



The Sponsor Circle Program for Afghans

Over 74,000 Afghans have been evacuated to the United States since August 2021. Many of these individuals are currently at U.S. military bases as they wait to be resettled into welcoming communities across the country.

The Sponsor Circle Program is a new community-led resettlement initiative that enables everyday Americans to take on the responsibility of welcoming Afghan newcomers to their communities. The program was launched in October 2021 as an emergency response to support the resettlement of Afghans into local communities at a time when many resettlement agencies may be overstretched and unable to provide immediate assistance. Through this program, groups of individuals can apply to form certified Sponsor Circles and be matched with Afghan newcomers. The program is managed by the Community Sponsorship Hub, a non-profit initiative, in collaboration with the State Department and a coalition of partner organizations.

The Commitment

By serving as a certified Sponsor Circle, your group commits to welcoming a family of Afghan newcomers and providing support for a minimum of **90 days**. You may commit to supporting a family whom you already know, or a family with whom you will be matched.

As part of your commitment, you will fundraise at least **\$2,275** for each family member you welcome. Your commitment will also include providing essential assistance (such as helping to secure initial housing and providing for basic necessities like furniture and clothing), ensuring Afghan newcomers connect to relevant services (including health care, education, legal assistance, public benefits), and supporting integration (by helping newcomers access resources to learn English and secure employment). This is a significant commitment but know that you will play a critical role in helping Afghan newcomers build new lives in your community.

The Support You Will Receive

As a certified Sponsor Circle, you won't be alone. Once you have been matched with a family of Afghan newcomers, you will be connected with a partner organization serving as a sponsor circle umbrella. These are organizations, many of which with deep expertise in resettlement, that will provide you with ongoing guidance and support, including answering any questions that you may have during your Sponsor Circle experience. You will also have access to a range of resources, such as Airbnb.org credits to secure temporary housing, and a growing collection of tools including a Sponsor Circle guide, checklist, and cultural backgrounder.

The Application Process

To ensure Sponsor Circles are up to the challenge of supporting a newcomer family, they are asked to complete an application process. Expect the process to take a few weeks. Once finished, you will know that you are ready to welcome. Take these six steps to apply:

1. Bring together at least five individuals in your community over the age of 18 to form your Sponsor Circle.
2. Make sure every circle member completes the [required background check](#).
3. Make sure that at least one member of your circle completes [the sponsor circle course and knowledge check](#).
4. Complete a [welcome plan](#) sharing how you will support the Afghan newcomers with whom you will be matched.
5. Begin fundraising the minimum \$2,275 per Afghan newcomer you hope to welcome.
6. [Submit your application](#).

Upon submission, your completed application will be reviewed and you will be informed whether your circle is certified. Once certified, your Sponsor Circle will be matched with an Afghan newcomer family needing support. You will receive support navigating this process.

Questions? Join an Application Support Session

Join us over Zoom for our weekly Application Support Sessions. We'll walk through steps to become a certified Sponsor Circle and provide an overview of Sponsor Circle responsibilities. Facilitators will respond to questions on the application process, completing the Welcome Plan, and the Sponsor Circle experience. Sessions are held every [Monday at 6:00 PM EST](#) and [Friday at 1:00 PM EST](#). Please register for the day and time you prefer by clicking on the links above.

Want to Learn More? Go to sponsorcircles.org

For more information, visit the program website. If you are unable to join an Application Support Session but still have questions, you can also email applications@sponsorcircles.org to get connected with a representative who can help you learn more about the program.

Other Sponsorship Opportunities

Are you interested in sponsoring Afghan newcomers, but would prefer to work with a resettlement agency in or near your community? Consider co-sponsorship! Contact your nearest resettlement agency to learn about the co-sponsorship opportunities they offer, but be prepared for a possible delay in their response. Resettlement agencies are very busy in providing support to Afghan newcomers. You can find your nearest resettlement agency [here](#).