



**State of Florida  
Department of Children and Families**

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Chad Poppell**  
Secretary

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 26, 2020  
**TO:** Members of the Miami-Dade Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** Lourdes Leconte, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** February 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes

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### **THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:**

**Date:** April 10, 2020  
**Time:** 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 Noon  
**Location:** Via teleconferencing  
888-585-9008 Access code 951-031-034 #  
**Contact:** Lourdes Leconte  
**Office:** (786) 257-5173  
**Cell:** (305) 401-3374  
**E-Mail:** Lourdes.Leconte@myflfamilies.com

This taskforce has been active in the Miami area for many years. The participants are representatives of various government agencies, private not-for-profit organizations and mutual assistance associations. An average of about twenty-five to thirty people attend these meetings on a regular basis. The purpose of these meetings is to increase awareness of the refugee populations, share best practices, build collaborations between agencies, spot trends in refugee populations, characteristics or movements, help create good communication among service providers; get informed about upcoming community events, request for proposals, training, workshops, conferences, etc., at the local, state and national level; discuss refugee program service needs and possible solutions to meeting those needs. Meeting participants also receive updates, information and clarification on new federal and state regulations and policy changes pertaining to refugees.

If there are any issues that you would like to include in the agenda, please contact me at the above address.

***I look forward to seeing you at the meeting!***

401 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite N-812 Miami, Florida 33128

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Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

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## MIAMI-DADE REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 08, 2019

### ATTENDEES:

Marielisa Amador; Bojan Bajic; Sabine Balmir; Berta Cassidy; Diego Castro; Martha Ferrer; Emilie Goesser; Maria Hernandez; Silvia Lopez; Dorothy Martin; Elmer Morales; Sergio Mora; Uliss Pacheco; Eduardo Morras; Cristobal Perez; Yeen Perez; Leydi sosa; Edgar Tobon; Carmen Torres; Natalia Duarte; Erika Deetjen; Liuba Abrov; Diana Formoso; Maria Fernanda Garcia; Claudia Marquez; Fernando Reyes, Paula Sobrero; Paulina Velez; Sol Fauve; Peter Marin; Angelique Williams; Inelda Canate; Maria Arriaga; Adriana Calzada; Sandrina portillo; Sheria Goodman; Dianelys Gomez; Rosaida Galano; Maria Negreis. Lourdes Leconte

### INTRODUCTION:

Lourdes Leconte, DCF Refugee Services Community Liaison for the Southern Region welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

### PRESENTATIONS:

**Natalia M. Duarte Reyes, MBA -MA and, Erika Deetjen**, Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau, Atlanta Region Census Center– provided an overview of the 2020 census and shared with the attendees the importance of getting everyone counted. The goal of the presentation was to educate potential Complete Count Committee leaders and members of the community about the 2020 Census and their roles and to equip CCC leaders with the information they need to inform their members on ways they can help promote participation in the 2020 Census.



General PPT -  
Census 2020.pdf

**Marielisa Amador - Medical/Health Care Prog Analyst, AHCA Doral - Bureau of Medicaid RPA - Miami.** – Provided an overview of the Florida Medicaid Program, she said Medicaid is a medical assistance program that provides health coverage to low-income families and individuals. This includes children, parents, pregnant women, seniors, and people with disabilities through the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care System. The Agency for Health Care Administration is the state agency that manages the Florida Medicaid Program. It enlists the help of many partners to deliver the services. The Department of Children and Families determines Medicaid eligibility through the ACCESS program. The Social Security Administration determines eligibility through the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. The fiscal agent for Medicaid Manages Florida Medicaid Management Information System (FMMIS) Process Medicaid claims for fee-for-service providers and services Assist with billing questions and provider enrollment. The Statewide Medicaid Managed Care started operation in 2013-2014. SMMC plans are offering a large number of extra benefits (“expanded benefits”) to their enrollees at no cost to the state. Most Medicaid recipients must enroll in an MMA plan. There are now essentially 5 types of plans under the SMMC program.

## REFUGEE SERVICES (RS) UPDATE:

**REFUGEE SERVICES UPDATE** (*Sent via E-Mail in January and February*)

**Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM**

### **SOUTH FLORIDA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES MINUTES – FEBRUARY 2020**

**South Florida VOLAG Consortium**

**None**

### **LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – FEBRUARY 2020**

**Immigration and Legal Issues Subcommittee**

**Minutes for February 5, 2020**

**Held at Americans for Immigrant Justice**

Submitted by Brad Ginter

**Attendees: Berta Cassidy, Roketa Mansfield, John Rico, Maureen Porras, David Claros, Adonia Simpson, Miriam Garcia, Jorge Vielman, Dorothy Martin, Angelique Williams, Inelda Canate, Marie Jean, Fritzlaine Julme, Tim Drahovsky, Brad Ginter**

### **USCIS**

USCIS is holding a training for Naturalization teachers tomorrow in Aventura.

The comment period for the proposed rule to adjust the fees for USCIS applications has been reopened. Comments may be submitted until February 10, 2020.

The US Supreme Court recently ruled that USCIS can implement the changes to the “public charge” rule, which will take effect on February 24, 2020. USCIS will only apply the final rule to applications and petitions postmarked on or after Feb. 24, 2020. New and updated forms have been posted to the USCIS website. USCIS will reject prior editions of forms if postmarked on or after Feb 24, 2020. *[These changes affect any applications for adjustment under section 245. The DOS may be many months away from implementing changes for consular processing overseas.]*

Because of a federal court injunction in December blocking the elimination of federal means-tested benefits as a basis for receiving a fee waiver, USCIS has reverted to the 03/13/18 edition of the I-912 Fee Waiver. USCIS will also accept prior editions or a written request.

**CBP**

On January 31, 2020, the government issued 212(f) restrictions on travel from China by persons who are not USC's or LPR's, because of the recent outbreak of the coronavirus there. Travelers entering the US are being rerouted through fewer than a dozen US airports. Prior to the restrictions taking effect, large numbers of people were arriving at MIA, which is not among the approved entry points. CBP is working with the CDC to identify those people having been in China, and the CDC is screening travelers with symptoms consistent with coronavirus.

John indicated that although there were media reports of increased targeting of individuals, particularly travelers with Iranian background reentering the U.S. in the state of Washington from Canada in early January 2020 (following the assassination of Iranian General Soleimani), there were no policy changes or directives issued by CBP.

In the fall of 2019 Poland became a visa waiver country.

The use of facial recognition, which is voluntary, is gradually expanding, although there are no plans to expand its use in Florida in the next six months. Facial recognition is widely used by cruise lines during passenger debarkation. At this time there is 97% accuracy in being able to identify people correctly.

**Information, Issues raised by members**

ILRC has a webinar on the changes in the public charge rule.

A member reports that the case of an EAD previously denied by the Memphis Field Office has now been reopened. (This is a south Florida parolee. Berta and others had previously elevated this problem.)

A member reports that the Tampa District Office has not held any stakeholder meetings for some time now. Others report difficulties in resolving cases in Miami, because of recent changes to INFOPASS.

Some EAD's are being approved more quickly. Berta reminded members that those EAD's which were recently issued in error must be returned to USCIS.

A member reports the case of a TPS'er who was detained at reentry to the US, based on their TPS having expired, even though the TPS had been automatically extended to January 2021. This person was detained for a month and a half, until released by a judge. John indicated that he was not aware of any training being given to CBP officers regarding the issue of the automatic extension of TPS (for citizens of El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, and other countries).

Members are seeing an increasing variety of documents issued to people being released at the border. One titled 'Interim Notice Authorizing Parole,' although not on an I-94 form, can be used to show parole status. Another, 'Notification to Grant Parole,' recently seen by a member and issued by ICE, clearly seems to qualify as a grant of parole.

**EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – FEBRUARY 2020****2020 REFUGEE TASK FORCE  
EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING****February. 14, 2020**

- REVEST is already enrolling students for the second Mini Term of Spring 2020 from March to May 2020. So far around 800 VESOL students have been enrolled program wide in this current Term of Spring A, and around 800 are going to be enrolled for the second Mini Term for Spring 2020. Approximately 200 students have been projected to test in our next Orientation Sessions throughout these months in our different Centers.
- The REVEST Program has been able to process 562 vocational registrations so far in the current contract year. REVEST continues with a campaign initialized in September 2019 (Fall 2197) to increase vocational registrations. We have continued to provide our students with Vocational Training Orientations during each VESOL Mimi-Term to start informing them, since lower levels, about their training options. These ongoing presentations also focus on the requirements for each type of course/Program, including VESOL completion, TABE scores and the in-state status; and include information about employment projections, growth and salaries as per a Labor market Analysis conducted by REVEST. In addition, the Vocational Coordinator attends Faculty meetings to discuss and develop strategies with the instructors to push the students' assimilation into vocational training, and the use of the vocational flyers in communicative activities. We continue providing training and advisement to advisors to be updated about changing procedures and system issues.
- Faculty meetings were conducted with all REVEST instructors Jan. 16,17, 2020. All procedures were reviewed with instructors to ensure a successful retention effort. Vocational and Intake Coordinators were present as well as student advisors to review all procedures and strategies employed to place and retain students. Instructors were able to give feedback directly to coordinators to help track attendance patterns and trends. Student attendance is being monitored on a weekly basis to attain optimal retention and facilitate communication between staff and faculty.
- REVEST continues to offer ESOL classes through scholarships at Community Education (Miami Dade College) Kendall and West Campus. This is allowing clients to be served by REVEST in a broader range of sites. Our current sites in Hialeah and Wolfson are also offering classes and we are ready to serve clients. REVEST continues to monitor progress of our eight-week courses and our mini-term system. We are also monitoring students receiving scholarships in the Kendall and West Miami Dade College sites. Please continue to get the word out that REVEST is eager to serve the educational needs of our clients.
- REVEST staff attended the USCIS Miami Teacher Training Seminar scheduled on February 6, 2020 at the North Dade-Aventura Branch Library. All enjoyed

gaining valuable information and networking with community partners. We appreciate all efforts of USCIS to keep us updated on current educational tools and practices regarding Citizenship Preparation.

- The new trimester at SAVES (2019-2) started on January 06, 2020 and will end on April 09, 2020. The total enrollment in the SAVES program is 1017. This number includes 356 new clients and 41 Success Management Academy (SMA) GED in Spanish program clients, 16 – 18 years old.
- We are asking every provider to refer clients to the SAVES program. We offer English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), General Basic Education, SMA GED in Spanish, and a wide range of vocational/technical programs. We also provide degree translation and validation services for our students. This service is provided for students with four-year degrees and higher, including licensing; associate degrees; and high school diplomas. For this contract year, we have already translated and validated documents for 80 students.
- The SAVES program continues to serve clients at 14 schools where SAVES school contacts are housed. Three other schools, George T. Baker Aviation Technical College, Miami Lakes Educational Center and Technical College, and D. A. Dorsey Technical College have received SAVES vouchers and are serving referred SAVES clients. The voucher program has been extended to all adult education centers and technical colleges in M-DCPS. Eligible SAVES clients can take advantage and the opportunity to attend classes to learn English and complete a vocational program that can lead to a successful career in the school that is most convenient to them.
- SAVES continues to work closely with the M-DCPS Office of Public Relations, the Marketing Department, and SAVES schools to reach out to the community and disseminate information about the SAVES program. SAVES is currently advertising via mail-out, newspaper, radio, career fairs, opening of school meetings, and fence banners in every school. We are exploring the possibility of advertising in social media.
- To continue to increase enrollments and retention, schools monitor student attendance and student withdrawals. Students are contacted when they are absent and/or withdraw from classes and offered alternatives, based on the reason for their withdrawals. SAVES schools administrators and SAVES school contacts continue to engage in an aggressive marketing campaign to recruit students by participating in open-houses and distributing flyers to the public at supermarkets, churches, and community agencies. SAVES school contacts continue to present at students' orientation and the public announcement system to promote their schools and the SAVES program. About 35% of the enrolled students are newly recruited students. Some of those students are new to the school system; others are returning students that SAVES contacts have reached through marketing.
- SAVES school contacts also are recruiting eligible high school students by attending high school graduations, where they have tables with SAVES information, thereby expanding the

opportunities for newly high school graduates to participate in our vocational/technical programs.

- The SAVES Success Management Academy (SMA) GED in Spanish program for students 16-18 years old continues to be implemented in seven SAVES locations. Students are graduating from the program and continuing their education by enrolling in institutions of higher education. Some graduates enrolled at SAVES technical colleges; and others join the workforce to take advantage of better employment opportunities.
- At Miami Coral Park Adult Education Center, during the trimester that ended on December 20, 2019,
  - Four students from the SMA GED in Spanish program graduated and plan to attend Miami Dade College in the Fall;
  - Six SAVES students earned an industry certification for QuickBooks and registered for the last portion of the Accounting Program; and
  - Seven students became full program completers and found employments in fields related to their studies.
- At Miami Sunset Adult Education Center,
  - Forty SAVES students received Award Certificates for moving from one level of ESOL to a higher level during the last trimester (2019-1);
  - Students who have been absent for three consecutive days are contacted and encouraged to return to class. As a result, 90% of those students contacted returned to class; and
  - Three students were referred to register at vocational centers/technical colleges to study Networking and Nail Specialist during the 2019-1 trimester, since Miami Sunset Adult Education does not offer these courses
- SAVES Students' success stories are shared at the SAVES District meetings and published on the SAVES website [www.savesdadeschools.com](http://www.savesdadeschools.com). We invite everyone to read them.
- The next SAVES District meeting will be held on March 18, 2020, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM at Hialeah-Miami Lakes Adult Education Center. Please let us know if you would like to attend and share any information with SAVES school personnel.
- If you have any questions about our program, you can call us at (305) 823-5020 or visit the SAVES website at [www.savesdadeschools.com](http://www.savesdadeschools.com).

<b>EMPLOYMENT SERVICES REPORT – FEBRUARY 2020</b>
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None

**USCIS UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2020****USCIS Miami & Caribbean District  
February 2020 Update****Fee Rule Proposal-Comment Period Reopened Until February 10, 2020**

On November 14, 2019, DHS published a proposed rule in the Federal Register at 84 FR 62280, wherein DHS proposed, among other things, to adjust certain immigration and naturalization benefit request fees charged by USCIS, add new fees for certain benefit requests, establish multiple fees for petitions for nonimmigrant workers, and limit the number of beneficiaries on certain forms to ensure that USCIS has the resources it needs to provide adequate service to applicants and petitioners.

On December 9, 2019, DHS published a proposed rule; extension of comment period; availability of supplemental information at 84 FR 67243. That document extended the comment period for the proposed rule through December 30, 2019. This notice reopens and extends the comment period through February 10, 2020, to allow additional time for interested persons to provide comments on the proposed rule. As part of this rulemaking, DHS will consider comments received during the entire public comment period, including comments received since December 30, 2019.

To read more, please visit: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-01-24/html/2020-01189.htm>

**Implementation of the Public Charge Inadmissibility Rule, January 31, 2020**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will implement the [Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds Final Rule](#) beginning Feb. 24, 2020, except in Illinois, where the rule remains enjoined by a federal court (as of Jan. 31, 2020). DHS has sought a stay of this injunction from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in light of the Supreme Court decision to stay the last nationwide injunctions. USCIS will provide additional guidance if the injunction in Illinois is lifted.

The Final Rule, issued in August and originally scheduled to be effective in October, prescribes how DHS would determine whether an alien is inadmissible to the United States based on the alien's likelihood of becoming a public charge at any time in the future, as set forth in the Immigration and Nationality Act. The Final Rule also addresses USCIS' authority to issue public charge bonds in the context of applications for adjustment of status. Finally, the Final Rule includes a requirement that aliens seeking an extension or stay of change of status demonstrate that they have not received public benefits over the designated threshold since obtaining the nonimmigrant status they seek to extend or change.

This means that USCIS will only apply the final rule to applications and petitions postmarked (or, if applicable, submitted electronically) on or after Feb. 24, 2020. For applications and petitions that are sent by commercial courier (such as UPS, FedEx, and DHL), the postmark date is the date on the courier receipt. After Feb. 24, 2020, except in Illinois, we will reject prior editions of forms if postmarked on or after Feb. 24, 2020. If we receive an application or petition



on the incorrect edition of the form, the applicant or petitioner will need to submit a new application or petition.

To read more, please visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/news/news-releases/uscis-announces-public-charge-rule-implementation-following-supreme-court-stay-nationwide-injunctions>

### **Revised Forms and Updated Policy Manual Guidance**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services posted several new and revised forms to our website on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2020. These forms are associated with the Feb. 24, 2020 implementation of the [Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds Final Rule](#).

These new and revised forms will not be used in [Illinois](#), where the Final Rule remains enjoined by a federal court. The Department of Homeland Security has requested a stay of the Illinois injunction from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in light of the Supreme Court decision to stay the last nationwide injunction. If you are applying for adjustment of status and live in Illinois, or are a petitioning for/are an employer of an alien applying for an extension of nonimmigrant stay or change of nonimmigrant status and are located in Illinois, please review the information on our [website](#) for Illinois residents to access forms and information about how to apply in light of the injunction. Should the injunction in Illinois be lifted, USCIS will provide additional public guidance.

Once the Final Rule has been implemented on Feb. 24, 2020, we will reject prior editions of forms if the postmark date is on or after Feb. 24, 2020, except in Illinois. For applications and petitions sent by commercial courier, the postmark date is the date on the courier receipt. If we receive an application or petition on a prior edition of a form, we will reject that form, and the applicant or petitioner will need to file a new application or petition.

For additional information on new and revised forms, please visit:

<https://www.uscis.gov/news/alerts/public-charge-inadmissibility-final-rule-revised-forms-and-updated-policy-manual-guidance>

### **Updates to Biometrics Collection Guidance**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced updates to its [Policy Manual](#) that address mobile biometrics services and fingerprint waivers.

USCIS requires biometrics from individuals who submit applications, petitions, and requests for certain immigration benefits. USCIS uses biometrics to verify identity, produce secure documents, and conduct required criminal and national security background checks.

#### **Mobile Biometrics Services**

Generally, individuals have their biometrics collected by appointment at an applicant support center (ASC). In limited cases, at the discretion of the agency, USCIS may make special arrangements to collect biometrics from those who cannot attend scheduled ASC appointments in person, due to disability or other health reasons.

#### **Fingerprint Waivers**

The updated guidance also clarifies that an approved fingerprint waiver is tied to the specific petition, request, or application listed on notice of the appointment for submission of biometrics at the ASC. In other words, someone cannot use an approved waiver for any other biometrics requirement for any future filings.

To read more, please visit:

<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/policymanual/updates/20200130-MobileBiometrics.pdf>

### **Process for Accepting Petitions for Relatives Abroad**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced that, as part of the adjustment of its international footprint to increase efficiencies, [Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative](#), will only be processed domestically by USCIS or internationally by the Department of State in certain circumstances beginning Feb 1, 2020.

DOS will assume responsibility for certain services previously provided at USCIS international offices, services that DOS already provide in countries where USCIS does not have a presence. Eligible active-duty service members assigned overseas will file their Form I-130 locally with DOS, as will certain non-military petitioners who meet specific criteria for consular processing.

To read more, please visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/news/news-releases/uscis-updates-process-accepting-petitions-relatives-abroad>

### **Policy for Review**

USCIS seeks your input on the new or revised USCIS Policy Manual guidance listed below within the specified comment period. In addition, you can submit feedback on the USCIS Policy Manual at any time by clicking the “Feedback” button on the USCIS Policy Manual page. The USCIS Policy Manual is the agency’s centralized online repository for USCIS’ immigration policies and contains guidance for USCIS officers.

To read more, please visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/outreach/feedback-opportunities/policy-manual-comment>

Type of Document for Comment	Title of Document	Related Documents	Opening/Closing Dates for Comment	Effective Date of Policy
USCIS Policy Manual	Biometrics Services Updates	<a href="#">Policy Alert (PDF, 294 KB)</a>	January 30, 2020 to February 12, 2020	January 30, 2020
USCIS Policy Manual	Accepting Petition for Alien Relative (Form I-130) Abroad	<a href="#">Policy Alert (PDF, 316 KB)</a>	January 31, 2020 to February 13, 2020	February 1, 2020

Below is a listing of our upcoming outreach sessions and events. These events are free and open to the public. If you need additional information, please contact –

[Berta.M.Cassidy@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Berta.M.Cassidy@uscis.dhs.gov) or [Roketa.F.Mansfield@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Roketa.F.Mansfield@uscis.dhs.gov) .

Date	Time	Type of Event	Location
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February 8, 2020	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Kendale Lakes Library 15205 SW 88 St Miami, FL 33196
February 8, 2020	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Naturalization Information Session	North Trail Park 780 NW 127th Avenue Miami, FL 33182
February 18, 2020	6:00 – 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Southwest Regional Library 16835 Sheridan Street Pembroke Pines, FL 33331
February 19, 2020	1:00 – 3:00 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Miami Central Driver's License Office 3721 NW 7 ST Miami, FL 33126
February 25, 2020	12:30 – 2:30 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Mall of the Americas Driver's License Center 7795 W. Flagler St. Suite #82C Miami, FL 33126

### ❖ Upcoming Naturalization Ceremonies

Below are scheduled dates for upcoming administrative N-400 naturalization ceremonies in our four South Florida field offices. Please note that although these dates are current on the date of issuance of this update, the dates are subject to change without notice.

- **Miami Field Office** – February 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>
- **Hialeah Field Office** - February 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>
- **Oakland Park Field Office** - February 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>
- **Kendall Field Office** - February 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>