



Family Reunification of Unaccompanied Afghan Minors and Other Separated Afghan Children

This information was prepared by Kids In Need of Defense on behalf of the Unaccompanied Afghan Minor Working Group, which is part of the [Evacuate Our Allies Coalition](#), a group of trusted human rights, religious, and refugee organizations working alongside veterans and frontline civilians to relocate, welcome, and support the resettlement of as many at-risk Afghans as possible.

Who Are Unaccompanied Afghan Minors?

Unaccompanied Afghan Minors (UAM) are Afghan nationals, under the age of 18 on arrival, who were paroled into the United States as part of the Operation Allies Welcome relocation efforts organized by the U.S. during the Taliban takeover of the Afghan government. More than 1500 children were paroled into the United States as UAMs. Other children who were not classified as UAMs were also separated from their parents or guardians but were paroled into the United States in the company of relatives or other trusted adults.

Afghan children who were not part of the official relocation effort, such as children who arrived through private means or were paroled into the U.S. at the southwest border are not eligible to use the CARE relocation process.

What is the Process for Requesting Family Reunification Assistance for UAMs or Other Separated Afghan Children?

Soon after the initial relocation, the Office of the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE) acknowledged the importance of continuing relocation from Afghanistan and included among its priorities the reunification of separated children with their families. In the early days, the Office of Refugee Resettlement compiled lists of eligible UAMs and shared those lists with the CARE team; advocates also contacted CARE directly to notify the staff about additional children eligible to request relocation for their immediate families. This process continued until September 2023, when the Department of State updated its reunification request form, the DS 4317, by including a separate drop-down application for unaccompanied minors. New requests for reunification should be submitted through the portal. For more information, go to <https://www.state.gov/afghanistan-family-reunification/>

Which process do I use?

If your client was in ORR custody, however briefly, there is a good chance that they are already in the CARE relocation database. To check the status of a case you believe may be pending, you can contact

caretraveldata@state.gov. If you are told that the child has a case on file, you do not need to file a new request.

If the child was never in ORR custody, CARE is far less likely to have the necessary information to begin the relocation process (unless an advocate or sponsor contacted CARE directly to provide that information). If there is no record of registration with CARE, or if you are certain no request was ever submitted, you should use the form DS-4317.

CARE, ORR and USCIS have been working together to identify children who arrived with other family members or caregivers but were actually separated from their parents or guardians. Although ORR is reaching out to these children to inform them of the relocation process, you do not need to wait to be contacted to register for relocation assistance.

If it is not clear whether the child you are assisting is already in the database, you can review their documents and talk to the child and their sponsors, family, or caregivers to determine what process is appropriate. Unless you can determine that they already have a request on file, submitting the form DS-4317 is the first step towards reunification and should be done as soon as possible after confirming no other active case.

Who May Be Considered for Reunification?

Under the form DS-4317, a UAM or other separated Afghan child (under the age of 18 at time of parole under OAW) may request relocation assistance for a parent or legal guardian, and the spouse and children under 21. For siblings to be considered for relocation they must have been under the age of 21 as of August 14, 2021.

All individuals traveling with U.S. government assistance must have a valid passport by the time they travel. Although you should begin the process to request relocation before family members have their passports, the CARE team cannot complete necessary background checks or put families on a flight manifest without evidence of a passport for each person traveling. The passport must be valid for at least six months at the time of travel to meet the requirements of most departure locations. Given the time necessary to process requests, family members should consider applying for extensions if the passport will expire in a year or less. At this time, families must travel as a unit—CARE will only facilitate one flight per family. The State Department website recommends contacting caretraveldata@state.gov if family members are eligible for travel but do not have a valid passport.

Submitting a request does not guarantee relocation assistance or admission to the U.S. Once a request for reunification is submitted and all necessary documents have been provided and verified, family members will be contacted for additional information and will undergo background screening and other security checks. It is possible that some family members may not be approved for relocation. If a family is approved for relocation, however, they will travel to a third country for processing—most families who are relocated go through the refugee screening process and, if approved, enter the U.S. as refugees. The entire process can be very long and may be delayed by factors outside the control of the family or of the U.S. government (for instance, Qatar, the site of the U.S.'s main relocation processing center at the time, would not accept relocations flights for several months while it was hosting the 2022 World Cup).

How Do I Make a New Request on the Form DS-4317?

Go to the Department of State's website at <https://seirmprod.servicenowservices.com/reunification> which takes you to the Form DS-4317. Before completing the form, click the box for unaccompanied minors to read more information about eligibility and the process. To file the DS-4317, you will need:

Information About the UAM or Separated Child

- Employment Authorization Document (EAD).
- If no EAD, the USCIS# (A-Number) and other documents, such as the Form I-94. For more information on locating a Form I-94, see the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) [Form I-94 webpage](#) for parolees.
- Name and contact information for person assisting the minor in completing the form, if applicable.

Information About Family members (provide all information you have immediately available—you can continue to supplement)

- Name of parent(s), legal guardian(s) and/or eligible sibling(s) and contact information for the family members.
- Marriage Certificate - for parent(s)
- Birth Certificate - for minor eligible sibling(s)
- Tazkera - for each family member
- Passport (if available) - for each family member
- Legal custody order (if applicable)"

NOTE:

"Available" does not mean that you must submit every document with this form and you should not wait until all documents are in hand to submit the form. This form is a registration of request for relocation. CARE will reach out for specifics but be prepared and gather as much documentation as possible as soon as possible.

How Do I Add Information to My Request?

To follow up on pending cases, including notifying CARE that family members have obtained passports or change in location: caretraveldata@state.gov.

How Do I check the status of a request filed on DS-4317?

Go to <https://www.state.gov/afghanistan-family-reunification/>

Click the DS-4317 Application Status Inquiry button located on the first screen.