

January 24, 2008

SUBJECT: FSP – Guidance on Iraqi and Afghani Special Immigrants

TO: All Regional Administrators

Effective December 26, 2007, Public Law 110-161 of The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 granted Iraqi and Afghan aliens special immigrant status under section 101(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). Individuals and family members granted this special immigrant status are eligible for resettlement assistance, entitlement programs, and other benefits the same as refugees admitted under section 207 of the INA, except the period of eligibility cannot exceed six months.

Verification of Special Immigrant Status

For Food Stamp Program purposes, Iraqi and Afghan aliens and family members who claim special immigrant status must provide verification that they have been admitted under section 101(a)(27) of the INA.

Date of Eligibility and Certification Period

The effective date of eligibility as a qualified alien is from the date the special immigrant enters the United States. The special immigrant's certification period for food stamps cannot exceed six months from the special immigrant's date of entry as the following illustrates:

Date of Entry	Date of Food Stamp Application	Certification Period
October 11, 2007—Six months from date of entry is October 11 th through March 31 st .	January 8, 2008	3 months—January 8, 2008 through March 31 st , 2008.
December 12, 2007—Six months from date of entry is December 12 th through May 31 st .	February 26, 2008	4 months—February 26 th , 2008 through May 31 st , 2008.
September 30, 2008—Six months from date of entry is September 30 th through February 28 th .	October 16, 2008	5 months—October 16, 2008 through February 28, 2009.

Because this is a provision of an appropriations bill, it is only in effect through the end of the fiscal year (September 30, 2008) unless extended by Federal law. States that discover or become aware of any special immigrants who were denied prior to the passage of this bill should reconsider those denials using this current policy.

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State agencies can work with or contact their respective State Refugee Coordinator's Office at http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/state_coordina.htm if they have questions regarding Office of Refugee Resettlement policy as it relates to Iraqi and Afghani special immigrants.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please contact Vicky Robinson of my staff at vicky.robinson@fns.usda.gov or at (703) 305-2476.

/S/

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