



Engagement Readout

The Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman's Webinar Series: Engagement with USCIS on the Streamlined, Fee-exempted Re-parole Application Process for Certain Afghan Nationals

On June 27, 2023, the Department of Homeland Security's [Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman \(CIS Ombudsman\)](#) hosted a webinar to discuss the streamlined, fee-exempted re-parole application process for certain Afghan nationals.

During the session, Acting CIS Ombudsman Nathan Stiefel engaged in a dialogue with representatives from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to provide information on the new streamlined, fee-exempted re-parole application process for certain Afghan nationals in the United States. Beginning June 8, these individuals can apply for re-parole and employment authorization renewal in one filing.

During the engagement, USCIS and ORR representatives shared an overview of the application process and resources available to these applicants. Also, Acting Ombudsman Stiefel acknowledged the immense amount of work USCIS has undertaken in recent years, particularly with respect to its increasing humanitarian workload.

A total of 310 people joined this national webinar, including representatives of community and faith-based organizations, universities, state and federal government agencies, businesses and legal services providers. Participants submitted more than 30 written questions and comments.

Below is a sample of the questions received:

- By what date do individuals have to file their asylum or Green Card application in order to be considered for re-parole without applying?
- I have a pending Form I-485, *Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status*. When and how should I expect to receive confirmation that USCIS is considering re-parole in my case (e.g., a notice in the mail)? If I don't receive notification shortly before my current parole is set to expire, should I apply for re-parole?
- Will Afghans with pending asylum or adjustment of status cases pursuant to a special immigrant visa (SIV) with automatic processing of re-parole need to submit Form I-765, *Application for Employment Authorization*, or are they "work authorized incident to status" for two years?

- Is USCIS providing guidance to employers regarding the sufficiency of Form I-797 for employment authorization?
- Does the additional two years of parole start upon expiration of current parole or date the re-parole application is filed?

The CIS Ombudsman will share a full list of inquiries received with USCIS to give the agency an opportunity to address the public's concerns.

Speakers:

- Nathan Stiefel, Acting CIS Ombudsman
- Rachel Ellis, Assistant Chief of Public Engagement, Office of the CIS Ombudsman
- Emilie Hyams, Deputy Chief of Staff, USCIS
- Mark Ludeking, Senior Advisor, Office of Policy and Strategy, USCIS
- Quinn Andrus, Management and Program Analyst, Digital Services Division, External Affairs Directorate, USCIS
- Andrea Crane, Refugee Program Eligibility Specialist, Refugee Policy Unit, Division of Policy and Procedures, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services