



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 27, 2015
TO: Members of the Orlando Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: Pedro Padua, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: June 10, 2015 TF Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR: -

Date: August 12, 2015
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: Community Health Centers – Pine Hills
Lakeside/Aspire building (Conference room 1st floor),
1800 Mercy Drive, Orlando, FL 32808
Contact: Pedro Padua
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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 attends 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, S1111D, Orlando, Florida 32801

Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

ORLANDO AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING**INTRODUCTIONS**

This meeting was held at Mid-Florida Technical School, located at 2900 W. Oak Ridge Rd; Orlando, FL 32809. Thirty-seven people were in attendance. Pedro Padua, Central Region Community Liaison represented the Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

PALMAS – Rose Boisrond, Program Coordinator, had three former students speak about their experience with the PALMAS refugee adult education program:

1. Carl Henry (Haiti) – Graduated 2015 in Hotel Management and is now working at Rosen Hotel.
2. Dsahaba Quiala (Cuba) – Graduated 2010 in Accounting and has been working at Mid Florida Tech for 5 years.
3. Victor Lopez (Cuba) – Graduated from AC repair in 2015 – He currently works at Bakery Express and is not looking to change jobs at this time as he is in the process of closing on home purchase.

They all spoke highly about the program and the support provided by staff in helping them complete their training successfully.

LYNX- Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority for Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties; it also serves small portions of Polk and Lake counties.

Maria E. Numpe, Compliance Support Coordinator and Ms. Tiffany Jones, Safety and Training Coordinator/Contract Compliance, explained the various programs available through LYNX. An informational pocket was distributed to everyone present. It was explained that LYNX provides “Travel Training” free of charge to individuals and organizations. Each participant that completes the training receives a free 30 days bus pass. To sign up or request training, please call 407-423-8747 option 6.

Maria explained the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program Guidelines.

Application Process: Applications are individually evaluated and eligibility is based on functional ability to use the fixed route (regular bus service) system.

Eligibility/Certifications/Re-certifications: TD service is provided for [individuals who do not have access to any other means of transportation, including public bus service; which includes after regular scheduled service.](#) It is also provided to those who do not receive services from a sponsoring organization.

Fares: The fare for the TD program is based on how far you are traveling:

- Less than 5 miles - \$2.50 each way
- 5 miles but less than 10 miles - \$3.50 each way
- 10 miles or more - \$4.50 each way

Children: An adult must accompany any child under age 15.

Reservation Hours: Since TD is a limited ride program, reservations are taken on a first-come, first-serve basis; **one day prior to the date service is needed.** -

TD Trips are prioritized based on need: • Critical Care Trips • Other Medical • **Employment** • **Education** • Other

Escort and Fares: Escort is a companion who travels with a passenger but not in a care-taking mode. You may travel with one escort who will be charged the same fare as you.

Passenger Coverage: Provided to both ambulatory and wheelchair customers (see wheelchair specifications inside brochure).

Service Area: TD service is provided to customers whose origin address and/or destination address is further than 3/4 of a mile from a fixed route (regular bus service).

No service is provided if both origin and destination are within 3/4 of a mile of a fixed route (regular bus service). No out-of-area trips are provided.

REFUGEE SERVICES UPDATE

No updates from Refugee Services

GENERAL UPDATES

World Refugee Day – Debbie Cruz, CRS Program Coordinator at Catholic Charities, reported the event will be held on Saturday, June 20th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Oak Ridge High School Cafeteria. Set up for exhibitors and vendors will be from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. The event is designed to give the audience a feel for the various cultures.

USCIS - Donald Jarred, USCIS Community Relations Officer, reported that Mr. Warren Jansen is leaving his post as Director of Orlando's Field Office. He added Ms. Crenshaw will be Acting Director. He asked to be notified of any instances of EADs taking longer than 90 days. He mentioned that Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalis has been extended.

DCF ESS/ACCESS – Maria Guzman was present but she had no updates.

Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) – Fitzroy Bacchus, Program Administrator stated that they hosted two public meetings to solicit public input on the **proposed amendment Florida's 1115 Managed Medical Assistance (MMA) Waiver**. The State is requesting to **remove the 30-day period between eligibility determination and managed care plan enrollment and to amend the auto-assignment criteria to conform to Section (s.) 409.977(2), Florida Statutes**.

The proposed amendment will allow individuals to be enrolled in a managed care plan immediately after eligibility determination. The State is requesting an effective date of September 1, 2015. Under the proposed amendment, individuals will receive both their managed care plan assignment and information about the managed care plan choices in their area, to encourage an active selection, immediately after eligibility determination.

During the initial 30 day period post enrollment, if a recipient decides to change plans, the change will take effect the first day of the following month. The 30 day change period will be followed by a 90 day disenrollment period. During the 90 day disenrollment period, if a recipient decides to change plans, the change will take effect the first day of the following month.

Medical Transportation Management:

The Agency for Health Care Administration contracted with LogistiCare Solutions (phone # is 1-866-726-1457), LLC in Regions 1, 2, 9, 10, and 11 and **Medical Transportation Management (MTM # is 1-844-239-5974)**, Inc in Regions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 to provide non-emergency transportation (NET)

services to eligible Medicaid recipients who are not enrolled in a managed care plan.

Refugee Arrivals: -

Catholic Charities – Jennifer Powers, Resettlement and Match Grant Program Coordinator, reported 4 Iraqi arrivals for April and 1 Iraqi arrival for May. They are expecting 17 arrivals in June (5 Burundi, 2 Iraqi and 10 Congolese). She added the projected arrivals for the 4th quarter is 55.

Lutheran Services Florida – Esubalew Dadi, Orlando Resettlement and Match Grant Program Manager, reported 9 arrivals in April (2 cases – 7 Congo and 2 Iran), 5 arrivals in May (3 cases – 3 from Congo, and 2 from Cuba). The arrival projection for June is 21 (8 cases – 14 from Congo, 6 from Iraq and 1 from Burma). He added that housing, particularly for large families, is a challenge; but they are working on new partnerships with new apartments. On Matching Grant, he indicated to have 49 slots available and he asked providers to refer recently arrived (first 30 days) Cuban/Haitians or asylees that could benefit from program.

RS-CONTRACTED PROVIDER UPDATES**Catholic Charities of Central Florida- Comprehensive Refugee Services (CRS):**

Richard Logue, Director of Refugee and Immigration Services for Catholic Charities, reported that a total of 3031 clients have been served by CRS as of May 31st. He explained that 80% of the clients served by CRS are Cubans and Haitians. He added most Cubans are single adults.

Fears about possible immigration changes as a result of the normalization of relations between US and Cuba seems to have contributed to an increase of arrivals from Cuba.

In the absence of Noemi Guzman, Legal Services & Immigration Services Program Coordinator, Richard indicated that Legal was experiencing a delay with EAD filings and they hired additional staff to get caught up. He mentioned there have been some issues with I-94 extensions for some Haitians; but they are working with ICE and CBP to resolve the problem.

In absence of Daisy Clemente, Employment Coordinator, Debbie Cruz reported they have developed additional On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunities for clients in the following areas: Floor Tech (Chemical Spraying), Commercial Painting, Food Processing, Cook Helper, Data Analyst, Electrical Trainees, Daycare workers, Industrial Sewing, and Front Desk.

Maria Diez, Youth Program Coordinator, reported they are optimistic about the partnership and collaboration with UCF College of Education. Dr. Nutta and Alex Davis are interested in helping the youth program starting this summer. UCF students will plan ESOL activities and Tours to UCF for our clients. Also, Alex will come to Catholic Charities in August to help CRS enter the volunteer opportunities on their website and specify exactly what is expected from the students that would volunteer with the program starting in October. They are not interested in helping us at schools; but they may have students interested in group tutoring and one-on-one assistance after school.

Katherine Diaz, ESOL Coordinator, reported they currently have 33 individuals enrolled in ESL classes. There are 8 students from Congo, 14 from Cuba, 5 from Haiti, 4 from Iraq and 2 from Egypt. She added that classes are held at Catholic Charities, in Orlo Vista (located in N Power Dr. Orlando) and a new class was opened at Vida Abundante Church (located in Winegard Rd, Orlando) with good attendance.

Monica Araujo, Case Management Coordinator, indicated the program has been very busy as a result of increased arrivals. She added that two out of three SSI applications have been approved and one is pending.

PALMAS - Rose Exantus-Boisrond, Program Coordinator, reported that 20 students graduated from technical programs. She added they had two volunteers from UCF assist with small groups and conversational English in class and anticipate more participation for Fall Term. In addition, they've enrolled 36 students in New Arrivals classes.

Community Coordinated Care for Children, Michael Montgomery, Family Support Specialist, reported they have 46 children enrolled in services and 5 are pending; but scheduled for enrollment.

County Health Departments -

Orange – Martha Ortiz, Case Manager, reported they do 80 to 100 assessments per month.

Seminole- Connor Bridge reported a total of 69 assessments were done in May.

Osceola – Lizzette Plaud, Health Services Representative, reported they did 17 screenings in May (8 Egypt and 9 Cuba).

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS -

Venezuela Refugee Day – Victoria Ramos from Justice Shall be for all extended an invitation to the celebration of Venezuela Refugee Day on Wednesday, July 1 at 5:00 PM at 1 Court Square, Kissimmee, FL 34741. The event will commemorate 204 years of Venezuela's Independence.

Arab-American Community Center – Rasha Murabak announced the center is offering the following services:

- Free immigration consultations the second Thursday of every month from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. To schedule an appointment, please call (407) 985-4550 or send email to: aaccinfo@gmail.com.
- Citizenship Clinics
- ESL classes
- Welcome services for New Americans and refugees
- Resources for immigration services

They are located at 4300 LB McLeod Suite B. Orlando, FL 32811

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2015

Location: Community Health Centers – Pine Hills
Lakeside/Aspire building (Conference room 1st floor),
1800 Mercy Drive, Orlando, FL 32808

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