

Canadian Special Immigration Measures (SIMS) & Asylum Programs for at-Risk Afghans

Option 1: Canadian Govt/Army support: If you are an Afghan national and your employment involved a significant and/or enduring relationship with the Government of Canada, which could be, but is not limited to interpreters who worked with the Canadian Armed Forces local staff who currently or used to work at the Embassy of Canada to Afghanistan.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2021/07/government-of-canada-offers-refuge-to-afghans-who-assisted-canada.html>

Option 2: If you have significant HRD (human rights defender) experience – and ideally with linkages to Canadian-funded HRD projects in Afghanistan, Canadian NGO partnerships, etc. – you might wish to apply through an existing SIMS program dedicated to HRD professionals. This program requires However, only 250 visas will be given out for those primary applicants (+ supporting visas for their family members): <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2021/07/minister-mendicino-launches-a-dedicated-refugee-stream-for-human-rights-defenders.html>

Option 3: The new “C20K” (Canada issuing 20,000 additional visas for vulnerable groups) program. For that one, you don't need as extensive direct Canada experience (although it would be helpful), but the focus is more on areas which might be closer to your background and experience: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2021/08/canada-expands-resettlement-program-to-bring-more-afghans-to-safety.html?fbclid=IwAR2zZBYuhjNkuYodk_BJvYe32hE6zI3BKlmdSPZMr1ILc1adfaT8bfd5uHE

This new program includes: women leaders, human rights defenders, journalists, persecuted religious minorities, LGBTI individuals, and family members of previously resettled interpreters. The program will welcome government-supported and privately sponsored refugees, along with those sponsored by family already in Canada.

General eligibility requirements & how to apply:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/afghanistan/how.html>

The Canadian asylum application process is roughly these steps:

1. You send an initial e-mail to GOC/IRCC (Govt of Canada / Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) at Canada-Afghanistan@international.gc.ca.
2. Response from GOC/IRCC and request to complete pre-screening questionnaire
3. GOC/IRCC provides applicant with Application Pack
4. Applicant has 72 hours to complete and send back application.
5. If application approved, GOC/IRCC will contact applicant with an appointment for biometric collection (fingerprints) for every member of the family who is 14 years and older
6. Then applicant/family will be contacted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) regarding an appointment for a chest x-ray.
7. Applicant will then be contacted if they will be allowed to submit applications for their eligible de facto family members (de facto members would be anyone other than spouse/kids whom you also wish to obtain asylum)
8. GOC/IRCC will contact applicant/family with flight arrangements (evacuation date / related details).

The entire process (from start to finish) may take up to 3-4 months, but (prior to August 13, a number of applicants' cases were reviewed, processed, and completed within 3-4 weeks.

Eligible Applicants:

1. **Primary Applicant (PA)** – yourself
2. **Dependents** – spouse and children
3. **De Facto Family Members (DFFM)** – family members who live with you and/or who rely on you substantially for financial or emotional support (e.g., mother, father, siblings).

***De Facto Family members are not automatically approved, but additional information might be needed from them. IRCC primarily will consider you and your immediate dependents as the priority for the asylum request.*

Documentation:

You will need scanned copies of all the following documents for yourself, dependents, and de facto family members:

1. Birth Certificates (Tazkiras) for all family members.
2. Family Booklet and/or Civil Registry Extract
3. Marriage Certificate (if applicable/available) – **recommended; it will likely be needed for local legal requirements within Canada if you are married.**
4. Divorce certificate (if applicable/available)
5. Custody/court documents for your children (if applicable/available)
6. Baptismal certificate (if applicable/available)
7. Military booklet (if military service was completed or an exemption was obtained)
8. National identity cards (if available)
9. ID from country of residence (if available)
- **10. **Complete pages of all valid and/or expired passport(s) within the last 10 years** for each person included in the application. If an applicant does not possess any valid or expired passport then they may provide a copy of their national identity card (or other official documentation with a photograph) for identification purposes

Recommended Additional Scanned Documents (these will make your application much stronger):

10. Copies of documents **showing partnership with the Canadian government** – examples can include:
 - a. Projects funded by the Canadian Embassy, GOC, etc. that you did with them. Good to include Project Name, Project Number, and GOC person who was responsible for the project you worked with.
 - b. Letters of recommendation or reference from any partners in the GOC, Canadian media partners, women's rights/women's empowerment organizations that demonstrate your work with Canada and on behalf of helping women, human rights, rule of law, other related HRD (human rights defender) areas.
 - c. Any legal documentation (if it is not confidential) or Afghan-registered business incorporation documents if you own or operate a small business or larger company.
11. **Security & Safety:**
 - a. Copies of letters, flyers, WhatsApp/other SMS, e-mails that are direct threats to you and/or your family from the Taliban and other groups. If there are online links where they have posted such threats, you can include those as a supplemental attachment to your formal application.

12. Any other relevant documents, testimonials, press releases, media articles, etc. which might further demonstrate your relationship with Canada, your work on HRD, women's rights, media/journalism, etc. and also security threats to you and your family as a result of this work.

To Apply:

To submit your **initial inquiry** and save time, submit all details at once for Steps 1 & 2 above to in the body on e-mail to Canada-Afghanistan@international.gc.ca.

GOC/IRCC staff will review your e-mail and if you pre-qualify for further consideration, they will e-mail you an application pack. In the past, the application pack needed to be completed within 72 hours. Be sure to have a computer, scanner, and printer available for the process.

For your initial inquiry e-mail, include the following information:

Your own information as Primary Applicant (PA)

1. your full name (include any nicknames you may have had)
2. your date of birth
3. Afghan passport number – if expired, list that passport number
(you will need a valid passport to depart for Canada)
4. Tazkira number – if expired, list that Tazkira number
5. your email address
6. your phone number

Information for each of your immediate family members (dependents):

1. Family member's full/legal name
2. Date of birth
3. Afghan passport number
4. Tazkira number
5. Current job title/position

Information for any de facto family members you wish to include:

1. Family member's full/legal name
2. Date of birth
3. Afghan passport number
4. Tazkira number
5. Current job title/position

Information on your relationship with the Canadian government, other Canadian stakeholders:

1. A description of your work with the Government of Canada or the Canadian Armed Forces in Afghanistan, including your job title or position your identification number, if you had one
2. If you were involved with media, NGOs, HRD, etc. provide some information on your work and any Canada-related involvement, including working on Canada government-funded projects or programs, collaboration with Canadian media, NGOs, etc.
3. The name(s) of your Canadian point(s) of contact (include title/designation, company name, location), family members who are Canadian citizens, permanent residents, etc. and the cities in which they are living (if possible)
4. Attach any relevant documents you have that show you worked with the Government of Canada.

For #1-4, you might wish to break that part of the e-mail into several sub-headers that include for each sub-header bullet points with descriptions of how you worked with GOC (Government of Canada). Do also include any other Canada-related relationships (business, media, humanitarian, etc.)

- A. Work & Relationships with the Government of Canada & the Embassy of Canada in Afghanistan**
- Detailed bullet (several sentences if needed) explaining one type of project or work you did with them.
 - Another detailed bullet with further details.
 - Use as many bullets as needed.
 - Where you have the info, include names of the Canadian organizations you worked with, the contact person (name, title/designation, and e-mail address/mobile number if you still have them).
- B. Journalism & Media**
- Bulleted details. Include names and examples
 - Bulleted examples of any Canadian-funded projects you worked on. Include Project Name and Project Number where possible (makes their search/verification process much easier and faster).
 - Where you have the info, include names of the Canadian organizations you worked with, the contact person (name, title/designation, and e-mail address/mobile number if you still have them).
- C. Women's Empowerment, Women's Education, HRD (Human Rights Defender activities)**
- Some of this might be covered already under Item B above. Feel free to structure this as you feel appropriate.
 - Bulleted Examples of any Canadian-funded projects you worked on. Include Project Name and Project Number where possible (makes their search/verification process much easier and faster).
 - Where you have the info, include names of the Canadian organizations you worked with, the contact person (name, title/designation, and e-mail address/mobile number if you still have them).
- D. Death Threats & Related Security Risks**
- Include examples and attach relevant scanned files, examples of threats received.
- E. Other Examples** – feel free to add other categories and bullet-point examples as appropriate.

Documents to include with your initial inquiry e-mail:

Copies of your current passport and Tazkira, and relevant documents. Don't flood GOC/IRCC with too many, but any supporting documents for A-E above will be helpful, particularly those showing your Canada linkages (recommendation letters, major press releases or media announcements, copies of contracts on projects (if the info is not confidential), letters of appreciation, etc.

**It is also very good to include a statement about why – on a personal and professional level, you would like to migrate to Canada (versus other countries) Think of this as a job interview and explaining to the GOC/IRCC why you could add value to Canada, why you'd prefer to live there as compared to other countries, and what you and your family can contribute to the country, the Canadian people, and its global aspirations (especially relating to women's rights, humanitarian, journalism, media, etc.)

**You must add a final line/sentence which indicates you agree with this:

I consent to having my personal contact information and that of my family members provided to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) so that we may be contacted in future to assist with admissibility screening.