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**From:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services <uscis@public.govdelivery.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 20, 2022 4:58 PM  
**Subject:** New Filing Process for Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Petitions and Policy Update on Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Classification



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

Public Engagement  
Division



## **New Filing Process for Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Petitions and Policy Update on Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Classification**

Effective July 20, 2022, Afghan nationals seeking a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) must file Form DS-157, Petition for Special Immigrant Classification for Afghan SIV Applicants, with the Department of State (DOS) when applying for Chief of Mission (COM) approval. This replaces the previous two-step process where Afghan nationals must first seek COM approval from DOS and then apply for SIV classification by filing [Form I-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow\(er\), or Special Immigrant](#), with USCIS.

### **When to File Form I-360 with USCIS**

Afghan citizens or nationals who already started the SIV application process and received COM approval on or before July 20, 2022, must still file a [Form I-360](#) with USCIS on their own behalf. For

individuals in the United States with COM requests pending on July 20, 2022, please reference the chart below.

<b>Afghan nationals located in the United States</b>	
<b>If</b>	<b>Then</b>
COM pending and have a signed DS-157	Once COM and DS-157 are approved, file Form I-485
COM pending and have an unsigned DS-157	Once COM is approved, file Form I-360
COM pending and have no DS-157	Once COM is approved, file Form I-360
COM approved before 7/20/22	File Form I-360
I-360 pending with USCIS	Once I-360 is approved, file Form I-485

### **Special Immigrant Visa Classification**

Afghan nationals who worked for or on behalf of the U.S. government as a translator or for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan may be eligible to apply for SIV classification. A special immigrant is a person who qualifies for [lawful permanent residence](#) in the United States. Afghan nationals present in the United States with an approved Form I-360 or Form DS-157 may apply to adjust their status to lawful permanent resident (obtain a Green Card) with [Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status](#).

### **Policy Manual Updates**

USCIS has also updated policy guidance on expanded eligibility requirements for the SIV classification, including a one-year employment requirement instead of two years, as well as the type of qualifying employment with ISAF. The policy update incorporates other changes to the eligibility and evidence requirements for Afghan or Iraqi SIV classification resulting from the Emergency Security Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021. For more information visit the [USCIS Policy Manual](#).

Visit the [Policy Manual Feedback](#) page to provide feedback on this update. USCIS welcomes feedback on this guidance and will consider any feedback received in future updates.

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