



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 17, 2018
TO: Members of the Orlando Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: David Draper, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: August 8, 2018 TF Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: Wednesday, Oct 10, 2017
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: TBD
Contact: David Draper
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This task force has been active in the Orlando 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 thirty to thirty-five 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 at the local, state and national level, request for proposals, training, workshops, conferences, discuss refugee service needs and explore solutions to those needs. Meeting participants 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!

400 W. Robinson Street, S1111C, Orlando, Florida 32801

ORLANDO AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

This meeting was held at the H.O.L.A. offices located at 595 N. Primrose Dr., Orlando, FL 32803. Thirty people were in attendance. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, represented the Florida Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Rosa Chaves, Community Liaison for the Central Region, was also present. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

I. **APS Adult Protective Services – Elizabeth Seijas, DCF Adult Protective Services Specialist**, provided an overview about the APS program.

- APS started services in 2010 and the Department maintains a “Central Abuse Hotline” available to all Persons 24/7. The Abuse Hotline accepts reports that are written, faxed, electronically submitted (via web reporting), or “called in” to the hotline. The types of abuse include in home and institutional abuse, neglect, exploitation, and self-neglect (in-home only). Self-neglect includes no food at home, dirty/filthy home, clients that do not go to necessary medical appointments, etc. The phone number is 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).
- The program assists vulnerable adults (ages 18-59) to live safely in their own homes or in a least-restrictive environment. The vulnerable adult is not just classified by age but also by whether they are living in a particular facility (Assisted Living Facility, Adult Family Care Home, Skilled Nursing Facility, etc.). This assistance is delivered and coordinated in-home and through community-based services
- Counselors ensure that arrangements and referrals are made for appropriate services for vulnerable adults. Counselors conduct an assessment of clients and their situation, develop a ‘care development plan’, and provide case management.
- Victims 60 and over require electronic ARTT (an APS Referral Tracking Tool) and are referred to a senior services agencies (like Senior Resource Alliance).

II. **CC Catholic Charities – Maria Diez, CRS Program Coordinator and Youth Program Coordinator** provided an overview of the CRS Youth program.

- CRS (Comprehensive Refugee Services) started in 2012 and previously enrolled youth that were in elementary, middle, and high school. With this previous youth

program, Catholic Charities also worked on preventing kids from entering gangs and tried to limit high school drop-outs. In 2015, due to changes and a restructuring of the Refugee Youth Program, staff was reduced to 3 case managers (and later reduced to 2). Overall, the goal is for clients to achieve integration and self-sufficiency.

- The Youth program is now utilizing a new program model. The new Youth program focuses on youth ages 16 to 19. It addresses educational and employment needs of vulnerable refugee/entrant youth. The new model still strives to prevent school drop-out and to provide support and resources to meet graduation requirements. If a youth doesn't qualify for the traditional school system, the program links them to an alternative to traditional high school.
- To be eligible for the Refugee Youth Program, clients must be 16-19 years old and have a demonstrated educational and/or employment needs. This program serves refugees, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, or Asylees. The provider stated that it can be challenging enrolling an 18-year old youth into schools when they don't have English skills and cannot show proof of previous credit
- In addition to the main requirements to be eligible, a youth must meet one of the following statements:
 1. The youth is enrolled in at least one of the core courses and is not passing it with at least 2.0 GPA
 2. The youth has attempted but didn't pass the State Assessment Requirements.
 3. The youth's overall GPA is lower than 2.0
 4. The youth has no formal education, or no school records.
 5. The youth is not meeting high school requirements and is interested in pursuing a General Education Diploma (GED).
 6. The youth is not interested in pursuing a high school diploma but is interested in employment or vocational training.
- The program consists of two possible pathways - the Academic Pathway and the Career Pathway. The academic pathway assists clients who are interested in obtaining a High school diploma or obtaining a GED. And the career pathway assists clients who are interested in pursuing a career in their desired field and/or completion of vocational studies.
- The Youth program also provides different services like tutoring, mentoring, referral to ESOL programs, job training, apprenticeship programs, and job coaching that match the client's career goals. Also, the client could be referred to the Employment Program.

- Mentoring and tutoring for youth are provided via the Vista Volunteer working with Catholic Charities. These volunteers help youth in the process of learning English and becoming acculturated. The youth program develops short term and long-term goals.

GENERAL UPDATES/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Anna Packham, Market Place Director with Primary Care Access Network (PCAN) stated that there has been a significant cut in funding for the Navigation Program and several of the current navigators will now become part-time workers (and some will no longer work in the system). The concern is that vulnerable populations could be left behind, and it won't be as easy to access health services.

Debbie Cruz, Director of Comprehensive Refugee Services with CC stated that there have been low refugee resettlement numbers (just seven families since April 2018 and no families in June or July). Overall, this year they have received 45 individuals in the Match Grant program and the majority have been Venezuelan. Catholic Charities works holistically with these families. Catholic Charities has noticed the migration of African refugees to Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky. In the youth program, career laddering has been successful. Also, due to an overall decrease in client numbers, this will allow Catholic Charities more creativity with service delivery.

Donald Jarrel, Community Relations Officer with the USCIS Tampa District stated that there will be a training on Sep 13th, 2018 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM about Citizenship preparation. Sep 5th, 2018 is the deadline for registration. Also, he clarified that if a document is missing from an immigration-related application, USCIS can deny the application immediately (at the discretion of the immigration officer).

Isabel Sousa-Rodriguez Director of Membership and Organizing Florida Immigrant Coalition announced the Welcoming Week Celebration on Sep 15th, 2018 from 3:00 – 6:00 PM in the “Studio 1 Orlando” facilities in Vineland Road in Orlando. In this event, they are expecting 800-1,000 people and will serve refreshments, snacks, and appetizers. There is going to be a charge of U\$5.00 per person but any organization can apply for free tickets to the event. Some of the governmental institutions clarify that they cannot participate in the event because of the organizations focus on advocacy.

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday, Oct 10, 2018

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Location: TBD

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