



Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2018
TO: Members of the Palm Beach Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: **Miriam Rosario** (Refugee Services Program-RS)
SUBJECT: March 16, 2018 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: May 18, 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. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A presentation on **“Using Social Media for Community Outreach”** was given by **Paige Patterson-Hughes, Southeast Region Communications Director at the Department of Children & Families in the Southeast Region**. This presentation focused on the most effective way to utilize social media for outreach. Despite many social media options, Ms. Patterson pointed out that Facebook is still the most utilized and effective tool to master for outreach purposes. Studies show that refugees are using Facebook more than any other social media with an average of 7 hours per day of usage. Paige explained that Facebook Groups have the capacity to build on-line communities and are now prioritized by Facebook so all posts in these groups will show up first in a member’s newsfeed. All Facebook posts are automatically translated so this saves time and funds and allows for timely communication between agencies/programs and potential clients in the Facebook group. It is critical to have a point person assigned to maintain the group and post regularly. It was emphasized the importance of information posted in the internet it reminds indefinitely and its exposure worldwide.

A power point presentation given by **Tiffany Louis, 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, respite 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 offer transportation services and at no extra cost. The camp for children under 16 years, are referred by their teachers. 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. Distribution of resources material such as “Five wish Book”.

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). 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. Discussions on best practices on how to best manage programs in this uncertain environment. Some suggestions in how to best utilize mutual outreach plan; Youth Co-op, Inc (YCI) and Project Transition (PT) increasing their outreach by participating in various community events, job fairs and providing mutual orientations. RS providers meet and had reviewed their outreach plan.

Planning for World Refugee Day (WRD) 2018

Sindy De Leon, Supervisor YCI and Marcia Bahia, PB Sheriff Office (PBSO) discussed the PB Area WRD celebrations. All the members will like to participate and TO increase community involvement specially. WRD planning committee established partnership with Palm Beach State College was established and the PB USCIS. The WRD planning members asked the RTF members for possible Keynote Speakers suggestions. This year them 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 swore-in as USA Citizens.

GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

DOH- Merlene Ramnon PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, Nursing Consultant, Northern Clinics reported on the decreases in number of client been served. The refugee clinic is offering additional services to outreach the new arrivals. DOH additional services includes; family planning, teen clinics, including resume writing, volunteers hours and transportation. All services are confidential. The services ae listed under the PBC School District newsletter.

ESS/DCF-Teresa Hernandez -Troici, RAP Specialist briefly provided overview of the SNAP requirements. She reminded of the 12 months' timeline Employment services with YCI.

PBSO- Marcia Bahia, Gang Prevention Coordinator invited all to the Youth Summit 2018, Saturday, April 28, 2018. Middle School and High School students are welcome at the PB Lakes High School from 9:00 am to 4 PM. Topics included; Career Development Scholarship, Healthy Relations-Drugs & Gang Prevention Education and Dealing with Emotions. The event will have free snack and lunch. Get tickets at www.pbcyouthsummit.org.

RS Contracted Providers:

Project Transition (PT) – Noel Hernandez, Program Director for the PB School District Adult Education reported on their Summer program and enrollment process. PT has 60 intakes and have a wait list. Their Contract Manager has been notified.

Church World Service (CWS)-

Maureen Porras, Managing Attorney and Oscar Rivera, Director CWS reported on their IA program, workshops including Crime Prevention offered by PBSO, MG, CHEP Orientation and Legal services are available to the refugee eligible clients including Haitian and Cuban Family Reunification. They are filing for Employment Authorization documents. She advised not to use the “notary/notarios” to prevent fraud or been over charged. Cuban /Haitian are to proof hardship and CWS can attend or help with the hearing with the judge. The 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.

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

NEXT MEETING:

Next Meeting: Friday, May 18th 2018
10:00 AM to 12 Noon
West Palm Beach City Hall
WPB, Florida 33401

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