tribal name, write "None."
5. Enter any names/aliases you have used.
6. Enter your date of birth as it appears in your tazkera or passport.
7. Enter your place of birth as it appears in your tazkera or passport.
8. Enter your passport number (if any).
9. Enter all tazkera numbers you have ever used. If applicable, enter your National Identity Card also in the Tazkera field.
10. Check the appropriate box.
11. Enter your spouse's full name. If you are unmarried, write "N/A."
12. Enter your father's full name as it appears in his tazkera or passport.
13. Enter your mother's full name as it appears in her tazkera or passport.
14. Enter your email address and phone number.
15. List the full names and dates of birth of all your children under the age of 21 as it appears in their tazkera. If you do not have children, under the age of 21 write "N/A."
16. List all the countries you have visited during the past 10 years and the year of the visit (for example, China 2004, Italy 2007). If you have never traveled outside of Afghanistan, write "None."
17. List all the countries which have issued you a passport, including your current one (even if expired). If you have never been issued a passport and do not hold a current passport, write

“None.”

18. Check the appropriate box to note whether you have ever lost a passport or had one stolen.
19. List the requested information for your last five employers, including your current employer. If you have had only one employer or no employer before your current job, you should explain that in the box. List your previous employers regardless of whether they have a connection to the United States. Please explain your job if you were self-employed. Please state specifically your employer's name, the job location, job title, supervisor name, supervisor email address, dates of employment, and the reason for separation. If you do not have your previous supervisor's email address, enter 'N/A.'
20. Check the appropriate box to note whether you have ever applied for Chief of Mission approval. If so, enter the case number(s) associated with your previous application(s). If you have never applied before, write 'N/A.'
21. Sign and date the form.