

In United States immigration law, there are defined statuses granted to people based on humanitarian protection from persecution in their home countries. There are several immigration statuses that fall under the category of people fleeing persecution. People with these statuses may adjust their status to Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) after a period of time in the United States, and have a path to citizenship.

People with these statuses are eligible for Federal and State benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee.

For a list of types of documentation demonstrating the following statuses, see [Documentation Guide for People Fleeing Persecution & Victims of Trafficking](#).

- REFUGEE

Refugee status is a form of protection granted to people who meet the definition and criteria of refugee and who are of special humanitarian concern to the United States. To be granted refugee status, people must establish they are unable or unwilling to return home due to persecution or fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Refugee status is granted prior to US arrival to those who meet the processing priorities set by the Department of State and involves a minimum 18-24 month application, interview, and security vetting process.

People with refugee status are eligible for Federal and State benefits and services beginning on their date of U.S. arrival.

- ASYLEE

Asylum status is a form of protection granted to people who are already present in the United States or are seeking admission at a port of entry, who meet the definition and criteria of refugee. To be granted asylum status, people must establish they are unable or unwilling to return home due to persecution or fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The process for establishing a claim of asylum before an USCIS asylum officer or immigration judge may take some time, often 5 years or more.

People with asylum status are eligible for Federal and State benefits and services beginning on the date of their asylum grant.

NOTE: People with pending asylum applications (asylum seekers) may be eligible for state-funded benefits prior to their asylum being granted. See [0011.03.24 \(Non-Citizens - Lawfully Residing People\)](#). Some applicants who are not granted asylum may be granted Withholding of Removal.

- IRAQI OR AFGHAN SPECIAL IMMIGRANT

Iraqi or Afghan people who provided assistance to the U.S. government can receive special protection in the United States.

Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrants will be admitted to the United States as Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), as Parolees, or adjust to Special Immigrant status after entering the U.S. under another immigration status.

Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrants are eligible for Federal and State benefits and services to the same extent as refugees beginning on their date of U.S. arrival with Lawful Permanent Resident status or Special Immigrant Parole (SQ or SI) status.

Note: Afghan parolees without SQ or SI Parole may be eligible for state-funded benefits. See [00.11.03.24 \(Non-Citizens – Lawfully Residing People\)](#).

- CUBAN/HAITIAN ENTRANT

Cuban/Haitian Entrant status is granted to nationals of Cuba and Haiti who have a current or expired parole, who are in pending removal proceedings, or who have a pending application for asylum. The individual's country of origin/citizenship must be Cuba or Haiti.

People with Cuban/Haitian Entrant status are eligible for Federal and State benefits and services beginning on their date of U.S. arrival. Eligibility is treated the same as refugees. Do not treat as parolees.

Cuban/Haitian Entrants with a non-appealable final order of removal are not eligible for federal benefits. They may be eligible for state-funded benefits. See [0011.03.24 \(Non-Citizens - Lawfully Residing People\)](#).

NOTE: Haitian nationals granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) do not meet the definition of Haitian Entrant. People with TPS may be eligible for state-funded benefits. See [0011.03.24 \(Non-Citizens - Lawfully Residing People\)](#).

- AMERASIAN

Amerasian status is granted to certain individuals who were born to a U.S. citizen father and a Vietnamese mother during the Vietnam War. People with Amerasian status may be admitted to the United States along with their immediate relatives such as spouse, children or parents. See AMERASIAN in [0002.03 \(Glossary: Agent Orange...\)](#).

People with Amerasian status are eligible for Federal and State benefits and services beginning on their date of U.S. arrival.

- VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING

For information on Victims of Trafficking, see [0011.03.30 \(Non-Citizens - Trafficking Victims\)](#).