

AFGHAN SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA (ASIV)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING FOR CHIEF OF MISSION APPROVAL

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1. Required Documents

Four documents are **required** for the ASIV COM processing unit to review your file:

- 1) A Human Resources (HR) employment letter from your employer that provides details about the employment that qualifies you for an Afghan SIV.
- 2) A Letter of Recommendation from a direct supervisor.
- 3) A [DS-157 form](#) completed and signed by you.
- 4) A copy of your Afghan national identity information (Tazkera, passport, or National Identity Card).

If you have a badge from your employer(s), you should scan and send a copy of your badge(s) with the other required documents.

We may ask for additional documents during case processing.

2. Human Resources (HR) Employment Letter

Your employer's Human Resources (HR) department should write your HR employment letter. If there is no HR department, a company representative with access to employment records can write your HR employment letter. The company representative must state in the letter that the company no longer has an HR department and explain why they qualify to write your HR employment letter.

To meet the 12-month minimum qualification for time worked, you can add together days spent working for more than one employer. If you worked for more than one company, you should provide a separate HR employment letter from each company. If you have overlapping dates of employment with different companies, you must explain how you worked for more than one employer at the same time.

- For each employer, your HR employment letter(s) should include:
 - Your full name and date of birth as they appear in your Afghan national identity documents (Tazkera, passport, National Identity Card).
 - The date you began work. Your starting employment date must be between October 7, 2001, and December 31, 2023.
 - The date you stopped working. Time worked must total at least 12 months.
 - The place you worked (city, town, province, base).
 - Your job title. A description of your work duties.
 - If you served as an interpreter or translator your HR employment letter should include an example of how you translated for Department of State, USAID, or U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan, especially if you interpreted/translated away from the embassy or off base.
 - The reason your employment ended.

- The company name, and the name, signature, and contact information (including a corporate email) of the person writing your HR employment letter.
 - If the corporate email no longer works, or the person writing your HR employment letter no longer has access to a company email, the person writing your HR employment letter should provide an alternative email address.
 - It is acceptable, and often helpful, for the author of the HR employment letter to provide more than one email address.
- Contract information that shows you were employed by, or on behalf of, the U.S. government/NATO/International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)/a successor mission.
 - Project name.
 - Contract number.
 - Time period the contract began and ended.
 - Name of the contract's prime contractor.
 - If available, scan and send a copy of the contract between your employer and the U.S. government, or a copy of your employer's subcontract to work with a company who had a prime contract with the U.S. government.

If you worked directly for the ISAF, NATO, or a successor mission:

- Your HR employment letter should include all the items listed above **PLUS**:
 - Confirmation of your employment dates between October 7, 2001, and December 31, 2023. Time worked must total at least 12 months.
 - Your HR employment letter must be written by a representative from the ISAF Headquarters Human Resources Department, or the successor mission Human Resources Department, no matter where you were stationed in Afghanistan. If an ISAF member nation, or successor member nation, hired you directly, your HR letter must come from the department or agency that hired you.

- An English-language copy (or English translation) of the contract between you and your employer. If you were hired under a Personal Services Agreement (PSA) or a Personal Services Contract (PSC), you must submit an English-language copy of the PSA or PSC.

3. Non-Qualifying Work:

Work under a U.S. grant or cooperative agreement, for a contractor/subcontractor working for ISAF or a successor mission, or for the Afghan military or government, is **not** qualifying employment for an Afghan SIV under the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009.

- You will not receive COM approval if you only worked under a U.S. grant or cooperative agreement.
- You will not receive COM approval if you only worked for a contractor/subcontractor that worked for ISAF or a successor mission.
- You will not receive COM approval if you only worked for Afghan security forces (military, police, or government).

4. Letter of Recommendation

The person who directly supervised you should write a Letter of Recommendation for you, and sign and date the letter.

The person who writes your Letter of Recommendation or co-signs your Letter of Recommendation does not need to be a U.S. citizen.

A co-signer is no longer required. This is true even when the person who writes your Letter of Recommendation is not a U.S. citizen. A co-signer is still allowed, and U.S. citizen co-signers can be especially helpful.

If your direct supervisor is not able to write a Letter of Recommendation for you, someone higher up in your direct chain of command can write the Letter of

Recommendation for you. That person must have been in the chain of command above your direct supervisor. For example:

- The company CEO or President can write your Letter of Recommendation.
- A company Vice President, if your direct supervisor worked under that Vice President in the same chain of command, can write your Letter of Recommendation.
- A corporate representative in the chain of command of your supervisor can write your Letter of Recommendation.
- A company senior Human Resources Officer, if you worked in the HR Department or your supervisor was under their chain of command, can write your Letter of Recommendation.
- If the person who writes your Letter of Recommendation was not your direct supervisor, they must describe their place in the chain of command and their connection to your direct supervisor.

If you were directly employed by ISAF or a successor mission, a U.S. military member who personally worked with you should write your Letter of Recommendation.

There is no required template or format for a Letter of Recommendation.

A Letter of Recommendation must include:

- Your full name and date of birth as it appears in your Tazkera, passport, or National Identity Card.
- Your job title and location.
- Your badge number (if available).
- A statement that the person writing your Letter of Recommendation was your supervisor and knew you personally.
- The date the person writing your Letter of Recommendation began supervising you, and the date the person writing your Letter of Recommendation stopped supervising you. These supervision dates must

overlap at least one day with the dates of employment written in one of your HR employment letters.

- Your recommender's name, job title, company or U.S. government email address, and a personal email address.
- A statement of whether you provided faithful and valuable service to the U.S. government.
- A statement of opinion as to whether you pose a threat to the national security or safety of the United States.
- A description of your specific work duties, and where you performed those duties.
- If you worked as an interpreter or translator for Department of State, USAID, or U.S military personnel, the person writing your Letter of Recommendation should describe that work, and specifically note whether that work occurred away from the embassy or off base.
- If the person writing your Letter of Recommendation is a U.S. citizen, they **may** provide their U.S. passport number, if they have one and wish to do so. This information can be helpful. However, the person writing your Letter of Recommendation **is not required** to provide their U.S. passport number.

If you worked directly for ISAF or a successor mission:

- Your Letter of Recommendation should include all the items listed above, **PLUS:**
 - The person writing your Letter of Recommendation must be a U.S. military member who personally supervised you.
 - The person writing your Letter or Recommendation must include their **name, title, rank, U.S. government/military email address**, and personal email address in the letter.

Letters of Recommendation are a very important part of the COM process. Please ask your supervisor to be as detailed and complete as possible in describing your work in the Letter of Recommendation. Ask them to write a letter that describes your specific accomplishments and responsibilities. Your supervisor's contact information must be active and correct.

5. Co-Signer on a Letter of Recommendation

A co-signer is no longer required but is allowed. A co-signer does not need to be a U.S. citizen.

- A co-signer on your Letter of Recommendation should state that, based on the co-signer's relationship with the person writing your Letter of Recommendation, the co-signer is confident that the information provided in your Letter of Recommendation is correct.
- A co-signer can also state that, to the best of the co-signer's knowledge, you pose no threat to the national security or safety of the United States.
- A co-signer must include their full name and work and personal email addresses in the letter.
- If the co-signer is a U.S. citizen, they **may** provide their U.S. passport number, if they have one and wish to do so. This information can be helpful. However, the co-signer **is not required** to provide their U.S. passport number.

6. Statements of Unavailability for HR Employment Letters and Letters of Recommendation

If you believe you are eligible, you should apply for COM approval even if you cannot get an HR employment letter or Letter of Recommendation. If you are unable to submit an HR employment and/or Letter of Recommendation, be sure to submit all the other documents you can. Write and submit a Statement of Unavailability for a missing HR employment letter and/or Letter of Recommendation. The Statement of Unavailability should clearly and briefly explain which document is unavailable, and why. There is no specific format for a Statement of Unavailability.

Some U.S. government agencies verify employment and provide Letters of Recommendation directly to the ASIV COM processing unit as part of the COM approval process. In such cases the ASIV COM processing unit may be able to confirm your employment and recommendation, even if you have not submitted an HR employment letter and/or Letter of Recommendation.

7. Completing a [DS-157 form](#) (Petition for Special Immigrant Classification for Afghan SIV Applicants)

Pages 3, 4, and 5 of the [DS-157 form](#) contain instructions explaining how to complete the [DS-157 form](#). You must complete the entire form by answering all questions and you must sign the form. Please read the instructions and be sure you understand them before you complete the form.

8. Proving your Afghan National Identity

There are three ways to prove your Afghan national identity:

- 1) Provide a copy of your Tazkera **with an English translation**, OR
- 2) Provide a copy of the biographic data page in your Afghan passport, OR
- 3) Provide a copy of your Afghan National Identity Card (front and back).

Submit any one or more of these identity documents with your application.

9. Helpful Tips

- Each document you submit should be copied cleanly and easy to read.
- **Use PDF format for all documents.**

- Spell your name the same way on all documents. The spelling should match your name as written in your Tazkera, passport, or National Identity Card.
- List on the DS-157, question 6, any other names you may have used or continue to use (aliases/alias names).
- **Include different spellings of your name**, especially if those spellings or any other names appear in any of your application documents, in response to question 6 on the DS-157 form.
- Make sure that you have an HR employment letter from each individual employer (if possible), Letters of Recommendation, and you signed the [DS-157 form](#).

10. Frequently Asked Questions

You can find answers to frequently asked questions about the COM process at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/special-immg-visa-afghans-employed-us-gov/afghan-faq.html#q8>