

Humanitarian Parole: An Explainer for Unaccompanied Afghan Minors

You have “**humanitarian parole**,” which is **temporary permission** from the United States government to enter and physically stay in the country for a period of time, usually **two years**. **Humanitarian parole is not a permanent immigration status.**

You should apply for **permanent permission** to stay in the United States before your humanitarian parole ends. Humanitarian parole does not give you permission to leave the United States and come back in.

Humanitarian parole also requires you to receive certain **medical exams and vaccinations**. You may have received these at your shelter. You can learn more about what those requirements are here:

<https://www.uscis.gov/vaccination-status>.

The document that proves that you have humanitarian parole is called an **I-94**. It looks like this:

The image shows a sample of a U.S. Department of Homeland Security I-94 Paroled form. The form is titled "DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY U.S. Customs and Border Protection" and "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY PAROLED". It includes fields for "Admission Number", "Date of Entry" (AUG 26 2021), "Date of Parole" (AUG 25 2023), "Purpose" (DAR), and "WAS 1794". There is also a "Warning" section and a "Record of Changes" section. The form is marked "STAPLE HERE" at the bottom.

Your I-94 has:

- The date you came to the United States
- The date your humanitarian parole ends
- Your name
- Your date of birth
- Your immigration identification numbers

It is important that you keep this information safe! You will need the information from the I-94 for your future immigration applications.

Humanitarian parole means you can apply for permission to work. If you want permission to work, you will need to fill out an application for an “[Employment Authorization Document](#)” (known as an EAD). The immigration lawyers that provide free legal services at your shelter can help you fill out the EAD application. You can learn more about the EAD application here: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>. However, you can only work if your application for employment authorization is approved *and* there are no other laws preventing you from working. In the United States there are many rules about when and how people under the age of 18 can work. It is also important that you file your taxes with the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) each year that you work. You should speak to a lawyer to better understand the laws in your state about working and filing taxes.

You have the right to talk to an immigration lawyer. There are legal services organizations that provide free legal services to minors in ORR shelters. Legal services staff will tell you about your legal rights, advise you of the immigration benefits you may qualify for, and give you information about immigration lawyers who may be able to help with your immigration case after you leave the shelter.

Humanitarian parole is temporary. Parole is not a permanent immigration status, and it does not provide an automatic or direct pathway for permanent immigration status. If you want to stay in the United States after your parole ends, you should speak with an immigration attorney **as soon as possible** about applying for permanent permission to stay in the United States.

One way to receive permanent permission to stay in the United States is to apply for **asylum**. Asylum is a protection for people who are afraid to return to their home countries or may be in danger there. If you decide to apply for asylum, you should speak with an immigration attorney **as soon as possible** because asylum cases take a very long time to file and process.

There are other ways to apply for permission to stay in the United States beyond the time of your humanitarian parole. An immigration lawyer can tell you about any other available options for getting permanent permission to live in the United States. The legal service provider at your shelter can help connect you with a free or low-cost immigration lawyer after you leave the program, if you don't already have one.

If you have any other questions, please reach out to us at UAM@acf.hhs.gov.

If you have already left your shelter and need to find an immigration attorney or other help with your humanitarian parole, you can find more resources here:

<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/>

<https://www.wrapsnet.org/afghans-granted-humanitarian-parole/>