



Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 11, 2018
TO: Members of the Palm Beach Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: **Miriam Rosario** (Refugee Services Program-RS)
SUBJECT: May 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: July 20, 2018
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Location: West Palm Beach City Hall
WPB, Florida 33401
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 Palm Beach 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!

2383 Phillips Rd. Tallahassee, FL 32308

PALM BEACH AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held at the West Palm Beach City Hall. Miriam Rosario, Community Liaison represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program. Miriam thanked Jose Tagle, assistant to the West Palm Beach Mayor for hosting the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Maureen Porras, Managing Attorney, Church World Service, (CWS) did a presentation on Public Charge, she shared with the group the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act that defines public charge (INA section 212(a)(4) “Public Charge”). She explained in detail the intricacies of this law and to which category of immigrant status this law applies to and the exceptions. The proposed federal rule to change definition of public charge is filed with OMB. The final language is unclear however both current definition and proposed definition were discussed. The expected public charge rule likely would significantly change the use of public benefits by legal immigrants and their U.S.-born dependents. The proposed rule once issued will also provide a period for public comments for 60 days.

A presentation given by, **Arlene Williams, Family Services Coordinator, Early Learning Coalition of PBC (ELCPBC)** on available services to refugees’ families with children under 13 years. Child Care (CCS) services, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK), School Readiness programs are available as resources to families. RS Child Care are also available to refugee families, the referrals most come from the YCI (employment RS provider), Project Transition, (Adult Education RS provider), CWS, and Catholic Charities Match Grant providers. RS CCS has no wait list, however the regular CCS program does. ELCPBC in partnership with Children Services Council of PBC (CSCPBC) also help the families with financial assistance. Referrals to other community resources and programs including Developmental Screening Process, Inclusion Services, Early Head Start CC Partnership and Healthy Beginnings. All invited to the Refugee Connecting Communities Event. The event is organized by ELCPBC, CSCPBC and Bridges at Lake Worth West. The participating organizations are asking in Mental Health Awareness that all wear Green.

NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

Client Outreach Plan for 2018

Sandra Perez, Program Administrator from Catholic Charities Dioceses of PB stated of their closing of their Reception & Placement program and will continue their Match Grant (MG) Program. She briefly provided an overview of their MG program and distributed informative material of their MG program in English, Spanish and Creole. Youth Co-op, Inc (YCI) and Project Transition (PT) increasing their outreach by participating in various community events, job fairs, partnering with community base organizations and providing mutual orientations. WRD offer another the venue for their outreach practices.

Planning for World Refugee Day (WRD) 2018

Sindy De Leon, Supervisor Youth Co-Op, Inc. (YCI) and Marcia Bahia, Palm Beach Sheriff Office (PBSO) reported on the PB Area WRD celebrations. Sindy invited all to the PBC Commissions WRD Proclamation which will be presented during the PBC Commission meeting on June 5 at 9:00 am sharp by Vice-Mayor Bernard. WRD planning committee established partnerships with Palm Beach State College and USCIS. The WRD USCIS Naturalization Ceremony Keynote Speakers is The Honorable Edward L. Artau, Judge and he will share his experience as a son of Cuban refugees. The theme is “Many Cultures One Nation”. The event will be, Thursday, June 28th, 2018, from 8:30 – 12:30 PM at the Duncan Theatre, Palm Beach State College, Lake Worth Campus. The theater has a capacity of 600 people. The activities cover; Refugee Award Ceremony, Refugee Youth Drawing contest, Resources Fair and WRD USCIS Naturalization ceremony where 100 candidates will swear-in as USA Citizens. Tables for the vendors to display their resource and services are still available.

GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) - Zulma Ruiz reported on “USCIS began phasing in use of the U.S. Postal Service’s (USPS) Signature Confirmation Restricted Delivery service to mail Green Cards and other secure documents such as Employment Authorization Document (EAD) as of April 30, 2018. As part of the new delivery method, applicants must present identification to sign for their documents upon delivery. They also have the option to designate an agent to sign on their behalf by completing the Postal Service’s PS Form 3801. Applicants will also have the option to arrange for pickup at a post office at a convenient date and time by going to the USPS website and selecting “hold for pickup” and also USPS Informed Delivery to receive delivery status notifications. USCIS will destroy Permanent Resident Cards, Employment Authorization Cards (EADs) and Travel Documents returned as undeliverable by the U.S. Postal Service after 60 business days if USCIS is not contacted by the document’s intended recipient to provide the correct address. USCIS encourages applicants to report a change of address within 10 days of relocation using the procedures outlined at uscis.gov/addresschange.

USCIS began recalling a number of Permanent Resident Cards (also known as Green Cards) due to a production error. The cards were printed with an incorrect “Resident Since” date and mailed between February and April 2018. The affected individuals should return their incorrect Green Card to USCIS in the provided pre-paid envelope within 20 days of receiving the notice. They may also return their cards to USCIS field offices. USCIS will send replacement Green Cards within 15 days of receiving the incorrect card.

USCIS terminate the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Honduras with a delayed effective date of 18 months, on January 5, 2020. Do not pay for or submit any form until USCIS updates official re-registration information on the www.uscis.gov website.

USCIS is still accepting Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) only renewals. The DACA program ended in September.

For more information, visit www.USCIS.gov

DOH- Merlene Ramnon PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, Nursing Consultant, Northern Clinics reported on the decreases in number of client been served, 6-7 new clients per month. The refugee clinic is offering additional services to outreach the new arrivals. DOH additional services are the teen clinics; including resume writing, volunteers community services hours, free refreshments and bus passes. Teen advocate available to answer questions Wednesday from 3:00 pm to 6:00pm. The ages are from 12-18 and no appointments is needed. All services are confidential. The services are listed under the PBC School District newsletter and material regarding the Teen program was distributed.

Health Council of Southeast Florida- Marcia Hayden Project Navigator Manager reported on workshops at the library available to educate the community on significant events/changes that can impact the Affordable Care Act (ACA) application.

Hispanic Human Resources Council, Inc.- Mabel Datena Center Director informed the members of the Mandel WPB Library Summer free lunch program for children.

Palm Beach County Library System- Maribel De Jesus, Multicultural Outreach Services Librarian stated the PBCLS also has Free Summer lunches and Snacks at all the PBC libraries. She reported on their English Exchange classes, free informal Conversation Sessions. To pre-register call your respective local branch.

Catholic Charities Dioceses of PBC- Sandra Perez, Program Administrator informed of their available slots under their Match Grant Services and Human Trafficking program.

Career Source of PBC –Marta Roque, WTP Senior Career Consultant informed of their community services program available to refugees. Ed Gruvman, Senior Accountant Manager, informed members on their available Scholarship for free workshops and training. CSCPBC has an array of trainings available to improve the financial stability of refugees.

ESS/DCF- Teresa Hernandez, Specialist from ESS/DCF remind all on the different benefits such as ABA, TANF, SNAP, RAP, Match Grant and their services criteria.

RS Contracted Providers:

Project Transition (PT) – Noel Hernandez, Program Director for the PB School District Adult Education reported on their Summer program and 227 enrollments. He has authorized to expand the summer registration for one additional week. The Fall program has then started a wait list process.

Church World Service (CWS)- Maureen Porras, Managing Attorney CWS reported on their Legal services are available to the refugee eligible clients including Haitian and Cuban Family Reunification. They are filing for Employment Authorization documents. Vilsaint Duverseau, CWS Coordinator stated serving Venezuela asylum seekers and granted asylums from Colombia and Venezuela. He has recently observed the asylum cases are processed much sooner that previous years as some within 45 days of application.

Youth Co-Op, Inc. (YCI)- Sindy De Leon stated their Youth Program and employment Services available slots and is asking for referrals.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Meeting: Friday, July 20th 2018
10:00 AM to 12 Noon
West Palm Beach City Hall
WPB, Florida 33401

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