

Open Season Continues for Long- Term Care Insurance

The open season for the federal government's new long-term care insurance program continues through December.

About 20 million people are eligible to apply for the insurance, according to the federal Office of Personnel Management. More than 860,000 persons, OPM said, have expressed interest in the program, the first significant expansion of federal benefits since the 1980s, when the Thrift Savings Plan was established.

During open season, federal employees may enroll in a variety of options to cover services ranging from nursing home care, home health care and assisted living facilities to adult day care, caregiver and respite care.

Those eligible to enroll in the program include federal employees and members of the uniformed services, annuitants, spouses of employees and annuitants, children 18 and older, parents, parents-in-law and stepparents of employees.

You may enroll online at www.ltcfeds.com. To receive an information kit and application, call toll-free 1-800-582-3337 (voice) or 1-800-843-3557 (TDD).

Applications are not available in the Department.

State Reassembles Afghan Law Code

The State Department recently provided comprehensive sets of Afghanistan's pre-1978 criminal, civil and commercial codes to Afghan judges, prosecutors and legal professionals in response to an Afghan government request. There were no complete copies left in the country after years of Soviet and Taliban rule.

State first became aware of the need after a professor and Afghan scholar at New York University, Barnett Rubin, contacted the Department to see if U.S. funding might be available. Already, Qadir Amiryar, an Afghan-American professor at The George Washington University, was working with several non-governmental organizations to assemble the texts. Seeing the value of the undertaking, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement agreed to fund the project.

Dr. Amiryar and the NGOs assembled the codes piecemeal from Afghanistan, the United States Institute of Peace, The George Washington University and the Library of Congress, with assistance from the Center of Afghanistan Studies at the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

The American Bar Association Asia Law Initiative and the International Resources Group won the contract to reproduce and disseminate the codes. The U.S. Embassy in Kabul oversaw the distribution in coordination with the Afghan Interim Authority and the Ministry of Justice.

The documents, many of them more than 40 years old, were scanned on computers in Washington, D.C. The ABA and IRG hand carried the actual film for the

printing to Islamabad, where 1,000 versions were printed in Pashtu and Dari and 200 in English. The Ministry of Justice received the codes on June 7, 2002.

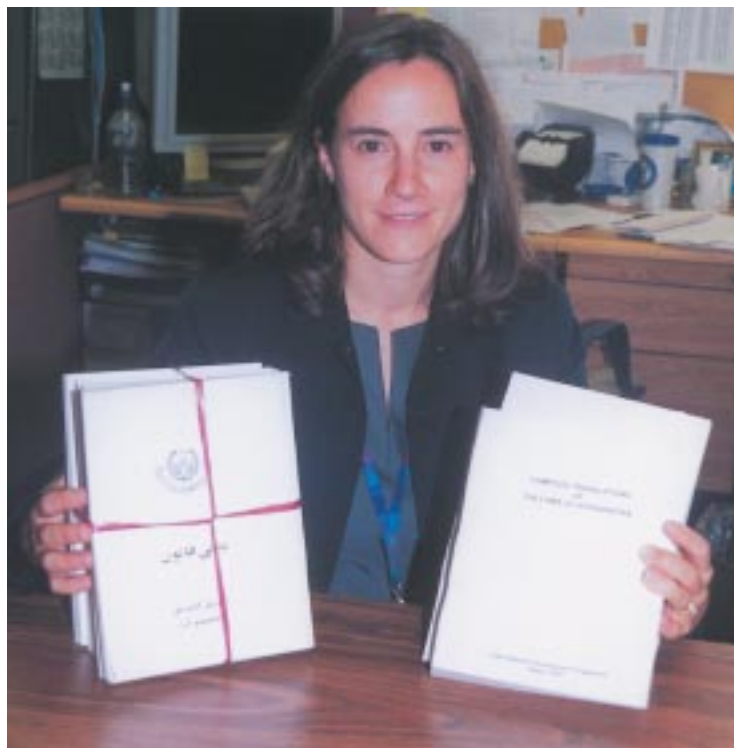


Photo by Matthew Ryan

Michele Greenstein with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement oversaw the Afghan code project. "The quick U.S. action to reassemble the Afghan legal codes was an important tangible step toward reestablishing the rule of law in Afghanistan," she said. "This will have a real impact."