

My name is Noorullah Safaie, and I want to share my story to express my deep gratitude for the incredible support my family and I have received from the county. On May 21, 2024, my wife, three children, and I arrived in Maryland from Afghanistan as newcomers, facing overwhelming challenges. We had to figure out how to pay rent, enroll our children in school, find jobs, and meet our basic needs, all without knowing where to start or who to turn to for help.

One day, feeling frustrated and unsure of what to do next, I attended a job fair where I picked brochures from various organizations. I decided to call one of the numbers, and on the other end of the line was a kind woman who invited me to meet her in person. That meeting in Silver Spring changed everything.

With her guidance, I was able to access county resources, including referrals for food and clothing for my family, information on school enrollment and required documents, and mental health support services. Most importantly, she took the time to listen to me, helping me understand the challenges I was facing and showing me how to overcome them. She assisted me in identifying barriers to employment and connecting with training programs. The support I received gave me hope and a clear path forward.

Because of this guidance, I was able to secure a job, get my driver's license, and, most importantly, provide stability for my family. My kids are now enrolled in school and today, I can pay my rent on time and confidently navigate life in this new country.

I know there are many other families in our community who, like me, need that extra push and support to succeed. In difficult times like these, services like The Lighthouse and HHS are not just helpful, they are essential. That's why we must ensure these programs remain available for those who need them most.