



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

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Chad Poppell**  
Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 13, 2019  
**TO:** Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** LeAndra Stafford, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** May 8, 2019 Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** July 10, 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  
**Office:** (904) 485-9540  
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**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 25 people in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

### GUEST PRESENTATION

- 1.) The Guest Speaker was a no show

### REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **World Relief (Jose Vega, Director):**
  - WR had 37 arrivals (8 SIVs included in this number) since Oct. 2018
  - No arrivals since December 2018, but believes 16 are in the pipeline for arrivals
  - No Match Grant program this year
  - For April, the Preferred Communities (PC) program served 17 youth and 15 intensive case management 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
  - The youth program will continue under another grant at World Relief
  - The Integration Assistance program will be closing for good in July 2019
  - The new Tier Case Management program transition was difficult, but they completed 7 individual assessments for the month of April
  - They will have their first Community Food Pantry on 05/25/19, they will be partnering with Feed Northeast Florida. They are expected to serve 150 families
- **Catholic Charities Bureau (Matt Schmitt, Associate Director):**
  - CCB has 43 people have arrived out of the 71 expected since Oct. 2018
  - Expect 2 more cases to arrive at the end of the month: a family of 5 and a single
  - Match Grant 34 of the 41 slots have been filled
  - Tier Case Management: 10 open cases
  - ESOL: 126 students enrolled and 78 enrolled in upper level classes (Summer term)
  - They announced the relocation of their food pantry to St. Pious (32209). They moved it because the pantry is now more accessible to the clients who use it (this zip code is also known as a food desert). It will be opened Wed and Fri, on a first come first serve basis. A person can receive this service once every three months.

- **Lutheran Social Services (Cristina Parcel, Director):**
  - LSS has 89 arrivals since Oct 2018, they expect 14 arrivals in March and 20 in April. Will be receiving a family of 10 this evening and then expect 10 more arrivals throughout the month of May.
  - Their Match Grant is on hold
  - The youth program did workshops at Terry Parker and Englewood for College Readiness.
  - ESOL summer school will be at Englewood this year so they students will have transportation to their summer program at LSS
  - This year they are partnering with World Relief for summer camp
  - They are developing the Mentoring program by doing outreach to figure out the best program
- **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid:**
  - No updates
- **Early Learning Coalition:**
  - Every first Friday they offer free clothing to children. First Come first serve. Families can visit every 90 days. Location: Gateway to Heaven Christian Church, 7700 N Pearl St.
- **Department of Health**
  - No updates

### **GENERAL UPDATES**

#### **USCIS –**

- The new Community Relations Officer, Vesna Bozic attended the meeting and introduced herself to the task force members

#### **FSCJ ESOL – No Updates**

#### **Project for Healing –**

- They are conducting 50 sessions per month; learning hypnosis to help people visualize what is hindering them.
- Hired a Spanish therapist, this therapist will also be working with immigrants
- now using a Kurdish interpreter when needed
- Will be working with JALA to assist with assessments for people w/mental health issues in collaboration with doctors
- Continue with Community Listener program and training bilingual people to help in the community

#### **Red Cross –**

- Restoring Family Links Program – encouraged community partners to refer clients
- Reminded about the Sound the Alarm, Safe a life campaign

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

- At the DCPS programs will officially close on 05/21 and reopen in September but clients can still come and get assistance during the summer at CLC. Will be closed every Friday during the summer

**NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN**

- 1.) Updates given on World Refugee Day 2019. Theme: Entrepreneurs: Investing in Our CommUNITY. Date: June 13<sup>th</sup> at Southside Baptist Church, will also have a Naturalization Ceremony, location: Theatre Jacksonville
- 2.) Discussed Match Grant expansion for Entrants and Asylees. They don't have to have EAD on day 90 to participate in the program
- 3.) Match Grant Quarterly Consultation Update
  - a) Lutheran Social Services had no update (Cristine Parcell was not in attendance)
  - b) Catholic Charities Bureau (Frances Luna): Employers have been reaching out to them and they are getting client employed sooner. The community members have been stepping up to provide education (such as transportation training). Since the economy is doing well there are more entry-level job opportunities for low-skilled and low English speakers.
- 4.) Christine Rothberg gave an update on the Provider Resource guide she and Basma Alawee are working on. They have been working on creating a Provider Resource guide for the community partners to access those community resources. They currently have about 60 resources collected, it will be On-line accessible at [NorthFloridaResources@gmail.com](mailto:NorthFloridaResources@gmail.com). Community partners will have the ability to update the resources as new ones are found. Basma will give a presentation at the next Task Force meeting on the Resource guide and how to use the google drive to use and update it.