



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

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Chad Poppell**  
Secretary

## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 13, 2020  
**TO:** Members of the Orlando Area Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** David Draper, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** April 8, 2020 Task Force Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
**Time:** 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon  
**Location:** Senior Resource Alliance  
3319 Maguire Blvd. Orlando, fl. 32803  
Suite 100.  
**Contact:** David Draper  
**Office:** (407) 317-7335  
**Fax:** (407) 245-2766  
**E-Mail:** [David.Draper@myflfamilies.com](mailto:David.Draper@myflfamilies.com)

This task force has been active in the Orlando 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 thirty to thirty-five 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 at the local, state and national level, request for proposals, training, workshops, conferences, discuss refugee service needs and explore solutions to those needs. Meeting participants 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!***

400 W. Robinson Street, S1111C, Orlando, Florida 32801

## ORLANDO AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

### INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held via teleconference call. Approximately 19 people were in attendance. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, represented the Florida Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Rosa Chaves, Community Liaison for the Central Region, was also present. Everyone introduced themselves and the agencies that they represented.

### Special presentation

#### I. Step Up for Students – Melissa Jaramillo/Manager, Community Outreach

- The presenter provided an overview of Step Up for Students which is a state-approved nonprofit scholarship funding organization that helps administer five scholarships for Florida children and youth. The organization empowers parents to pursue and engage in the most appropriate learning options for their children, with an emphasis on families who lack the information and financial resources to access these options. The presenter stated that more information can be found on the organization's webpage: <https://www.stepupforstudents.org/>.

### GENERAL UPDATES/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **David Draper, Department of Children and Families Community Liaison Manager** recommends that taskforce members regularly review DCF's COVID-19 webpage (<https://www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/>). Information on the page states that DCF has submitted a federal waiver to temporarily increase Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit amounts to the maximum monthly allowable amount based on household size. The DCF COVID-19 webpage also states that clients requiring a benefits recertification (those scheduled to recertify in April and May) would receive a six-month extension on the requirement to recertify. Those receiving Medicaid benefits will continue to receive those benefits through the end of the state of emergency.
- **Debbie Vega, Catholic Charities of Central Florida** announced that Catholic Charities' physical offices are closed to the public, but Catholic Charities will still be assisting clients telephonically/virtually. Catholic Charities has set up a new phone line to assist both new and existing clients. Information will be provided in three languages (English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole). The phone number is 407-486-1507. Catholic Charities stated that they are assisting some new clients, but the number of new arrivals has decreased. Catholic Charities stated that clients can submit applications and work registrations online. Thus far, Catholic Charities refugee employment program has been able to successfully place newly unemployed clients into new jobs. The Adult Education program is offering hybrid classes (assisting clients virtually online and over the phone). Refugee clients in the vocational program at Orlando Tech (in Orange and Seminole Counties) have been studying remotely since last week. The Catholic Charities Youth and Mentoring programs

are also conducting all activities online with clients. The Catholic Charities legal program is scheduling appointments via phone calls and completing applications online with electronic signatures. Face-to-face contact with clients is occurring by appointment only for those applying for Employment Authorization (electronic signatures are not permitted with that application). The Catholic Charities food pantry is providing food on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:30 AM to 12:30PM.

- **Anne Packham, Marketplace Project Coordinator** is also working virtually. She is working with refugee and non-refugee clients to assist them in signing up for Marketplace insurance. For clients who lose their health insurance, they have a 60-day window to apply for insurance through the Marketplace. For assistance, clients can call 877-564-5031.
- **Felipe Sousa-Matos Rodriguez, City of Orlando** informed the task force that public activities are currently canceled. Employees at the city are working from home. Felipe encouraged task force members to review the city's webpage ([www.orlando.gov](http://www.orlando.gov)) where information is provided in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. He also encouraged individuals to complete the 2020 census.
- **Kimberly Young/Tamika Fanel, CareerSource** informed the task force that they are currently working virtually. Clients can place paperwork in a box at the front of the facility (or it can be mailed). CareerSource stated that several companies are currently hiring, including the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) which is posting new jobs (they are looking for 250 bilingual individuals to assist with customer service and billing).
- **Madelyn Torres, Bays Family Connections** stated that her organization is still receiving referrals and is working via 'telehealth'. Services are free. The organization can be contacted at 407-704-9551.
- **Marie-Jose Francois, Community Health Centers**, announced that they have 12 locations currently open and are scheduling appointments with doctors. They do screenings before the clients come into the office. Clients can call 407-905-8827.
- **Sandra Algarin, Community Health Centers**, announced that they also have pharmacy and delivery services available (407-905-8827)
- **Michael Montgomery, Community Coordination Care for Children (4C)**, informed the task force that 4C is currently working from home, but is still providing services to children and clients online/virtually. If a client's service date is ending in April or May, childcare services will automatically be extended for sixty days. Some childcare facilities have closed, but over 100 remain open. If a child is in a daycare that closes, they can be transferred to another site that is still open.
- **Pascal Vincent, Community Health Centers**, announced that dental and medical services are still being provided (by appointment).

**NEXT MEETING**

**Date:** Wednesday June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Time:** 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

**Location:** Senior Resource Alliance  
3319 Maguire Blvd. Orlando, FL 32803. Suite 100

**Contact:** [David.Draper@myflfamilies.com](mailto:David.Draper@myflfamilies.com) (407) 317-7335  
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