



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Refugee Resettlement | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr

ORR-Funded Behavioral Health Support Program for Afghan Arrivals

Dear Colleague Letter 23-12

November 17, 2022

Dear Colleague:

The Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022, and Additional Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (ASA) provided the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) with specific appropriations to provide benefits and services to the citizens or nationals of Afghanistan delineated in ORR Policy Letter (PL) [22-01](#), *Afghan Humanitarian Parolees and Unaccompanied Afghan Minors Eligible for ORR Benefits and Services; ASA-Eligible Afghan Populations*. This Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) announces additional behavioral health services available to ASA-eligible individuals. These services, provided by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), are a continuation of their work providing behavioral health services at the Safe Havens.

Under this award, USCRI will provide direct clinical support and access to culturally and linguistically appropriate trauma-informed behavioral health services to ASA-eligible individuals in various resettlement locations across the United States. This program is intended to provide direct client services, training and technical assistance (TTA), and direct behavioral health support to local service providers, and crisis response activities to address the behavioral health needs of Afghans resettled in various locations across the United States, in states where the state agency or replacement designee responsible for administering the ORR-funded Refugee Resettlement Program has requested such assistance. Services will be available as of the date of this DCL through September 30, 2023. Programming under the grant includes:

1. Direct behavioral health services to ASA-eligible individuals by the USCRI team of primarily Afghan-origin behavioral health professionals: USCRI will provide clinical, psychosocial, and emergency support services (virtual and in-person) using a telehealth platform, onsite providers, a national helpline, and a crisis response team.
2. Training and technical support to service providers: The USCRI team will work closely with ORR stakeholders, including State Refugee Coordinators, State Refugee Health Coordinators, and community partners to provide training and to screen, assess, provide linkages/referrals, and/or psychosocial education/information to Afghan arrivals in need of behavioral health care.
3. Development of resource materials and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): These resources will focus on behavioral health care for ASA-eligible individuals.

4. Crisis response activities: At the request of ORR, a USCRI Crisis Response Team (CRT) will deploy to support individuals and service providers when local capacity is inadequate or unavailable.

All components will include gender-sensitive considerations as well as developmentally appropriate services for pediatric and adolescent arrivals.

Service providers can request USCRI assistance directly via email: AfghanMH@uscrimail.org. In urgent situations, ORR will direct USCRI's deployment of the CRT as necessary.

ASA-eligible individuals will be able to request direct assistance using a helpline. USCRI will inform stakeholders about the helpline once it is operational in the coming weeks.

If you have any questions about this DCL, please contact DRH Refugee Mental Health Team Lead Tabassum Siraj at Tabassum.Siraj@acf.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,

Robin Dunn Marcos
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement