



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

**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**Mike Carroll**  
Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** July 9, 2015  
**TO:** Members of the Broward Area Refugee Task Force (RTF)  
**FROM:** Miriam Rosario, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** May 21, 2015 Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** July 16, 2015  
**Time:** 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon  
**Location:** Broward County Community Action  
900 NW 31st. Avenue  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 33311  
Contact Tel. 954- 357-5001  
**E-Mail:** Miriam\_Rosario@dcf.state.fl.us  
Taddese\_Fessehaye@dcf.state.fl.us

This task force has been active in the Broward 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, 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

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Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

## BROWARD AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

### INTRODUCTIONS

This meeting was held at the Broward County Health Department. Twenty eight people were in attendance. Miriam Rosario, Community Liaison for the Southeast Region and Taddese Fessehay, Community Liaison Manager represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency they represented. Miriam thanked Broward County Health Department for hosting the meeting.

### SPECIAL PRESENTATION

#### **Immigration Scams and the Unauthorized Practice of Immigration:**

Carlton Ayoung, Fraud Detection and National Security Chief, Miami and Caribbean District, provided an overview of the Immigration Scams and Fraud Detection program. He discussed the laws, regulations and benefits that are available to protect people from Immigration Scams and Fraud. He also covered the Unauthorized Practice of Immigration which is a crime. Information was provided on how to detect the signs of some of these unlawful practices and how to help a victim. Look for people who might be taking advantage; some may be asked to pay fee for forms that are not required, fee waiver offer and services to people not eligible. The list of certified (BIA) individuals is available on line. Report fraud tips at <http://www.uscis.gov/avoid-scams/report-immigration-scams>.

### NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

- **2015 World Refugee Day (WRD):** Jeanette Alban from Youth Co-Op stated that there will be over 60 organizations with tables at the June 19th WRD event and that there is still room for more vendors. Jeanette distributed the Palm Cards – WRD invitation cards to be handed out to clients in the region. Miriam encouraged all meeting participants to attend and mentioned who is sponsoring the WRD Proclamations: Honorable Jeri Muoio, Mayor and the City of West Palm Beach, Honorable Becky Tooley, Mayor City of Coconut Creek, Honorable Dale V.C. Holness, Broward County Commissioner, and Honorable Steven Abrams, Palm Beach County Commissioner.
- **Step Up for students:** Discussion on referrals to Step Up scholarships ensued. Taddese stated these scholarships are more appropriate for older refugee youth who struggle in public schools. The program is a better alternative for students who are having difficulty passing the FCAT test. Step Up is not accepting applications for 2015-2016 school year for the income based scholarships. However, applications for the special needs scholarships are still being accepted. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Melissa Jaramillo, Community Outreach Manager by email at [mjaramillo@stepupforstudents.org](mailto:mjaramillo@stepupforstudents.org) or by telephone at 904-595-6814.
- **Partnering with Colleges and universities:** CWS continues to partner with Nova University students, Mental Health, Haitian foundation and Dr. Myriam Glemaud of For the Children Inc. Youth Co-op (YCI) continues to partner with NOVA University. Youth Co-Op's youth program is partnering with the NOVA graduate students assisting with their children's tutoring program. GCJFCS is also partnering with NOVA University and the students are helping the resettlement program.

### NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

- Miriam and Taddese facilitated discussion regarding Adult Education Community-Level Action Plan. Miriam stated Refugee Services (RS) conducted uptake analysis of adult education services to determine which client populations are accessing or not accessing services. She reported that based on the data analyzed, the focus will be on two specific groups – Non-English/Non-Spanish speaking refugees and Spanish speaking professional refugees. Taddese suggested creating a group that consists of representatives from adult education, employment and resettlement agencies to develop a local Adult Education Community-Level Action Plan to reach out to the focus groups. Since schools are closed for the summer and staff are on vacation and due to WRD activities, the group will meet after the WRD celebrations.

- Miriam reminded resettlement agencies to utilize the Declaration of Domicile, especially for new arrivals. This document will help refugees to establish residency for accessing services in their community, especially for in-state tuition. Some acceptable legal documentation are state issued identification cards (ID) or Driver's license issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV).
- Miriam and Taddese informed everyone that they had coordinated a meeting with Mr. Charles D. Frazier, Assistant Director and discussed how refugees can take advantage of the benefits available through the Palm Beach County's Public Transportation System. This coordination will also be replicated in Broward with Broward County Transit.

### **GENERAL UPDATES**

- **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS):** Adam Chioffe, Section Chief-Oakland Park Office, stated that the West Palm Beach and Oakland Park USCIS Field Offices will be putting together a naturalization ceremony for 200 candidates (100 from each office). He also mentioned the participation of the Color Guards. There will be a walk thru for the naturalization ceremony on June 11th to prepare for the event.
- **CareerSource Broward-** Keisha Hall, Program Manager spoke about the available of services for Welfare Transition clients. The clients can go on line for orientation, and apply for services. They are also offering test supplement and help with resume. Career Source is coordinating for volunteer enhance skills workshop to help those who never worked and had no skills. They also offer cash assistance to go back to school, GED, transportation, child care. She said this information is also available in English and Spanish and can be accessed at [www.careersource.com](http://www.careersource.com)
- **Department Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles:** Richard Schwable, Area Coordinator provided information and answered questions regarding Driver License and the requirements for free ID cards. He advised to make sure that clients make a copy of their I-94 before they visit the DHSMV. Richard and Serena Johnson, Assistant Office Manager discussed ID cards replacement, TPS and DHSMV documentation requirements. For more information about the full list of required documents, visit [www.GatherGoGet.com](http://www.GatherGoGet.com).
- **DCF/ESS/ACCESS:** Wilber Roney reported on DCF customer service enhancements by adding the name and local number of the worker on pending cases. Yuliet Alonso responded to questions regarding the application process.
- **Broward Department of Health (DOH):** Discussion ensued on DOH's procedure for Refugee Health assessment and coordination of children's school physicals and immunizations. The Broward County Health Department does not have a mobile unit, however the Broward Regional does. It was recommended to create a one pager guide to help refugees access health services in Broward similar to the one created by a subcommittee of the Palm Beach Refugee Task Force. Jodi Jones will be coordinating this initiative.

### **NEW REFUGEE ARRIVAL UPDATE**

- **Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services (GCJFCS):** Clara Jaramillo, Resettlement Program Coordinator reported on refugee arrivals YTD; 16 cases (40 Adults and 12 minors). Among the groups are 4 cases from Ukraine (10 people), Iraq-1 Cuba-11.
- **CWS:** Silvio Padilla, Sub-Director mentioned he resettled one case from Eritrea.

### **RS CONTRACTED PROVIDER UPDATES**

- **Adult Education:** Not present
- **Employability Status:** Chris Reis, Program Director, St. Thomas University Human Rights Institute (STUHRI) spoke regarding EAD delays. She indicated that the program has been very busy as a result of increased arrivals. Chris advised that refugees should contact Catholic Charities to help reduce the wait time for appointment. Discussions lead to new arrivals coming to Florida thru Texas borders with sign for deportation and the impact on benefits. The CBP establishes their entrant status. This new group lack documentation and are being denied asylum status.

- **Employment:** Gladys Sanchez reported that they have placed 579 placements YTD with 41 % with health Insurances, OJT 15 completed.
- **Youth:** Lina Rodriguez, Youth Services Coordinator reported that 52 students received tutoring, orientation, and career development services. Lina mentioned that two youth graduated from High School. Miriam stated one of Youth Co-Op's youth program participants will be accepting the WRD Broward Proclamation this year.
- **Integration Assistance (IA):** Silvio Padilla, Sub-Director, CWS is providing assistance in all areas especially thru the Information and Referral services and short term case management. He stated they use the radio show to communicate important educational topics to the Haitian Community.
- **Child Care:** Yahneek Phillips, Manager from Family Central reported they enrolled 13 children and need more referrals. RS contract with Family Central is ending and a new agency will be providing child care services to refugees in Broward.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Miriam announced that registration is open for the RS Advanced Eligibility training which is scheduled for June 25, 2015 at the CSC of PBC from 10-12.

### **NEXT MEETING**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact person &amp; Phone #</b>
July 16, 2015	Broward County Community Action 900 NW 31st. Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311	Contact: Audry Ljung /954- 357-5001
Set. 17, 2015	Children Services Council	JB Baptiste/ 954-377-1116
Nov. 19, 2015	TBD	TBD

**Contact:** Miriam\_Rosario@dcf.state.fl.us. Phone: (561) 227-6722  
Taddese\_Fessehaye@dcf.state.fl.us. Phone: (407) 317-7335