



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2019
TO: Members of the Broward Refugee Task Force
FROM: Miriam Rosario (RS)
SUBJECT: March 21, 2019 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: May 16, 2019
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Location: Family Success Division, Community Action
900 N.W. 31 St. Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
Contact: Miriam Rosario
Office: (561) 227-6722
Cell: (561) 459-6098
E-Mail: Miriam.rosario@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Broward area in the past few years. The participants are representatives of various government agencies, private not-for-profit organizations and volunteer groups. An average of about twenty to twenty-five 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!

Southeast Region - Circuit 15
111 South Sapodilla Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33401

BROWARD COUNTY REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held at Broward Department of Children and Families Miriam Rosario (MIR), Community Liaison represented the DCF, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Miriam thanked ESS/DCF for hosting the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves, services and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Angelica Coronel, Project RECAP, Program Manager, provided a presentation on the **Project RECAP, Broward College**. This is a new program focused on career-readiness for refugees. Broward College has been approved for funding through DHHS/ORR for the new Refugee Career Pathways Program. Project RECAP is an extension of services offered from their college's Project RENEW (Refugees Entering New Enterprises and Workforce) program, which has offered adult education and basic computer skills training. Participants first enter Project RENEW, take an English competency exam and then complete ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses depending on their level of understanding. They later transition to Project RECAP, taking career-readiness classes and receiving educational assessments, customized career development plans and referrals to community services to aid transitions, among other services.

The new program will offer occupational training, with four high-priority industries targeted: health sciences; business; industry, manufacturing, construction and transportation; and information technology. Some employers supporting Project RECAP include Memorial Healthcare System; Bolton Medical; Boardroom Communications; 94th AeroClaims; Auxis Managed Solutions; Code Explorers; Lauderdale Marine; and Rosciolo Yachting Center.

Jocelyn Martinez, former director of Project RENEW, who was named director for Project RECAP, stated that the grant will offer participants a clear pathway to meaningful employment. It will help students gain language skills necessary for their careers. Students also will be able to use other services offered in Broward College.

Virginia Yarce, Social Work Supervisor and Doris Frech, LLM, Unaccompanied Child Case Manager for **Bethany Christian Services**, provided a presentation on the services offered by **Bethany Christian Services of Florida (BCSF)**. Bethany Christian Services has been caring for children and families for more than 70 years. They are a global non-profit organization working in 15 countries and five continents. As a worldwide leader in adoption and family services. BCSF assists unaccompanied immigrant children to reunify them with family and friends in the United States. Bethany staff accomplishes this by providing in-home social services for unaccompanied children in federal custody who have been identified as survivors of trafficking, fled community violence, have endured some type of abuse, or are being reunified with a caretaker. Bethany provides many vital resources to these families. Other services include: in-home country adoption, foster care, adoption, pregnancy groups, family counseling, case management, home visits, and family preservation. Bethany functions through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Department of Health & Human Services Office of

Trafficking in Persons. They can provide comprehensive case management services to foreign-born victims of trafficking.

NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

Miriam Rosario, Community Liaison, RS DCF discussed the development of a **strong outreach plan (OP)**. Members discussed their collaboration to help refugee clients and newly arrived asylees in the community. The Broward Outreach Planning Team met and discussed collaboration and outreach strategies. The team reviewed Refugee Service Performance Review data to improve the plan.

World Refugee Day (WRD)- WRD will be part of the Broward outreach plan to educate the community and develop resources for refugees in Broward. Broward College/Project RENEW (BC/PR) is hosting WRD event again at their OMNI Auditorium, North Campus. Members discussed previous activities and events in Broward. USCIS will be participating with a Naturalization Ceremony. Clara Jaramillo, PR/BC Director has reserved WRD for June 18, with a Refugee Award ceremony. She distributed the WRD nominations forms.

GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

USCIS, Berta Cassidy Community Relations Officer (CRO) reminded all about Information Services Modernization – On March 18th, the Information Services Modernization Program expanded to all Miami and Caribbean District Field Offices. This program ends self-scheduling of InfoPass appointments and instead encourages applicants to use USCIS online information resources and the USCIS Contact Center. As a reminder, individuals needing in-person service must make an appointment through the USCIS Contact Center at 1-800-375-5283. This includes individuals needing a stamp in their passport for travel/work, emergency advance parole requests, local filings and motions. Expanded Fee Payment System - On March 18th, all Miami and Caribbean District field offices rolled into a new expanded fee payment system. Under this new payment system, we will only accept personal, attorney or business checks as well as debit/credit cards. Please note: this change only applies to locally submitted filings.

ESS/DCF- Wilber Roney; discussed RAP/ACCESS benefits eligibility. He said it was important to inform refugees and referring agencies of eligibility criteria.

DOH-Liliana Marin, representative from Kidcare, informed the task force of the upcoming health event and will bring the RS/DCF Welcome Brochures to distribute during the event. Please contact her with any questions.

CSCB-Lydia Beggs, Community Liaison CareerSource's Broward spoke about the new programs and services available thru CSB and she distributed informational material.

RS Contracted providers:

CWS Francisco Fernandez, stated that some Cuban arrivals are arriving with only an "Order of Release on Recognizance". CWS (in Broward) indicated that Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) are being delayed which impacts refugees. Berta from USCIS will notify her headquarters as other regions report improvements. **Project RENEW (BC/PR)**, Clara Jaramillo

indicated that Adult Education is offered in South Central and North Campus and referrals are welcome. Summer classes start on May 13 and registration is starting now.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 16, 2019

Time: 10:00 to 12PM

Location: Broward Family Success Community Action Partnership
900 NW 31 ST, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

Contact: Miriam.Rosario@myflfamilies.com Phone: (561) 227-6722

David.Draper@myflfamilies.com Phone: (407) 317-7335