

Refugee Resettlement Resources

Contra Costa County provides limited eligibility determination and case maintenance for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program and a Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI). Refugee Cash Assistance provides cash aid to refugees and other qualified immigrants with time-limited cash assistance to assist the refugee in becoming self-sufficient. CAPI is a State funded program that provides cash assistance for aged, blind, and disabled legal immigrants who do not qualify for Federal Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Program (SSI/SSP). In FY 2019-20, General Assistance staff processed 161 CAPI applications, and 4,384 individuals were served by CAPI. The current year program allocation is \$589,000.

As a result of the US military withdrawal from Afghanistan, 235 Afghan individuals from 90 families have been resettled by the Jewish Family and Community Services (JFCS) East Bay with anticipation of up to 500 additional refugees. The attached proposal from JFCS East Bay further elaborates the current situation.

Recommendation

A one-time allocation of \$1 million is recommended to support efforts to improve access to comprehensive services. These funds are recommended for allocation directly to JFCS East Bay due to the County's existing relationship with the organization. The funding will be used with state and federal funds to meet the current and urgent needs of our community. The allocation is not limited specifically to Afghan refugees.



**JEWISH FAMILY &
COMMUNITY SERVICES
EAST BAY**

COMPASSION IN ACTION. COMMITMENT TO ALL.

Welcoming Newly Arriving Afghan Families to Contra Costa County

Refugee Resettlement

JFCS East Bay is an affiliate of HIAS, an international refugee resettlement humanitarian organization. As an affiliate, we provide mandated resettlement and placement services over a 90-day time period for newly arriving refugees who seek to rebuild their lives in Contra Costa County. This is minimally funded through the US government's Office of Refugee Resettlement.

These refugee resettlement services are also extended to Afghans arriving as humanitarian parolees and special immigrant visa holders who have fled their homes and country as a result of the August 2021 US military withdrawal from Afghanistan. As part of the withdrawal, the United States also committed to evacuating Afghans who served our country's interests working alongside US military personnel, along with their family members.

From August 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022, 463 Afghan individuals from 173 families have been resettled by JFCS East Bay, including 235 Afghan individuals from 90 families in Contra Costa County. We anticipate resettling a total of 650 Afghans by July 2022, with up to 500 people resettling in Contra Costa County. In the last six months, JFCS East Bay has resettled more than four times the number of people we usually resettle in one full year. The majority of new arrivals have come to the East Bay to reunite with their family members who are already a part of the established East Bay Afghan community.

To provide the above services, we receive federal funding of \$2,275 per person, with \$1,225 going directly to the new arrival to pay for initial living expenses and the remaining \$1,050 to JFCS East Bay for service administration. We also raise private funds, solicit in-kind donations of goods and services from the community, and organize large numbers of community volunteers to meet the demand.

Additional Needs for Newly Arriving Contra Costa County Residents

However, with the massive and complex migration of Afghans to the East Bay, self-sufficiency for most newly arriving families cannot be achieved within the 90-day period. As a result of multiple compounding factors such as the large volume of new arrivals in a short period of time and federal government delays in processing work permits, **there is a gap in direct assistance funding and services to support the basic needs of newly resettled families to Contra Costa County.**

JFCS East Bay's Role

JFCS East Bay has committed to welcome, resettle, and provide support and assistance to the maximum number of newly arrived Afghans possible. We partner with them to restart their lives in their new homes, with access to fundamental health, social, mental, legal, educational and employment services.

JFCS East Bay mobilizes community support for our resettlement efforts through partnerships with community and civic leaders, donors and funders, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, businesses and public agencies, and individuals and groups of volunteers. We prioritize partnerships with the established Afghan community of the East Bay.

To support family reunification, JFCS East Bay continues to serve members of the East Bay Afghan community whom we previously resettled.

For each evacuated Afghan family arriving as a result of the withdrawal, JFCS East Bay provides the following resettlement services:

- A. Arranges for the **reception and placement** of evacuees in Contra Costa County and offers appropriate **assistance during their initial resettlement**;
- B. Provides evacuees with **basic necessities** and **core services** during their initial period of resettlement; and
- C. In coordination with publicly supported evacuee service and assistance programs, assists evacuees in achieving economic **self-sufficiency through employment** as soon as possible after their arrival in Contra Costa County.

Additionally, JFCS East Bay provides legal services to all new arrivals who need to secure **permanent legal status** and coordinates with public agencies and community-based organizations seeking to **support the health, well-being, social and educational opportunities** of new arrivals.

Addressing the Need

JFCS East Bay requests **\$2000 per person for all Afghan evacuees who arrive in Contra Costa County between August 1, 2021 and July 31, 2022, up to 500 people or \$1 million. These funds will contribute to closing the gap between the original federal funding investment and state support scheduled to arrive later in the year.** Assistance from Contra Costa County will be utilized for direct financial assistance, community-based services, case management and legal services, according to the following outline.

Afghan New Arrivals: approximately 500 people resettled in Contra Costa County from August 2021 - July 2022	
Goal: self-sufficiency and positive community contributors	
Total Investment: \$1 million or \$2000/person	
Direct Assistance: housing/rental subsidies, utility subsidies, food assistance, transportation, home goods, technology, etc.	\$1,000
Community-Based Services: provided by JFCS East Bay and other CBOs, including job training and job search coaching, ESL classes, childcare, psychosocial education, etc.	500
Case Management: JFCS East Bay provides extended and comprehensive case management to set self-sufficiency goals and build and implement self-sufficiency plans and connect clients with a range of benefits and services to meet their goals.	300
Legal Services: JFCS East Bay and legal partners to provide legal services for Afghan asylum applications.	200

Direct Assistance

Funds that pass through JFCS East Bay to pay basic expenses of Afghan new arrivals. No administrative fees are withheld. \$1000/person will contribute to **basic household costs** so that families will not be evicted from their homes nor go hungry while transitioning to work and self-sufficiency.

Community-Based Services

JFCS East Bay mobilizes community support for our newly resettled Afghan clients to become self-sufficient through partnerships with community and civic leaders, donors and funders, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, businesses and public agencies, and individuals and groups of volunteers. We prioritize partnerships with the established Afghan community of the East Bay. Funds will be utilized to increase **availability of and access to** needed physical and mental health, language, employment and other **critical services**, either offered directly by JFCS East Bay or through civic and community partners in Contra Costa County.

Case Management

JFCS East Bay's extended case management services include additional support for clients on how to **navigate a range of social services**, including culturally responsive mental health services, ESL classes, childcare resources, and employment opportunities. As new arrivals gain employment, case managers assist them in navigating health insurance options in order to stay linked to medical care despite changes in coverage. As additional needs arise, we continue to assist and support our clients even after they have been in the country for some time, helping to ensure that they integrate successfully. Case management funds contribute to maintaining case managers on staff at JFCS East Bay. \$300/person represents 4-5 hours of a case manager's time for extended case management.

Legal Services

Due to the rapid pace and chaotic circumstances of the evacuations, most Afghan evacuees have arrived in Contra Costa County without permanent legal status. JFCS East Bay's Immigration Legal Services team is developing **new legal services** to specifically address the acute legal needs of our new Afghan clients. \$200/person contributes 6-10% of the total cost of legal representation per client.

About JFCS East Bay

Rooted in Jewish values and historical experiences, and inspired by the strengths of the diverse communities we serve, JFCS East Bay promotes the well-being of individuals and families by providing essential mental health and social services through every stage of life.

We are proud to serve and support Alameda and Contra Costa county residents of all ages, races, and religions.

JFCS East Bay was founded in 1877 as the Daughters of Israel Relief Society, with a focus on helping vulnerable women, children, and community members. Early on in our history, we developed expertise in resettling refugees in the East Bay: Jews coming from Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century, earthquake survivors coming across the bay from San Francisco in 1906, Jews escaping Nazi Germany in the 1930s, Holocaust survivors after the war, and Jews fleeing anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union during the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. In the mid-1990s, as the wave of Russian Jewish emigration subsided, we began to apply our refugee resettlement expertise to others fleeing religious and ethnic persecution in Afghanistan, Iran, Bosnia, and elsewhere.