

Afghan Refugee Resettlement



Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the Afghan refugees?

Individuals and families who have been evacuated from Afghanistan, many because of their service to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. Many of these allies and their families aided American diplomatic, military, or civic agencies as interpreters, translators, professionals or other support personnel. Many were at risk of persecution by the Taliban. They have received full security and background checks, and completed immigration processing and health screening.

What is the current need?

Over 100,000 Afghans were evacuated, approximately 44% were children. The nine traditional U.S. resettlement agencies have limited capacity, having resettled just over 11,000 refugees last year. Thousands of Afghan allies remain on the military bases, thousands more are living in temporary housing in communities across the U.S., and more arrivals are anticipated.

Who is requesting Lions' help?

Welcome.US was formed in response to the White House call for private sector support to help expedite the resettlement of refugees. Welcome.US identifies themselves as a non-partisan, non-profit, single point of entry for Americans who want to get involved in helping Afghan refugees in the U.S. Former U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, as well as former first ladies Hillary Clinton, Laura Bush and Michelle Obama, joined Welcome.US as honorary co-chairs.

What is being asked of LCI?

LCI has been asked to support the resettlement initiative as an Institutional Partner. LCI signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Church World Service (CWS). CWS will provide training to LCI, identify refugees for placement and provide funding in the amount of \$2,275 per refugee. LCI will recruit and train Lions clubs, maintain case files, oversee reporting, and provide integration support to clubs.

What is the role of Lions clubs?

Lions clubs that opt in to participate in this program will provide core integration services to an Afghan refugee or family for a minimum of 90 days. Those services include, but are not limited to, reception at the airport, safe and affordable housing for 6-12 months, household items and furnishings, food and clothing, school enrollment for children, assistance accessing health services and enrolling in public benefits, assistance finding employment and financial assistance with basic living expenses during the sponsorship period. It is likely that club support for the families will extend beyond the 90-day period.

How will clubs pay for the services they provide to refugees?

Each club will receive \$2,275 in government funding for each individual refugee they receive into their community. This funding is intended to cover the immediate needs of the refugee while

they go through the process of securing employment and access to longer-term benefits. Additionally, each club is recommended, but not required, to raise \$2,000 or 3 months of rent to support the long-term stability of housing for the refugee. If necessary, clubs can apply for additional funds via LCI grants.

What type of training is available to LCI and LCIF staff?

Church World Service (CWS) has been named the center of excellence for Institutional and Community Partners participating in this initiative. CWS worked directly with LCI staff to provide training on how to develop and implement this program with Lions clubs. CWS is also available for ongoing support and troubleshooting.

What type of training is available to clubs who want to participate?

CWS will provide training sessions through an online virtual platform, which clubs complete in advance and at their own pace. There are 9 lessons, including topics such as “Cultural Orientation Overview” and “Organizing for Welcome.” CWS also has a Community Partner Manual, multiple targeted resources and hosts a weekly webinar series on relevant topics.

What are the potential benefits of participating?

This is an opportunity for Lions to participate in a national effort of historic proportions. The need is great, and immediate, and the call to action is coming from the highest levels. Sponsoring a refugee family will change the trajectory of their lives forever. Welcoming a new neighbor into a community can be an incredibly rewarding experience. Successful implementation of this program could revitalize Lions clubs across the United States, raising the profile of Lions in their communities and around the world.