

For Immediate Release – 1:15 P CDT, August 24, 2021

Statement by Russell Smith, LMSW, CEO of Refugee Services of Texas

Refugee Services of Texas continues to work with national refugee resettlement partners and the U.S. government to offer protection and resettlement to hundreds of Afghan Special Immigrant Visa holders and their families who gave everything to help the American military in Afghanistan.

All Afghans who have received Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) have undergone security background checks and health screenings.

Between Aug. 1 and Aug. 23, Refugee Services of Texas has welcomed 75 Afghan SIV holders, their spouses, and children.

Austin – 35
Dallas – 19
Fort Worth – 10
Houston – 11
Total 75

Projected is the number of SIVs that Refugee Services of Texas is slotted to resettle in partnership with national resettlement agencies for the federal fiscal year, ending Sept. 30, 2021

| RST SIV Snapshot as of 8.23.21 | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Total arrived FY 21 as of 8.23.21 | Total Projected FY 21 by 9-30-21 | Percentage arrived so far |
| Austin - 114 | 185 | 61.62% |
| Amarillo - 0 | 11 | 0.00% |
| Dallas- 105 | 144 | 72.92% |
| Fort Worth - 59 | 119 | 49.58% |
| Houston - 34 | 115 | 29.57% |
| 312 | 574 | 54.36% |

RST continues to need the public’s support in resettling the brave Afghans and their families who are now paying the price of giving our country and our military so much. We are extraordinarily grateful for the outpouring of support from the public so far and from our tireless volunteers. Opportunities to support RST’s work in resettling SIVs can be found at <https://www.rstx.org/make-an-impact/>

Special notice:

Until all Afghan SIVs have arrived safely in the U.S. -- likely in early to mid-September -- Refugee Services of Texas is not making client families available for media interviews even with guarded identities. The threat on the lives of remaining SIVs and their families in Afghanistan by the Taliban has placed the lives

of remaining SIVs in grave danger. When personal safety and privacy concerns are resolved, Refugee Services of Texas will consider media requests for interviews with Afghan SIVs who have resettled in Texas and are willing to be interviewed. Thank you for your understanding.

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