



ILSAA
IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES
FOR AFGHAN ARRIVALS

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Informed Consent for ILSAA Focus Group Participation

OMB Control No.: 0970-0401
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THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT (PRA) OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) The purpose of this information collection is to gather information about your experience receiving legal services from the Immigration Legal Services for Afghan Arrivals project, an Office of Refugee Resettlement initiative. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average three hours per respondent, including the time for traveling to the focus group, reviewing instructions, and participating in the focus group. This is a voluntary collection of information. A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and no individual or entity is required to respond to, nor shall an individual or entity be subject to a penalty or failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Participation is Voluntary: You are being asked to participate in a focus group. Your participation in this focus group is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without any consequences to the services you receive from ILSAA or other agencies. This document contains important information about the focus group and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. You can ask questions before making your decision whether to participate.

Background of Study: The Immigration Legal Services for Afghan Arrivals (ILSAA), funded by HHS' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and implemented by U.S. Committee for Refugee and Immigrants (USCRI) and ICF, is conducting a study to explore the experiences of Afghans who resettled in the United States and received legal services from ILSAA. The aim is to understand how you have utilized and perceived the legal services provided by ILSAA. These insights will be vital in shaping future support and assistance.

Study Design: This focus group will be facilitated with the assistance of an interpreter and will provide a safe environment for you to express yourself. We expect the focus group to last about one and a half hours. The facilitator will guide the conversation, which we will record for study purposes, asking questions intended to learn about your experience with ILSAA. The interpreter will ensure clear communication between the facilitator and participants. In addition to recording, a note-taker will write your responses for analysis. An Afghan staff member, referred to as a subject matter expert, is also part of the facilitation team to help guide the team in cultural understanding. The facilitation team is bound by privacy agreements to ensure that all discussions remain private.

Risks of Participating: Participation in this focus group may involve certain risks. While discussing personal experiences or sensitive topics, you could experience emotional or psychological stress. Discussions might inadvertently touch upon sensitive cultural issues, leading to discomfort. Language barriers may lead to misunderstandings. However, facilitators trained in cultural sensitivity, and trauma-informed care are prepared to address and mitigate these risks. Your privacy is a primary concern, and measures are in place to ensure the security of your responses. You are free to not respond to any questions that you do not wish to answer. Because we have taken robust measures to ensure privacy, there is very minimal risk of your identity being disclosed.

Benefits of Participating: The following benefits may occur as a result of participating in this focus group: gain new insights, network with peers, get validation, influence ILSAA services, and receive financial compensation (incentive). We expect that the results of the focus group discussions will provide valuable insights for ILSAA to enhance services for



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Afghan arrivals. Your contributions will be instrumental in shaping future support and assistance for Afghans, potentially leading to improved service quality and accessibility.



The content in this document is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice on any matter. USCRI received competitive funding through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Contract #140D0423C0027. The ILSAA project is 100 percent supported by federal funds.



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Privacy and Data Management: Responses will be captured via audio recording and note-taking and will be securely stored internally. Audio recording will not be shared with anyone else other than the translating company to aid in producing a written report of the focus group. Once we have a written transcript of the audio, we will erase the recordings. Your name will not be in the transcript or any notes. Your name and any other identifying information will not be attached to your specific comments or views in any documents resulting from this focus group. In other words, this means that no one will be able to discover your identity from the data that we will collect and use in our study. Data will be shared internally with ILSAA and ORR representatives, and potentially with external entities on a case-by-case basis, as per ORR's policy. To that end, there may be circumstances where this information must be released or shared as required by law. All collected data will be retained for a period specified by ILSAA's policy, after which it will be securely disposed of or anonymized in compliance with data protection regulations.

Participant Guidelines:

- **Privacy:** Participants agree to not disclose information shared within the group to others outside of the session.
- **No Recording:** Participants are not permitted to record the session in any form (audio, video, or photographs) to respect the privacy of the group.

Token of Appreciation for Participation: You will receive a \$50 gift card after the completion of the focus group session, to reflect our appreciation for your contribution.

Ethical Approval: This study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This ensures adherence to high ethical standards in conducting this research.

Contact Information: If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the focus group, please contact Rafael Camacho Jr. at rafael.camachojr@icf.com or 833-286-0864. For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of ILSAA, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at ICF at irb@icf.com.

Consent Form Statement: I understand the content of this consent form and the information provided about the focus group. I understand and accept any associated risks. I had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

By signing below, I agree to the above statements and give my consent to participate in this focus group.

Participant Name
(Printed): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

