
Asylum Interview Orientation Session

— December 8, 2022 —

What is the Purpose of the Asylum Interview?

Do you meet U.S. legal requirements for asylum?

Your chance to tell your story to the Asylum Officer

Helps Asylum Officer make a decision on your case

What is the Asylum Office? Who is the Asylum Officer?



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Getting to the Asylum Office

Metal detector and bag scan

Waiting in waiting room

Fingerprints and photo taken

Asylum Officer will call you by the last three digits of your “A number”



Who Must Come to the Interview?

“Principal applicant”

Person whose name and information is at the top of I-589 asylum application

Spouse and children who are in the United States

Marked as INCLUDED on form I-589

Legally married for spouse

Children - unmarried and under 21

Interpreters

UPDATE: As of September 13, 2023, the Asylum Office requires **ALL** applicants to **bring their own interpreters**

Your interpreter **MUST** attend the interview **IN PERSON**

NO interpreters by telephone are allowed!

Who Can Be an Interpreter?

MUST BE:

Fluent in Dari/Pashto and English
18 or older

MAKE SURE:

Your client and the interpreter
understand each other!

MAY NOT BE:

Family member who is a derivative on the
case or a witness in the case

Someone with an asylum application who
did not yet attend their own interview

A representative or employee of the
Afghan government

The attorney or accredited representative

How to Work with an Interpreter

Say 2 or 3 sentences and then pause to let interpreter translate

REMEMBER: The interpreter is a human - not a computer

Interpreter must only interpret what is said by the applicant(s) and the officer. They must not add/change anything that is said. Must be NEUTRAL.

Asylum Officer will ONLY HEAR WHAT THE INTERPRETER SAYS IN ENGLISH

What Questions Will the Officer Ask You?

Questions from form I-589

Questions about why you are afraid to return to Afghanistan

Questions about things that could bar you from asylum

What Questions Will the Officer Ask Your Derivatives?

Your spouse and children will be asked about their identifying information and asylum bars

Your children will be asked asylum bar questions even if they are young

You as principal applicant cannot act as the interpreter for your spouse and children



How to Respond to Asylum Officer

Tell the truth!

If you don't know something, tell the officer you don't know

If you don't remember something, tell the officer you don't remember

If you are not sure, tell the officer you are not sure

If you don't understand the interpreter, tell the officer!

You can ask for a break if you need a break

How Do I Prepare for the Asylum Interview?

Review your application

Review your declaration

Make a list of any changes

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

U.S. Department of Justice
Executive Office for Immigration Review

OMB No. 1615-0067; Expires 01/31/2023

I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal

START HERE - Type or print in black ink. See the instructions for information about eligibility and how to complete and file this application. There is no filing fee for this application.

NOTE: Check this box if you also want to apply for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

Part A.I. Information About You			
1. Alien Registration Number(s) (A-Number) (if any)	2. U.S. Social Security Number (if any)	3. USCIS Online Account Number (if any)	
4. Complete Last Name		5. First Name	6. Middle Name
7. What other names have you used (include maiden name and aliases)?			
8. Residence in the U.S. (where you physically reside)			
Street Number and Name			Apt. Number
City	State	Zip Code	Telephone Number ()
9. Mailing Address in the U.S. (if different than the address in Item Number 8)			
In Care Of (if applicable):			Telephone Number

What Happens After the Interview?

Wait for decision

USCIS has 150 days from day you submitted I-589

Different possibilities:

Asylum granted

Notice of Intent to Deny

Denial

Questions?

This recording and the slides will be available at the following link: <https://vecina.org/afghan-interview-prep/>