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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Table with 2 columns: Field Name and Value. Fields include Transmittal, Date, To, Suggested Distribution, From, Subject, Effective Date, and Contact Information.

Section 2

The purpose of this GIS message is to inform social services districts (districts) that the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary recently designated Afghanistan for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

TPS can be extended to a country with conditions that fall into one or more of three statutory bases for designation: ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. The TPS designation for Afghanistan went into effect on May 20, 2022, due to ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary and temporary conditions in Afghanistan that prevent Afghan nationals from returning to Afghanistan safely.

Through Operation Allies Welcome, most Afghan nationals who arrived as part of the evacuation effort were paroled into the United States on a case-by-case basis, for humanitarian reasons, for a period of 2 years and received employment authorization. Districts received guidance on this matter on October 25, 2021, via GIS 21 TA/DC071. As noted in the aforementioned GIS message, if otherwise eligible, these non-citizens are eligible for Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and will be coded Welfare Management System (WMS) Alien Citizenship Indicator (ACI) code "R."

It is important to note that TPS is not automatically granted to non-citizens. To receive TPS, non-citizens must apply for it by submitting the necessary information to the United States Citizenship and

Immigration Services (USCIS). USCIS is responsible for making the TPS eligibility determination. For non-citizens who may need assistance with acquiring TPS, districts may refer those non-citizens to the New York State Office for New Americans (ONA), which provides free services to all non-citizens in New York State. Districts may provide non-citizens with the ONA New Americans Hotline: 1-800-566-7636.

Districts are reminded that per [GIS 16 TA/DC053](#), OTDA recognizes non-citizens with TPS as Permanently Residing Under Color of Law (PRUCOL) for the purposes of SNA eligibility. If otherwise eligible, non-citizens with TPS can receive SNA. Further guidance can be found in [GIS 18 TA/DC042](#). Non-citizens granted TPS are ineligible for FA, HEAP and SNAP, unless they are also in some other qualifying non-citizen status. When determining Temporary Assistance (TA) eligibility for Afghan nationals, districts should also refer to [GIS 21 TA/DC071](#) and the [LDSS-4579](#): "Non-Citizen Eligibility Desk Aid," as these non-citizens may be eligible for federal benefits, if otherwise eligible.

The following is a list of USCIS documents that may be presented to districts by Afghan nationals, to verify they were granted TPS:

- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD), with a category code of A12, or
- Form I-797, Notice of Action, that shows the approval of an EAD with a category code of A12, or
- Form I-797, Notice of Action, indicating the approval of Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, or
- Any other authoritative USCIS document indicating TPS granted.

As a reminder, in accordance with [13-ADM-07](#), when determining TA eligibility, districts must use the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system to verify non-citizens' immigration documentation. Benefits must not be delayed, denied, reduced, or terminated, pending verification of non-citizens' documentation through the SAVE system. If all other factors of eligibility have been established and the non-citizens are otherwise eligible, benefits must be granted while awaiting responses from the SAVE system.

For information from USCIS regarding TPS, districts may visit:

<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>, or call the USCIS TPS Hotline at: (202) 272-1533.

Districts may refer to the LDSS-4579 for SNA eligibility information pertaining to non-citizens with TPS. [GIS 16 TA/DC053](#), [GIS 18 TA/DC042](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC028](#) and [GIS 21 TA/DC043](#) also include guidance on determining SNA eligibility for non-citizens with TPS. For any TA related questions, please contact the OTDA TA Bureau at: (518) 474-9344 or by email: otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov.