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Policy Alert

SUBJECT: Extension of Blanket Civil Surgeon Designation for Certain Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Applicants

Purpose

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is issuing policy guidance in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to address the urgent need for additional civil surgeons to conduct immigration medical examinations in support of Operation Allies Refuge.¹

Background

The blanket civil surgeon designation applicable to certain military physicians authorizes eligible military physicians to complete all parts of a required immigration medical examination for members and veterans of the U.S. armed forces and their dependents without applying for civil surgeon designation. In July 2021, the United States launched Operation Allies Refuge to support evacuation for certain eligible Afghan nationals and their families applying for special immigrant visas.² In order to expedite the completion of the required immigration medical examination, USCIS is extending the blanket civil surgeon designation to allow military physicians to complete the required immigration medical examination for these Afghan nationals seeking special immigrant visas.

This guidance, contained in Volume 8 of the Policy Manual, is effective immediately. The guidance contained in the Policy Manual is controlling and supersedes any related prior guidance.

Policy Highlights

- Extends the blanket civil surgeon designation for military physicians to complete the medical examination for certain Afghan nationals (both principal applicants and eligible family members) seeking special immigrant visas.

Citation: Volume 8: Admissibility, Part C, Civil Surgeon Designation and Revocation, Chapter 3, Blanket Civil Surgeon Designation [[8 USCIS-PM C.3](#)].

¹ See U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan's [Operation Allies Refuge](#) webpage.

² See Section 602(b) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009, Title VI of [Pub. L. 111-8](#), 123 Stat. 524, 807 (March 11, 2009). See Section 1059 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, [Pub. L. 109-163](#), 119 Stat. 3136, 3443 (January 6, 2006). For more information, see Volume 6, Immigrants, Part H, Designated and Special Immigrants, Chapter 9, Certain Afghan Nationals [[6 USCIS-PM H.9](#)] and Chapter 10, Certain Iraqi and Afghan Translators and Interpreters [[6 USCIS-PM H.10](#)]; and Volume 7, Adjustment of Status, Part F, Special Immigrants, Chapter 9, Certain Afghan Nationals [[7 USCIS-PM F.9](#)] and Chapter 10, Certain Iraqi and Afghan Translators and Interpreters [[7 USCIS-PM F.10](#)].