



Special program for Afghans
23 August 2021
Summary of CCR recommendations

In response to the crisis in Afghanistan and the government's **August 13 announcement** of an expanded resettlement program for Afghans, the CCR has been making the following recommendations to the government.

1. Family members of Protected Persons (accepted refugees) in Canada

- CCR is asking that the government issue Temporary Residence Permits to family members of accepted refugees and include them among the priorities for evacuation out of Kabul.

2. Afghan resettlement should be additional to existing spaces

- The commitment to 20,000 places is good, but the numbers should be additional to places already committed in the immigration levels. The government should not count applications of Afghans who were already in process.
- This commitment should not result in delays for applicants of other nationalities.

3. Facilitating private sponsorship

- The requirement for a Refugee Status Determination document (for Group of Five and Community Sponsors) should be waived (since most Afghan refugees will likely be unable to obtain it).
- Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH) need additional allocation spaces to allow them to sponsor Afghans.
- The government should alleviate the burdens of the pending Program Integrity Framework (PIF) which will compromise SAH capacity. Many SAHs may hesitate to take on new commitments due to concerns about what PIF will mean.
- The door needs to be opened to private sponsorship in Quebec (currently no new private sponsorship applications can be submitted in Quebec).

4. Family reunification

- We welcome the inclusion of **family reunification immigration channels** in the special measures. However, there need to be concrete commitments to expedite processing and to remove barriers,

especially for people who are in a precarious situation or in a location where regular immigration processing demands cannot be met.

5. Openness of definitions

- Definitions (notably of family) should be applied flexibly, taking into account the fact that many Afghan families have been separated, combined and recombined through several decades of war.

6. Processing flexibility

- Processing must be expedited, and requirements minimized, taking into account that documents may be unavailable, or have been destroyed.
- The government should use Temporary Residence Permits and do the processing in Canada as much as possible.
- Flexibility is particularly needed in some third countries in which Afghans may be taking temporary refuge, and where regular immigration processing may be impossible.

7. Recommendations from people in Canada

- It is important to have a way that people in Canada (especially people of Afghan descent) can name people in need of urgent protection for consideration in the program.

8. Evacuation out of Afghanistan

- We urge government to continue to look for ways to facilitate evacuation out of Afghanistan, if at all possible, for the priority groups targeted by the program.

9. Communications

- IRCC needs to communicate clearly and frequently on the program.
- NGOs play a key role in getting information out and responding to questions, so it is important to keep good information flow. Regular meetings would be helpful.
- Individual applicants also need effective communication. There needs to be someone people can talk to when requirements can't be met or cause hardship.

10. Immigration and Refugee Board processing

- The Immigration and Refugee Board should expedite processing of Afghan nationals. (Note [IRB announcement](#))