



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

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Chad Poppell**  
Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** November 20, 2019

**TO:** Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force

**FROM:** LeAndra Stafford, Refugee Services (RS)

**SUBJECT:** November 13, 2019 Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** January 8, 2020  
**Time:** 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.  
**Location:** Baptist Association of Jacksonville  
2700 University Boulevard South  
Jacksonville, Florida 32216  
**Contact:** LeAndra Stafford  
**Office:** (904) 485-9540  
**Cell:** (904) 524-1316  
**E-Mail:** Leandra.Stafford@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Jacksonville 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!***

5920 Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, Florida 32211

## JACKSONVILLE AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

### **INTRODUCTION**

The meeting was held at the Jacksonville Baptist Association. LeAndra Stafford, Community Liaison represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program facilitated the meeting. There were 31 people in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

### **GUEST PRESENTATION**

1.) Vanessa Philips, Job Search Strategist, AARP Foundation

*ReGeneration – Jacksonville, FL*

- The AARP Foundation assists older workers to increase the skills they need to compete for in-demand jobs in the local job market.
- In partnership with Generation USA, the AARP Foundation offers an IT program for people who are 40 years of age and older.
- This program is an 11-week IT help desk technician program at no cost to the participant.
- Jacksonville is experiencing an 11% growth in IT call centers. Jacksonville ranks in the top 5 nationally with work in the IT field.
- IT help desk jobs and other IT jobs are currently available in the community.
- AARP will also teach employment-essential classes so students can learn how to be their own career managers (how to market oneself)
- This program provides a weekly stipend of \$115 as an incentive and will also pay for the student to take the exams to earn CompTIA and A+ certifications.
- Additionally, the program also provides “Monday Matters”. This is when company representatives come into the classroom to talk about open positions at their companies.

### **REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE**

- **Catholic Charities Bureau (CCB) (Matt Schmitt, Associate Director):**
  - CCB is sponsoring a Food Giveaway at St Vincent’s
  - CCB is moving offices on Dec 6<sup>th</sup> to 40 E. Ashley St. Suite 220.
  - CCB has received 15 arrivals since Oct. 1<sup>ST</sup>
  - Matching Grant: CCB has 50 match grant slots that have been filled and has received approval for 12 more slots.
  - Tiered Case Management: CCB has 19 clients who were served in October. From April to September, they served 116 clients.
  - ESOL: 23 students completed intakes; 24 students were tested; 130 students are currently enrolled; CCB has provided 203 hours for guidance and retention

- **Lutheran Social Services (Nina Frank, Refugee Services Program Manager):**
  - LSS closed its Reception and Placement (R&P) program in October 2019. They transferred 7 clients to CCB
  - Tiered Case Management: LSS has opened 5 cases since October 1.
  - Youth: LSS is currently serving 24 clients.
  - Employment: LSS has placed 15 clients in jobs and 1 in career laddering.
  - Mentoring: Volunteer mentors are assisting 7 mentees in October. They completed 47.5 hours of service and currently have 10 potential mentees
  - LSS is continuing to recruit mentors.
  - In the mentoring program, LSS offers the following: workshops-job readiness, interview skills, and personal finances services.
  - LSS assist youth with college readiness.
  - LSS is sponsoring a field trip to the Jacksonville symphony.
- **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid:**
  - They are currently not serving any new clients.
  - They are having difficulty with clients' citizenship applications since some are still learning English.
  - They have teamed up with Project for Healing to assist clients who are applying for a disability exception in the citizenship application.
- **Early Learning Coalition:**
  - No Updates
- **Department of Health**
  - No Updates

## **GENERAL UPDATES**

### **USCIS –**

- No Updates

### **ACHA –**

- If anyone has concerns with Medicaid, they should call the Medicaid helpline: #1-877-254-1055

### **FSCJ ESOL –**

- Registration for spring. Classes start on January 6; Registration continues until Jan 9.

### **YMCA –**

- This is the end of the first year of the program in Jacksonville. YMCA have been funded for next year. They had 1,400 visits, classes, and events
- YMCA has a Healthcorp volunteer who teaches health.

- YMCA distributed a calendar of events for the New Americans program. In this program, clients can be served passed five years of arrival and regardless of status.
- YMCA is partnering with CCB for a Refugee Thanksgiving Event on 11/23.

**Red Cross –**

- Restoring Family Links Program – Red Cross encouraged community partners to refer clients.
- Red Cross reminded the Task Force about the Sound the Alarm, Safe a life campaign

**Center for Language & Culture (CLC) –**

- CLC continues with the same class schedule

**Agape Clinic –**

- No Updates

**MASS (Muslim American Social Services) –**

- MASS offers a free clinic for individuals ages 18 and older.
- Working with the Legacy of Care Clinic to sponsor Seniors Got Talent will be take place on Saturday 11/16

**Project for Healing –**

- If you would like a link to the Community Resource Book, you may email a request to Project Healing and they will send out the link. Project Healing is currently working with UNF students to launch the website in April 2020.
- Project healing currently has Spanish speaking group sessions for PTSD
- Project Healing will be working with JALA to assist with assessments for people with mental health issues in collaboration with doctors
- Project Healing will continue with the Community Listener program; They will be training bilingual people to help in the community; English and Arabic classes start on 11/10, times: 9-12 and 1-4, Levels 1 & 2.

**NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN**

- 1.) Community Liaison, LeAndra Stafford, presented a PowerPoint presentation training on Child Support Enforcement Cooperation for Refugees.
- 2.) Also, LeAndra familiarized community members on the website: [www.auntbertha.com](http://www.auntbertha.com) for community resources to assist clients with referrals