



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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 10, 2019
TO: Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: LeAndra Stafford, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: July 10, 2019 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: September 11, 2019
Time: 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Location: Baptist Association of Jacksonville
2700 University Boulevard South
Jacksonville, Florida 32216
Contact: LeAndra Stafford
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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 24 people in attendance. A reporter from WJCT, Abukar Adan, attended and recorded the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

GUEST PRESENTATION

- 1.) Christine Rothberg, CEO & Therapist of Project for Healing and Basma Alawee, Florida Refugee Organizer, Florida Immigrant Coalition

Introduction of the Northeast Florida Refugee Resource Guide Presentation

- neflrefugeeresources@gmail.com
- The resource guide is in Google drive. Individuals wishing to access the database must contact the administration to get access to the guide (Christine R. or Basma A)
- The goal is to put an enormous number of resources into one shared location for everyone to access for the purpose of assisting the immigrant and refugee community
- They have partnered with UNF IT department to work on the online guidebook and to make it more streamlined and user friendly
- In the present time, once you have gained access to the drive, you can look up resources by categories and links (example: cultural, disabilities, elderly, medical, mental, etc.)
- When applicable, there will be attached forms for you to print and send along with a referral.
- The resource guide will be updated annually in August, however, if there are known updates, they may be submitted to the Administrator to be updated sooner
- If one finds any new resources that need to be added, please submit to the Administrator.

REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **World Relief (Jose Vega, Director):**
 - World Relief (WR) had 40 arrivals since Oct. 2018
 - Received a family of three this week
 - The Preferred Communities (PC) program served 15 intensive case management clients and 26 youth clients. Their PC program is in transition, they will no longer offer a youth program but will focus on serving at risk women and single parents (most of the clients will be from countries such as: Eritrea and Congo

- A client can be enrolled in the PC program for one year to assist them with obtaining self-sufficiency goals. At six months the client's plan is re-evaluated to determine goal status
- Next year there will be 20 intensive case management slots and 30 group (single parents and women's issues). They will continue to have Saturday workshops two times per month. It will focus on health, social adjustment, etc.
- 49 children were enrolled in summer camp this year. They had academics in the morning, YMCA in the afternoon (swimming lessons), and character development classes. A graduation ceremony will be held this Friday, 7/12/19 from 9-10 at 4000 Spring Park Rd.
- Currently Tier Case Management has a total of 19 clients.
- **Catholic Charities Bureau (Matt Schmitt, Associate Director):**
 - CCB has 58 people that have arrived out of the 71 expected since October 2018. The individuals mostly originated from the Congo, Burma, and Eritrea.
 - 50 out of 51 Match Grant slots have been filled. However, 14 clients have out-migrated.
 - Tier Case Management: The provider has 65 open cases.
 - ESOL: The provider has 138 students enrolled.
 - The location at Lakewood United Methodist Church English class has closed due to low enrollments.
 - It was replaced with a Saturday English class at 10-1:30 pm at Catholic Charities building. They will be a multi-level class with citizenship instruction. 28 people have enrolled thus far.
 - GED classes are being offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:30 am – 2:30 pm
- **Lutheran Social Services (LSS) (Cristina Parcell, Director):**
 - LSS has 16 arrivals for June 2019. They expect 8 arrivals for July 2019.
 - They have enrolled 0 individuals in Match Grant.
 - The youth program has 24 active youth clients. Last week LSS partnered with World Relief for a summer program. They also partnered with United Way Full Service schools to help the children practice mindfulness and crafts
- **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid (JALA):**
 - JALA has openings for 2 paralegals (preferable languages - Haitian/Creole or Arabic). The job advertisement is listed on Indeed.
 - The number of Refugees applying for citizenship has increased.
 - For citizenship, all medical forms must be complete, and all pages must be submitted in the packet
 - JALA has partnered with Project for Healing to assist with medical waivers. This allows them to serve more clients.
 - AIRE (Assistance with Immigration Law at a Reduced Expense) offers services on a sliding fee scale.
 - There is an increase in Cuban arrivals and since Florida Coastal Immigration Clinic has closed, they have seen an uptick in clients in need of assistance.
 - JALA also assists with consumer issues, eviction, SSI, and divorce

- **Early Learning Coalition:**
 - Currently there is no waiting list. Two families are scheduled for appointments.
- **Department of Health**
 - The number of refugees requesting appointments is increasing. The Department of Health has been able to serve them in a timely manner.

GENERAL UPDATES

USCIS –

- No Updates

FSCJ ESOL –

- Fall registration is opening next week and the South campus location has been added for night ESOL classes.

Project for Healing –

- They have moved to a new office (two doors down).
- They had a community listener (Mental Health First Aide) for Arabic women.
- MOCA will have a refugee exhibit from July- September
- They are assisting with the M648 (disability Forms).

Red Cross –

- Restoring Family Links Program – Red Cross encouraged community partners to refer clients to this program.
- The Red Cross reminded the task force about the “Sound the Alarm, Safe a life” campaign

Center for Language & Culture (CLC) –

- No Update

NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN

- 1.) A review of World Refugee Day 2019. Theme: Entrepreneurs: Investing in Our CommUNITY. Date: June 13th at Southside Baptist Church, Naturalization Ceremony, location: Theatre Jacksonville. Over 150 people attended the Naturalization ceremony and over 250 attended the celebration. The event was a great success. The video presented at the event to showcase entrepreneurship was well received.
- 2.) Match Grant Quarterly Consultation Update
 - a) Lutheran Social Services had no update (Cristine Parcell was not in attendance)
 - b) Catholic Charities Bureau (Frances Luna): They have reached out to the local community for bicycle and bike gear donations for a client that needed this type of transportation. They taught employment classes regarding the job search process. One of the problems encountered was that some clients are not revealing health issues that can impact gainful employment. 14 clients out-migrated.