



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 Resources for Afghan Arrivals

Dear Colleague Letter 23-33

September 8, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

The purpose of this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) is to announce an extension of the ORR-funded behavioral health support program for eligible Afghan arrivals, and to share behavioral health resources with our resettlement network. Please share these resources with your subgrantees, stakeholders, partners, and eligible Afghan arrivals as defined in ORR's PL [22-01](#) and [PL 23-06](#).

Since October 2021, ORR has funded the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) to provide behavioral health support to Afghan arrivals as well as training and technical assistance to local service providers. This support continues to be essential as new needs emerge. Accordingly, ORR has authorized USCRI to continue providing services to Afghan arrivals through September 30, 2024.

ORR has also authorized USCRI to expand the scope of the behavioral health program to include the following components:

For Afghan clients, the following resources are available:

- A 24-hour crisis helpline for individuals in crisis needing immediate, culturally appropriate counseling in Dari, Pashto, and English: 800-615-6514.
- Domestic violence and sexual abuse support for women and youth: 800-615-6514.
- Support and welfare check-ins for Afghan Minors (upon ORR request and approval).

For service providers assisting Afghan clients, the following resources are available:

- A [24/7 Helpline](#) at 800-615-6514 to request immediate help for a client.
- Assistance through a [Crisis Response Team](#): Service providers should complete a [referral form](#) or [email](#) to request multidisciplinary care and treatment for a client.
- A referral mechanism for [Telehealth Services](#): 571-427-5923 (urgent) / 301-392-7660 (less urgent). Providers must complete the [referral form](#) in English.
- Mental Health First Aid Training: [Email](#) to request training tailored for Afghan clients and providers.

Additionally, ORR recently awarded 24 grants under the new, one-time [Services to Afghan Survivors Impacted by Combat Program](#), which helps Afghan arrivals and their families address and overcome severe and long-lasting trauma. This grant provides services in key locations such as Austin, Chicago, Sacramento, Seattle, and Washington, DC. The full list of SASIC service locations is available [here](#).

Please note that other ORR programs also support behavioral health for Afghan arrivals. They include the following:

- [Preferred Communities](#), which provides intensive case management and group-based programming for vulnerable populations, and
- [Ethnic Community Self-Help Program](#), which provides resettlement and integration support through ethnic community-based organizations.

For additional behavioral health resources, visit [ORR's Afghan Behavioral Health Support web page](#).

Please contact Tabassum Siraj, ORR Mental Health Team Lead at Tabassum.Siraj@acf.hhs.gov or your state's Health Liaison if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robin Dunn Marcos
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement