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January 31, 2022

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No.: 22-04
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

SUBJECT: Refugee Medical Assistance and Medi-Cal Eligibility for New Afghan Arrivals (Reference: Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter No.: I [21-15](#); All County Welfare Directors Letter [19-13](#))

The purpose of this Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter (MEDIL) is to provide updated information regarding the Medi-Cal eligibility requirements for Afghan evacuees arriving in the United States (U.S.).

Background

As a result of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, there is a significant influx of Afghan arrivals who will need Medi-Cal coverage. Previous guidance issued in Medi-Cal MEDIL I 21-15 informed counties that these individuals and future arrivals will have a variety of different immigration statuses. Additionally, MEDIL I 21-15 provided that some individuals will enter as humanitarian parolees who could claim PRUCOL as the basis of full scope Medi-Cal eligibility.

Since the release of MEDIL I 21-15, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provided additional guidance on the eligibility of Afghan arrivals. The latest CMS guidance issued November 1, 2021, provides that New Afghan Arrivals paroled into the U.S. on or after July 31, 2021 are eligible for full scope Medi-Cal and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) to the same extent as refugees. The latest CMS guidance addresses the changes to federal law with the enactment of Section 2502 of the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act, (H.R. 5305, P.L. 117-43).

RMA and Medi-Cal Eligibility

The CMS guidance and the new federal law provide that:

- Otherwise eligible Afghan citizens and nationals (and some other Afghan residents) paroled into the U.S. between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022, are eligible for full scope Medi-Cal or RMA to the same extent as refugees.
- Otherwise eligible spouses and children of Afghan citizens, nationals and residents paroled into the U.S. between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022, are eligible for full scope Medi-Cal to the same extent as refugees if the spouses or children are paroled in to the U.S. after September 30, 2022.
- If an Afghan citizen, national or resident is paroled into the U.S. between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022, as an unaccompanied child, their parents or legal guardian are also eligible for full scope Medi-Cal to the same extent as refugees (if otherwise eligible) if the parents or legal guardian are paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2022.
- Otherwise eligible individuals paroled into the U.S. as described above are eligible for full scope Medi-Cal to the same extent as refugees until March 31, 2023 or until the end of their parole, whichever is longer. Counties must evaluate these cases for ongoing eligibility before terminating eligibility when the term of parole ends.

Immigration Documentation for Afghan Arrivals Classified as Humanitarian Parolees

Afghan evacuees arriving in the U.S. as humanitarian parolees will typically have one of the following immigration documents:

- Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp indicating “PAROLED” and noting:
 - Operation Allies Refuge (or “OAR”) or
 - Operation Allies Welcome (or “OAW”) or
 - DT
- Form I-94 indicating “PAROLED” and noting OAR, OAW, or DT.

Note: The passport or I-94 will include a parole stamp with date of admission, and the date parole ends.

Code of Admission Codes for Afghan Humanitarian Parolees

Counties will generally receive Code of Admission (COA) codes as part of the SAVE response when status is verified by the SAVE system. New Afghan arrival applicants and beneficiaries will typically have one of the following COA codes:

- OAR (Operation Allies Refuge) or
- OAW (Operation Allies Welcome) or
- DT

A COA code of OAR/OAW sent in the SAVE response indicating Humanitarian Parolee status is sufficient for verification of immigration status for paroled Afghan evacuee applicants and beneficiaries.

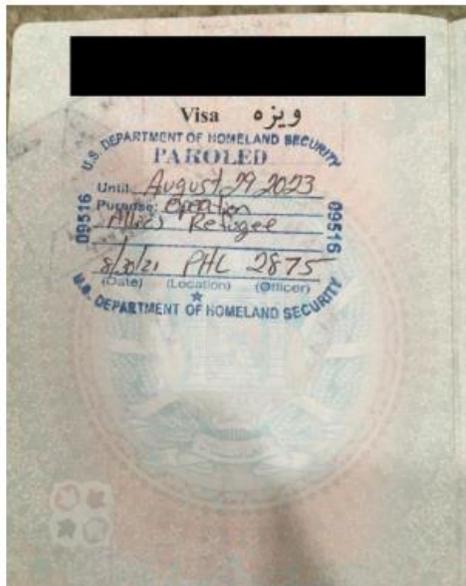
Humanitarian Parolee Document Examples

Below are a few examples of documents Afghan humanitarian Parolees may provide:

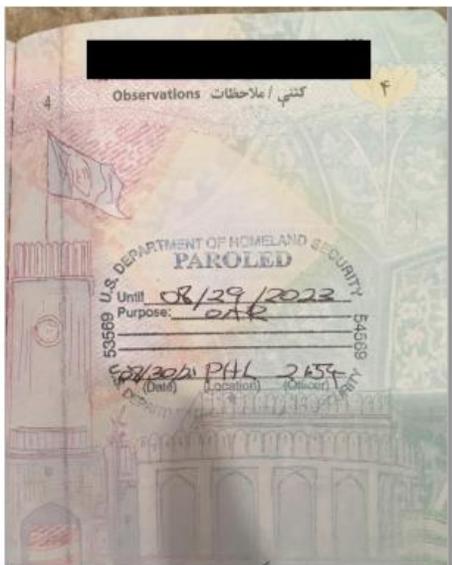
Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



Example 4

Save Verification

Regardless of the documentation presented to the eligibility worker, CWDs are required to comply with all program verification requirements, including submitting cases via SAVE. In cases involving unusual situations requiring additional verification, the CWDs may submit inquiries for these cases to SAVE.Help@uscis.dhs.gov. But counties must grant full scope Medi-Cal coverage to otherwise eligible immigrants during the SAVE verification process.

Social Security Number Requirement for New Afghan Arrivals

As a reminder, full scope Medi-Cal or RMA must be approved for Afghan new arrivals, and others, prior to providing their Social Security Number (SSN) if they are otherwise eligible. Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 50168, allows for an applicant to be approved for Medi-Cal, if all other requirements are met, even if the SSN has not been provided. Individuals are given 60-days from the date of application to provide their SSN or proof that they have applied for their SSN. They may have eligibility approved prior to the 60-day deadline even if they have not provided the SSN or proof of application yet, as long as they meet all other requirements.

Counties should assist the applicants or beneficiaries as necessary to comply with a request to gather information in the application process, including beneficiaries that still need to meet the SSN requirement. If a beneficiary informs the county that an

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application has been made to comply with the requirement, and the delay is a result of the entity making the decision, the beneficiary shall not be discontinued pending the outcome of the decision. Counties may determine their own best practices for following up with the individual after a reasonable amount of time to determine if the individual has received the approval or denial or is not responding to the county (See ACWDL 19-13).

All other RMA and Medi-Cal program eligibility requirements remain unchanged and in effect. In the coming months, if you encounter eligibility documentation for Afghan parolees or SIVs that require clarification, please contact the Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Immigration Unit staff.

If you have any questions about this letter, or if we can provide further information, please contact Buck Harris by phone at (916) 345-8162 or by email at Buck.Harris@dhcs.ca.gov.

Original Signed By

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Medi-Cal Eligibility Division