

Memo Name: Services for Afghan Refugees
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Income Determination & Documentation
No Proof of Identity, Address, Income
Processing Standards

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Services for Afghan Refugees

This policy memo provides guidance for certification and providing services to refugees evacuated to the United States from Afghanistan. In most instances, refugees from Afghanistan or any other country should be treated in the same manner as any other individual who applies for WIC services.

Processing Standards

Refugees who are considered homeless must have their eligibility for WIC assessed within 10 days of the first contact to the clinic requesting an appointment.

Determining Eligibility for WIC

The WIC program provides services to all eligible categories of individuals during critical times of growth and development. Refugee status is not considered when assessing WIC eligibility. It is therefore not necessary to determine whether or not an applicant is a refugee. Neither legal residency or United States citizenship are not requirements for participation in WIC.

Residency

In order to meet the WIC program residency requirement, an applicant must live in Nebraska at the time they apply for the program. In most instances, recent refugees from Afghanistan will be in transition and not have a permanent place to live. They may be considered homeless. Refer to the [Services for Homeless](#) and [No Proof](#) procedures for certifying individuals without requiring proof of residency under certain circumstances (e.g., no actual home address or temporary residence in a homeless shelter or facility). There may be instances in which refugees are living temporarily in a private residence with another family or who are living in an apartment or other location temporarily until a more permanent place can be found. Individuals in these situations would be considered as homeless.

Identity

Refugee families from Afghanistan may present different documents for identity as they may not have birth certificates or passports. Documents that are acceptable as proof of identity include:

- I-94 marked SI1, SI2, SI3, SQ1, SQ2, or SQ3;

- Passport with an immigrant visa stamp and code SI1, SI2, SI3, SI6, SI7, SI9, SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ6, SQ7, or SQ9;
- Form I-551 with a category code of SI6, SI7, SI9, SQ6, SQ7, or SQ9;
- Any verification from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or other authoritative document.

Income Determination

Meeting the income guidelines is a condition of WIC program eligibility for all applicants. The definition of family includes related and unrelated individuals living together as an economic unit. As part of the assessment process, local agency staff will need to ask clarifying questions to determine the exact economic unit for refugee applicants living in the residence of another individual. When the living arrangement is temporary (less than 365 days), the person would be deemed homeless and only members of their family would be counted as part of the economic unit.

Refugee families may or may not have obtained a job and received their first paycheck when they come to WIC for their first appointment. In these situations the affidavit/no proof option should be used and documented in Journey.

Nutritional Risk

Federal WIC regulations recognize homelessness as an allowable nutrition risk condition when determining eligibility for the WIC program. However, local agency are expected to perform a complete nutrition assessment for each refugee applicant. They have other medical or dietary nutrition risk factors that require education and/or referral to a health care provider.

WIC Supplemental Foods

CPAs should adapt the WIC food package to accommodate the unique needs and circumstances of refugee and homeless participants. Some of these adaptations may be necessary for refugees who are certified to receive WIC benefits, depending on their living situations or their access to cooking facilities, as well as their overall capability to make the best use of the foods provided (e.g., limited English proficiency may inhibit a refugee mother's ability to use powdered or concentrated infant formula). Such substitutions may include:

- Dry milk
- Canned beans/peas or dry beans/peas
- Ready-to-feed infant formula in place of concentrate or powdered

Special Formula/PAFs

The current procedure for issuance of special formula should be used for refugees applying for WIC who need one of these formulas. The current COVID waiver allows the provision of special formula without a PAF for 30 days. This waiver expires on 12/31/2021. After December 31, 2021 WIC participants must have a valid PAF to receive a special formula.