

Afghan Newcomer Documents

Background

There are many forms and documents that you will find are essential to interact with as you welcome Afghan newcomers to your community.

This guidance walks through these forms, defining each of them and providing an FAQ for each. Which forms you interact with may vary slightly depending on the unique situation, needs, and status of the newcomers you are welcoming.

Please be aware that answers are subject to change as new information is provided.

Acronyms

IOM	International Office of Migration
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
USCIS	United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS is a federal agency overseeing lawful immigration to the U.S. and is a component of DHS)
SIV	Special Immigrant Visa
EAD	Employment Authorization Document
SS card	Social Security card
A number	Alien Registration Number

About I-94s

What is the I-94? Form I-94 is an Arrival/Departure Record issued by DHS to all aliens who are admitted to the U.S., including those who are adjusting status while in the U.S., as well as tourists and other visitors (not including U.S. citizens and residents).

Accessing I-94s: Click [here](#) and choose “Get most recent I-94.” Click continue until you arrive at request page. Enter the “A number” into Passport field.

Note: If you have trouble retrieving the I-94 on the website, try entering the Alien Number without the A.

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Fixing I-94 Mistakes: You can correct mistakes on the I-94 [here](#).

Lost I-94/can't access/problems: Contact OAWI94ADJUSTMENTS@cbp.dhs.gov and provide information about the error. They usually respond quickly.

Note: Individuals with SIVs will NOT have an I-94.

About A Numbers

What is an Alien Registration Number (A number): This number can appear in a variety of documents and is THE number that tracks each PERSON through their immigration journey and with the Department of Homeland Security. The number will be different for each person and varies in length. It is usually 10 digits and is preceded by a capital A. [Here is a handy website](#) showing you where to locate this number.

Alien Registration Numbers: Once an EAD is supplied, the newcomer's A number will be used as the USCIS number printed on the EAD/work permit. They are the same number.

The USCIS number on the work permit is not the same as the social security number.

About EADs and SS cards

What is an EAD? Having an Employment Authorization Document (Form I-766/EAD) is one way to prove that you are authorized to work in the United States for a specific time period. Afghan parolee EAD cards are good for two years and then would need to be renewed if permanent change of status has not occurred.

Note: for Afghan newcomers to work, they need both an EAD (unless they are an SIV holder) and social security card.

SIVs and EADs: SIV holders do not have an EAD, and do not need them to work. They initially have a visa their passports that give them the right to work until they receive their green cards.

Tracking the EAD: You can track the EAD [here](#). You will need the receipt number from the I-765 application that was submitted on the military base in order to track the EAD. That will be located on the Notice of Action (aka I-797) in the top left corner. It will begin with three letters, usually the letters IOE. Find out more about receipt numbers below on page 4.

Resolving EAD card errors: You can submit the corrected information [online](#). This online option is available to all USCIS customers. Visit the [Information for Afghans](#) page for more information on how to request corrections to an EAD.

If reporting an incorrect photograph, contact your HIAS Liaison, who will talk to CSH about sending a notice for an appointment to have a new photograph taken at a USCIS Application Support Center.

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Regarding misspelling on EAD and how to address it on asylum application (from HIAS legal): Parolees are likely going to need to renew their EADs before they are able to adjust status. I just want to make sure they understand that there may be a few steps, and a few different EADs, between now and getting their green cards. They should update to the appropriate spelling of their names on any new EADs and should also always remember to list the incorrect spelling on all of the applications, where it asks about other names used. For the purposes of their asylum applications, they'll need to put the correct spelling of their name on their I-589 and include the misspelled version as an "other name used".

Name on SS card: The name and spelling on the SS card is the way the name needs to be spelled on all future job applications.

What to do if Social Security Card doesn't arrive: If the newcomer has their EAD then they can go to a local SS Administration office and fill out an SS-5 form (you can also find a copy of the SS-5 form online [here](#)). If they have already had an SSN generated they can get their number that day and the card usually arrives within a week.

Applications filed on the bases: Afghan newcomers will have applied for both the EAD and SS cards on the base by filing USCIS Form I-765. When the EAD is issued, it triggers the creation of a Social Security Number. Some newcomers will arrive to Circles with EADs and SS cards; for others it will be sent **to the first name on the Sponsor Circle application**. It should arrive soon after the newcomer's arrival to your community.

Contacting IOM (International Office of Migration): Approved EADs and Social Security cards were sent to IOM first, and then they either have or will be sent to the FIRST name on your Circles application. Before the EAD is mailed to IOM the status can be tracked through USCIS. However, once it is mailed to IOM that tracking is no longer possible. Therefore, if there is a delay, you can try emailing IOM at afgovdocs@iom.int.

In your email, you will need to include for each family member whose documentation is delayed:

- The IOE receipt number
- First and last name
- Hummingbird (HB) number
- A-number

They will look it up to see if they've received it. It's an imperfect process to be sure, but usually it can be located one way or another. For SS cards, if you make an appointment at the local SSA, they can look up the status of the card and whether it's been mailed.

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About Receipts

When any form is filed with USCIS for an immigration case, there will be a receipt code. It will start with three ALL CAPS LETTERS based on where processing was started (for parolees this will usually be IOE for online filing; if they applied for an SIV from Afghanistan then it may be KBL) followed by numbers. This number allows USCIS to recall what forms have been filed and received.

If you need to locate a receipt number, check if the newcomer family has an I-797 Notice of Action and you will find the receipt number in the top left corner. You can also contact USCIS customer service at 800-375-5283 and they can look this up manually. If you are having difficulty reaching a person through the customer service phone line, try prompting the system with the word “Infopass” to skip the automated system and be connected with a live person.

About HB Numbers

An HB number, or “Hummingbird” number (named for the Hummingbird case management system) tracks a family unit from arrival through resettlement. Camps and resettlement agencies will often ask for this number, and the purpose of it is to have one number that goes with them from the time they enter the country to when they’re assured to resettlement agencies. The same number is usually assigned to one family unit, but not always. IOM will often need the number as well to look up, track and release documents. The HB number is not the same as their A number.

About SIVs

The Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program was established by Congress in 2009 to provide a pathway to safety for Afghan employees of the United States government who served in Afghanistan. To qualify, Afghans must demonstrate that they provided faithful and valuable service to the United States, worked for at least two years in a qualifying capacity, and face serious and ongoing threats because of their work. SIVs enter the U.S. on a status that allows them to live and work in the U.S. as a legal permanent resident. Learn more about the SIV program [here](#).

Do family members get SIV status too? Generally, the spouse and unmarried children under 21 years old of a principal beneficiary of an SIV petition are eligible for derivative status. Siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc of a principal beneficiary are not eligible.

You can find more information about the legal status of SIV holders in [this info-sheet](#) from Community Sponsorship Hub.

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