



NGO Services for Afghans on USG Facilities



Media and Communications Guidelines for all NGO Staff under IRC/USCCB for the Relocation of Arriving Afghans

Given the serious safety and privacy risks to Afghans, both those in Afghanistan and those in the U.S., there are strict media and communications policies in place. Many of these precautions are set by the U.S. government, in conjunction with guidance on best practices from NGO programming and security staff.

Many of the arriving Afghans have family still in Afghanistan who may be targeted. Additionally, Afghans attempting to leave Afghanistan may be targeted. As such, these rules are essential to protect the safety of our clients and their families.

To protect the safety of the people we serve, non-government organization (NGO) staff and volunteers working under the NGO Services umbrella:

- Do not confirm your deployment or presence at a particular U.S. government facility while on deployment or in service.
- Do not take photos or videos of any military equipment or structures.
- Do not take any photos or videos of clients.
- Do not share social media from the base, such as livestreams.
- Do not share the number of people served at a particular U.S. government facility.
- Do not share any details regarding flights to the U.S., including the dates and times of flights, the number of flights, the number of people on flights, the airline, or the airport.
- Do not share details of the trip between the airport and the U.S. government facility.
- Do not talk about any suspension of arrivals at a US government facility.
- Do not share specifics or details of operations without prior approval.
- Do not share identifying info of clients, including names, photos, or other personal information.

The situation is dynamic, with details changing rapidly in response to conditions on the ground. Please do not confirm specific details of relocation efforts. If in doubt, reach out to the contacts below.

If asked for specific information, please say we cannot comment on ongoing operations for the safety and privacy of our guests that are in the various stages of relocation. You may refer questions to spokespeople listed below.

If you decide to engage in communications, you may

- Share your organization's work with the relocation in broad terms. Here is an [example press release](#). This includes confirming your organization's participation and sharing general activities (i.e. case management, medical screening, immigration processing, etc.). Staff are requested to go through their respective national agencies prior to participating or issuing any media.
- Share information about your organization's work to resettle arriving Afghans and SIVs once they reach their final destination city.



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- Share reflections from staff and volunteers deployed to relocation efforts, after they have returned from their deployment, without sharing operational details or client information.
- Connect clients who arrive in their final destination for interviews, if they provide informed consent and if appropriate safety precautions are taken. Engage in an informed consent process to ensure that clients are aware of their rights and any potential risks, as well as the option to remain anonymous.

If you engage in media or communications, please consider the following message guidelines:

- Avoid using the word evacuation, instead opting for 'relocation' where possible.
- Avoid referring to any Fort by name, instead using U.S. government facility. For instance, instead of Ft. Lee, use "U.S. government facility in Virginia".
- Ensure that any reference to the support RAs offer to SIV applicants is firmly framed within the US resettlement context; for example, do not refer to NGOs helping people to book flights but instead focus on the resettlement support provided in the USA by RAs.

The ongoing relocation of arriving Afghans and SIVs is a partnership between multiple NGOs and U.S. partner agencies. If you are in doubt about media and communications, please reach out to one of the following partners for clarification:

PRM: PRM-PressOfficers@state.gov

IRC: Charlie Ozuturk, Sr. Communications Officer, Charlie.Ozuturk@rescue.org

Stanford Prescott, Communications Officer, Stanford.Prescott@Rescue.org

USCCB: Mark Priceman, Assistant Director, Communications –

mpriceman@usccb.org

Signature

Printed Name

Date

**Operation Allies Welcome (OAW)
Release and Waiver of Liability; Code of Conduct**

THIS RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY (the "Release and Waiver") is given on this _____ day of _____, 20____ by _____ ("Volunteer") in favor of The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), its directors, officers, employees, and agents, and the heirs, executors, personal representatives, successors and assigns of each of them.

Individual desires to serve as an unpaid volunteer on a USCCB project located in Ft. Pickett, VA and to engage in the other activities related to being an emergency volunteer (collectively, "Emergency Activities").

USCCB has a mission to provide emergency relief and training activities worldwide. Included in our activities are volunteer efforts related to disaster relief and recovery, as well as preparedness training (the "Emergency Activities"). The Emergency Activities involve significant risks, hazards, and/or dangers, some of which are inherent in the activities and cannot be eliminated or reduced (collectively, "Risks"). These Risks can cause many kinds of injury and/or loss, including but not limited to loss of property, damage to property, personal injury, illness, physical, mental or emotional trauma, disability and/or death (collectively, "Injury"). I understand that USCCB does not want to frighten me or reduce my enthusiasm for the Emergency Activities, but believes that it is important for me to be informed of the Risks of Injury. The Risks include, without limitation:

- Living and working in dangerous circumstances, with limited access to medical care and proper sanitation.
- Working with dangerous equipment, which may break, fail, malfunction, or otherwise cause bodily harm.
- USCCB and other volunteers, many of whom are untrained volunteers themselves, must make various judgments and decisions as they conduct the Emergency Activities in changing outdoor and indoor environments. These judgments are, by their nature, imprecise and subject to error. Consequently, there are risks involved in such decision making and conduct, including, without limitation, the risk that USCCB Personnel or other volunteers may misjudge Participant's ability or preparedness to perform a given task, or may misjudge weather, terrain, water and/or river level, or may misjudge the necessity or propriety of medical treatment or lack thereof.
- The potential exists that Participant, USCCB Personnel, other USCCB volunteers, or third parties (e.g. rescue squad, hospital) may act carelessly, recklessly or generally fail to exercise due care.
- Emergency Activities may take place in remote places, at a significant distance from medical facilities, where communication and transportation are difficult and where evacuation and medical care may be substandard or delayed.
- The possibility exists that civil unrest or insurrection may occur as a result of limited resources, inadequate food and medical care, or any other reason.

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- Such other risks, hazards, and dangers that are generally associated with volunteer relief work in the context of natural disasters, both during and before or after normal work/volunteering hours.
- These and other hazards and dangers may result in Injury to Participant, which includes without limitation, falling, being struck, dismembered or crushed, colliding with objects or people, experiencing vehicle collisions, or being injured or sickened by machinery, objects, animals, water, mold, or people (collectively, "Injury").
- I understand that the above description of Risks and Injuries is not complete, and that other unknown or unanticipated risks, hazards, and dangers may result in Injury or other loss. I acknowledge that participating in the Emergency Activities may require a degree of skill and knowledge different from other activities and that I have responsibilities as a Participant. I warrant that I have no mental or physical problems or limitations that might compromise or affect my ability to participate in Emergency Activities, and I represent that I am fully capable of participating in these activities without causing harm to others or myself. I acknowledge that USCCB and USCCB Personnel are, and have been available, to answer any and all questions I may have had about the nature and physical demands of these activities and the risks, hazards, and dangers associated with these activities. I understand that presence of any USCCB Personnel is no assurance of my safety or any lessening of the Risks, and I nonetheless undertake to participate in the Emergency Activities.
- My participation in the Emergency Activities is purely voluntary and I choose to participate in spite of and with knowledge of the Risks. Therefore, in exchange for being allowed to participate in the Emergency Activities, I assume and accept full responsibility for myself, for those Risks identified here and for those risks not identified, and for all Injury, death, property loss or expenses suffered by myself or by any third party arising out of those Risks and/or my own negligence or (to the extent allowed by applicable law) the negligence of USCCB or others.

Volunteer does hereby freely, voluntarily, and without duress, give this Release and Waiver under the following terms:

1. Waiver and Release

Volunteer does hereby release and forever discharge and hold harmless each of the USCCB Parties from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from Volunteer's Activities with respect to the Project and does covenant not to sue any of the USCCB Parties with respect to such matters.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Volunteer understands and agrees that this Release and Waiver discharges each of the USCCB Parties from any liability or claim that Volunteer may have against any of them with respect to any bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from Volunteer's Activities with respect to the Project, whether caused by the negligence of a USCCB Party or otherwise. Volunteer also understands and agrees that USCCB does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide financial assistance or any other assistance, including but not limited to medical, health or disability insurance in the event of injury, illness, death or property damage.

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2. Medical Treatment

Volunteer does hereby release and forever discharge the USCCB Parties from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first aid, treatment or other medical service rendered in connection with an emergency during the Volunteer's work on the Project.

3. Assumption of the Risk

Volunteer understands that participating in Volunteer Activities involves certain risks, including, but not limited to, serious injury and death (see "Risks" listed above). Volunteer hereby acknowledges the dangers involved and agrees to accept all risks of participation, whether caused by the negligence of a USCCB Party or otherwise. Volunteer also agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the USCCB Parties for any and all claims arising out of Volunteer's participation in Volunteer Activities.

4. Insurance Volunteer understands that USCCB does not carry or maintain any insurance coverage of any kind for a volunteer, their parents, guardians, trustees, dependents, heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns and expressly waives any such claim for compensation or liability on the part of USCCB.

5. Auto Insurance Volunteer understands that if he/she drives any vehicle (including personally owned vehicles or rental cars) for USCCB business, that he/she must be an insured driver. USCCB business includes travel to and from the mission. **Each Volunteer is strongly encouraged to have adequate insurance coverage in effect.**

6. Media/Photographic Release

Volunteer does hereby grant and convey unto USCCB, and each of its subsidiaries, affiliates, agents, advertising or promotional agencies, and partners, and all such entities' officers, directors, agents, employees, respective successors and assigns (collectively, "Authorized Parties"), the absolute and irrevocable right and permission to use, publish, broadcast and/or copyright the use of Volunteer's name, voice, photograph and/or likeness, caricature, and personal information, in its current form or as retouched, digitized, cropped, altered, distorted or modified in any way, in any and all advertising, promotional, or other materials based upon or derived from the Volunteer Activities in any manner, in any media whatsoever for any and all purposes, including by way of example but without limitation advertising, promoting or publicizing products and services throughout the universe, in perpetuity, in any and all media now known or hereafter devised (including without limitation on the Internet), without compensation. Volunteer further agrees that anything derived therefrom will be owned solely by the Authorized Parties. Volunteer shall not authorize the use of any print, negative or other copy thereof by anyone other than the Authorized Parties.

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7. Code of Conduct

As an unpaid USCCB volunteer, I agree to adhere to the following rules of conduct while operating on a USCCB sanctioned mission, community service event, social gathering or workplace. I will represent myself, the United States, and USCCB with the highest standard of personal conduct, to include, but not limited to, the following:

- a) I will obey the laws of the United States of America and all nations whose jurisdiction I am in.
- b) I will not lie, cheat or steal.
- c) I will not use illegal drugs of any kind as defined by Federal law.
- d) I will not drink alcohol in excess.
- e) I will not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex in any country, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior.
- f) I will not have illegal sexual relationships.
- g) I will represent myself and my profession with the highest standard of professional conduct; never violating the principles of my training or profession.
- h) I will not operate outside the scope of my physical, mental, or emotional ability.
- i) I will treat organizational funds as if they were my own by maintaining a mission profile that mitigates costs within reason and ensures the maximum impact for every dollar spent.
- j) I will not seek financial compensation for my activities, outside of USCCB approved reimbursements for reasonable expenses.
- k) I will render lawful service to all in need, regardless of race, gender, religion, nationality or any other distinguishing factor.
- l) I will never present partisan information (supporting or endorsing political parties for candidates for office) while representing USCCB, in accordance with our organization's 501(c)(3) status.
- m) I acknowledge USCCB's program participants, staff and volunteers hold a variety of political, social, religious and personal beliefs. I will respect the views and opinions held by others I come in contact with while serving and will not try to force someone to adopt my viewpoint or opinion.
- n) I will not bring a firearm, an illegal knife, or other weapon of any kind at any time into any facility occupied or vehicle in use by USCCB or while involved in any activities for USCCB, including personally--owned vehicles, regardless of whether I am licensed to carry the weapon or not.
- o) I will properly care and account for money, vehicles, equipment, assets, assistance and property for which I am responsible.
- p) I will obey all lawful directives issued by my assigned Incident Commander, Directors, Supervisors, Leaders or USCCB staff members.

I understand that a violation of these principles may result in warnings in accordance with the Three Strikes Policy and/or my immediate dismissal from USCCB and an early return to my home of record at my own expense.

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The undersigned acknowledges that she or he has read the foregoing and is fully aware of the legal consequences of signing this Release and Waiver, Assumption of Risks, and Code of Conduct document. The term of this document begins on the date executed by the undersigned and continues through the term of involvement with USCCB. All pages must be initialed. Page 5 must be fully executed. Thank you for your service.

***Required* Signature:** _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____