

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Office of Public Affairs

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**Operation Allies Welcome Announces Departure of Last Afghan Nationals from Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia**

WASHINGTON — Yesterday, the last group of Afghan nationals temporarily housed at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia as part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) departed the base. Marine Corps Base Quantico is the second of eight Department of Defense (DOD) installations supporting the resettlement of Afghan nationals that are also known as “safe havens” to complete operations. To date, more than 49,000 Afghan evacuees have been resettled in communities across our country. These resettlement efforts are led by the Department of State in close coordination with more than 290 local resettlement affiliates.

“As another one of our safe haven locations completes operations, we remain steadfast in our commitment to safely welcome our Afghan allies to the United States,” **said Robert J. Fenton, Jr., Senior Response Official for Operation Allies Welcome.** “With operations now completed at Marine Corps Base Quantico, I would like to thank all the federal staff, servicemembers, and volunteers who made it possible for more than 49,000 Afghan evacuees to begin to rebuild their lives in America. We are grateful for the support the local community has shown our Afghan allies and the staff working with them throughout this historic effort.”

DOD continues to provide temporary housing facilities for the remaining approximately 25,000 vulnerable Afghans who are in the process of completing their resettlement while at the following six safe havens: Camp Atterbury, Indiana; Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey; Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Pickett, Virginia; and Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. While on these military installations, Afghan evacuees have access to a range of services, including medical care and resettlement services, and they can apply for work authorization.

“Over the past four months, the men and women in uniform at Task Force Quantico have provided unflagging support to Operation Allies Welcome, working with myriad partners enabling the successful resettlement of more than 49,000 Afghans into their new communities throughout the United States,” **said Gen. Glen D. VanHerck, commander of U.S. Northern Command.** “I met with service members, interagency partners, and volunteers at each of the eight military installations that supported Operation Allies Welcome over the course of the mission. In every instance, I was impressed with the incredible professionalism and compassion displayed, and I am extraordinarily proud of what members of DOD did to contribute to a brighter future for these Afghans.

As of December 23, the U.S. has welcomed more than 75,000 Afghans to the United States through Operation Allies Welcome, providing them with support and assistance as they begin

their new lives in America – and we are prepared to welcome additional qualifying Afghans over the coming weeks and months. Prior to entering the United States, Afghan evacuees must successfully complete a rigorous, multi-layered screening and vetting process that includes biometric and biographic screenings conducted by intelligence, law enforcement, and counterterrorism professionals from multiple federal agencies. Afghan evacuees also receive critical vaccinations – which include measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), varicella, polio, COVID-19, and others – as a condition of their humanitarian parole. All OAW arrivals are tested for COVID-19.

Those who are interested in supporting the resettlement of vulnerable Afghans can go to [www.welcome.us](http://www.welcome.us) to learn more about how to get involved. [Welcome.US](http://www.welcome.us) is a national non-profit initiative to welcome and support Afghan nationals as they rebuild their lives in communities across America. Groups of individuals and community organizations can also apply to form a sponsor circle to directly support arriving Afghan evacuees. For more information on the Sponsor Circle Program and to learn how to apply to form a sponsor circle, visit [www.sponsorcircles.org](http://www.sponsorcircles.org).

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*Operation Allies Welcome is the coordinated effort across the federal government to support and resettle vulnerable Afghans, including those who worked on behalf of the United States. For more information, visit [www.dhs.gov/allieswelcome](http://www.dhs.gov/allieswelcome).*