



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 1, 2018
TO: Members of the Broward Refugee Task Force
FROM: **Miriam Rosario (RS)**
SUBJECT: January 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: March 15, 2018
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Location: Department of Children and Families
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 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 the Family Success Program, Community Action Center. Miriam Rosario, RS Community Liaison Southeast Region represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program. Miriam thanked the Family Success Program, Community Action of Broward for hosting the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A power point presentation given by Brenda Centeno Filomeno, Outreach Coordinator Trustbridge Health Inc. on available services to refugees. Since 1978, Hospice of Palm Beach County, Hospice of Broward County and Hospice by the Sea have cared for 200,000 families in South Florida. These three hospices are now one branch of Trustbridge, a community nonprofit that provides support for families facing serious illness 24 hours a day. Other services include home health care, palliative medicine, caregiver support, hospice care, pet care, nurses'/doctors medical services, chapman, grief support and bereavement programs. If someone has been diagnosed with serious illness, they can rely on the compassionate professionals of Trustbridge. They can trust them to do what is necessary to guide them and their family through this difficult time and provide them with the loving care needed. The families will be visited within 3 days of the referral. Grieve support services are available to all family members regardless where the family had their lost. During the Haitian earthquake they were available to the Haitian families with services here in Florida. They accept Medicaid, Medicare, insurances and self-pay. If the clients have no insurances they are also assisted. The Trustbridge Health Inc. also has available a volunteer program (such as companion, read books, walk the dogs) and the RTF members were also interested in partnering for this program.

NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

Client Outreach Plan for 2018

Miriam provided brief report on visually dramatic drop in arrival numbers. Notification received from resettlement affiliates in Florida of closures by the end of Sept. 30th (current fiscal year). In Palm Beach the Catholic Charities Dioceses of PB will be closing their Reception & Placement program. Discussions on how to best manage programs in this uncertain environment. Some suggestions in how to best utilize future funding and increases outreach; Employment programs being enhanced to serve returning/past clients, who have not been in the country more than 5 years. Project RENEW is accepting registrations for their Adult Education classes and will be increasing their outreach by participating in various community events. RS providers were encouraged to collaborate & to meet to review their outreach plan. A meeting among RS providers was coordinated by Miriam Rosario.

Planning for World Refuge Day (WRD) 2018;

Jocelyn Martinez, Program Director, Project RENEW/Broward College discussed the WRD celebrations and the planning and forming of a WRD planning committee. The members will like to participate and increase community involvement.

GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

USCIS, Berta Cassidy from USCIS introduced the newest Community Relations Officer, Zulma Ruiz, both were present at our meeting. In the coming months you will be seeing both Berta and Zulma at community events and meetings. Briefly discussed the TPS changes.

On January 8, 2018, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen announced her decision to terminate the Temporary Protection Status (TPS) designation for El Salvador with a delayed effective date of 18 months to allow for an orderly transition before the designation terminates on September 9, 2019. To read more – <https://dhs.gov/news/2018/01/08/secretary-homeland-security-kirstjen-m-nielsen-announcement-temporary-protected>.

The designation of Haiti for TPS is terminated effective at 11:59 p.m., local time, on July 22, 2019. The 60-day re-registration period runs from January 18, 2018 through March 19, 2018.

USCIS provided TPS updates/handouts for the following countries: Nicaragua, Honduras, Haiti, and El Salvador.

NICARAGUA TPS terminates on January 5, 2019. Individuals who already have TPS have a re-registration period from Dec. 15, 2017 through February 13, 2018. EADs are automatically extended through March 6, 2018. In addition, the work permit of TPS beneficiaries who timely re-register and apply for work permit will be automatically extended until July 4, 2018

HONDURAS TPS extended through July 5, 2018. Individuals who already have TPS have a re-registration period from Dec. 15, 2017 through Feb. 13, 2018. Their Employment Authorization Document (EAD), work permit is auto-extended until July 4, 2018.

HAITI TPS terminates on July 22, 2019. Those individuals who already have TPS have a re-registration period from Jan. 18, 2018 through March 19, 2018. Their work permit is auto-extended until July 21, 2018. Individuals who had a Form I-821 and/or Form I-765 pending as of Jan 18, 2018, do not need to file a new application or applications. If TPS is approved, they will be granted TPS through 7/22/2019. If they had a pending TPS-related application for an EAD that is approved, it will be valid through the same date.

EL SALVADOR TPS terminates on September 9, 2019. Individuals who already have TPS have a re-registration period from Jan. 18, 2018 through March 19, 2018. Their work permit is auto-extended through September 5, 2018. Individuals who had a Form I-821 and/or Form I-765 that was still pending as of January 18, 2018, do not need to file either application again. If the pending TPS application is approved, they will be granted TPS through September 9, 2019. If they had a pending TPS-related application for an EAD that is approved, it will be valid through the same date.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals(DACA):

Due to a federal court order, USCIS has resumed accepting requests to renew a grant of deferred action under DACA. To read more, please visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-response-january-2018-preliminary-injunction> .

USCIS is no longer considering a consular certificate documenting an individual's birth outside of Cuba to a Cuban parent as sufficient evidence of Cuban citizenship. This policy memorandum aligns with Cuban law and applies to individuals born outside of Cuba applying for lawful permanent resident status in the United States under the Cuban Adjustment Act (CAA).

Also announced the invitation to an upcoming Teacher Training Seminar hosted by the USCIS Headquarters Office of Citizenship taking place on 2/13 from 9:45 am – 4pm at the West Dade Regional Library. This seminar is designed to enhance the skills needed to teach U.S. history, civics, and the naturalization process to immigrant students and to administer a comprehensive adult citizenship education program. If you are interested in attending this event, you must register using the attached registration form or at the following link- uscis.gov/teachertraining

West Regional Library Broward County (BCL)

Mary Cassell, Librarian Senior, West Regional Library informed the members regarding their services and resources available, including Continue Education classes, Homeless Coffee Talks, USCIS Citizenship classes. The award-winning Broward County Library (BCL) system offers programs, services and bilingual staff to make relocating easier in 34 languages, including Spanish. New arrivals will find a warm welcome at all of BCL's 38 locations around Broward.

The 'passport' for a host of special services is a library card, which is free and simple to obtain online or at any library location. Learning opportunities such as in-person English Café and Crossroads Café Classes, and online learning through the Rosetta Stone language program, give new arrivals practice to become comfortable speaking English. Live and online computer learning opportunities offer new arrivals the skills to qualify for employment and becomes successful job seekers. Online resources such as HelpNow from Brain Fuse and Broward e-Tutor offer free academic tutoring, testing and skills-building for K-12, college students and adults. Services range from skills assessments and sample tests with live, professional help in both English and Spanish, together with instruction for computer programs and résumé writing. The Library has assets to assist everyone. Families will discover that activities and programs for children and teens are offered in several languages, including bilingual story times and play sessions. Business people will find programs in Spanish, such as using social media, at the Creation Station Business Co-working Hub. The BCL website contains a Community Services page, where new arrivals will discover a host of in-person and online resources to assist in resettlement. All are free services available at the branches.

DOH- Migdalia Diaz, supervisor on leave however informed that she can be contacted via email at Migdalia.Diaz-Nieves@flhealth.gov with any questions. Marnelle Datus Louis from the DOH provided updated information regarding the KidCare program. The KidCare full paid fee is up to \$230.

ESS/DCF- Wilber Roney, ACCESS Specialist updated the members on the Disaster Supplement Nutritionist Assistance Program (DSNAP). He reminded to alert clients that the DSNAP will be expiring soon which is 90 days from the day money was deposited in the card account.

Federal Bureau Investigation (FBI)- Bijan Hunter, Special Agent, stated of their Outreach program. They have experience an increase of claims of harassments of immigrants, special youth in schools and they are reluctant to report these abuses. He is available to protect all human rights of all people under the International protection. He shared his email with the members.

RS Contracted providers: Youth Co-Op, Inc. (YCI) - informed on their free Tax Filing services available in their Broward location. YCI provided over of all their services available to refugees. The Employment and Youth program is open and accepting referrals from the community. Church World Service (CWS) reviewed their legal program and their IA thru the Information & Referral to offered family support resources specially to the Haitian community. CWS has experience a decline in new arrivals since the immigration policy changes. Project RENEW (PR) is accepting registrations for their Adult Education classes. PR has over 400 enrollments for the spring term. Catholic Charities and STHRI discussed on continuing EAD delays. All agencies commented on EAD delays past 180-day mark. All agencies have escalated issue to national headquarters, as well as USCIS liaison.

No additional updates.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Meeting: Friday, March 15th 2018
10:00 AM to 12PM /Department of Children and Families. FTL, FL 33309

Contact: Miriam.Rosario@myflfamilies.com Phone: (561) 227-6722
Taddese.Fessehaye@myflfamilies.com Phone: (407) 317-7335