



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 9, 2015
TO: Members of the Palm Beach Area Refugee Task Force (RTF)
FROM: Miriam Rosario, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: May 22, 2015 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: July 17, 2014
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: West Palm Beach City Hall
401 Clematis Street
West Palm Beach, FL 33402
Contact Tel. 561-345-2000
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This task force has been active in the Palm Beach 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

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

PALM BEACH AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTIONS

This meeting was held at the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. Twenty eight people were in attendance. Miriam Rosario, Community Liaison for the Southeast Region and Taddese Fessehaye, 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 Health Care District of Palm Beach for hosting the meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Chris Irizarry, Executive Director of the FQHC Primary Clinics, provided an overview of how to obtain health care in Palm Beach County, its services and benefits. He began his presentation with a little background on how Brumback clinics came about and the mission, to provide compassionate, comprehensive health services to all Palm Beach County residents, through collaboration and partnerships, in a culturally sensitive environment and reaching the goal of becoming the medical home for all of their patients. The Brumback Clinics, owned and operated by the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, serves adults and children at clinics in West Palm Beach, Belle Glade, Lantana and Delray Beach, Florida

He discussed what services are provided through these Clinics throughout Palm Beach. Services include, but are not limited to yearly physicals; medical evaluations and disease management; laboratory testing referrals; diabetes and hypertension screenings; mammogram referrals; nutritional assessment and referrals; specialty care referrals; adult immunizations; employment and school physicals as well as pharmacy services, pediatric services and dental, which is a new service recently added. He mentioned that the Brumback Clinics serve patients regardless of their ability to pay or whether or not they have insurance.

REFUGEE SERVICES UPDATE

- 2015 World Refugee Day (WRD): Miriam Rosario 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. She also went on to mention that the West Palm Beach and Oakland Park USCIS Field Offices will be putting together a naturalization ceremony for 200 candidates (100 from Oakland Park and 100 from West Palm Beach). There will be a walk thru for the naturalization ceremony on June 11th to prepare for the event.
- 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 scholarship. 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 at 904-595-6814 or email her at mjaramillo@stepupforstudents.org.
- Partnering with Colleges and universities: CWS continues to partner with Nova students, Mental Health, Haitian foundation and Dr. Myriam Glemaud of For the Children Inc. Youth Co-op (YCI) continues to partner with Palm Beach Atlantic University (PBA), and PBA students are helping their resettlement program. The YCI youth program is now partnering with the PBA students and they are assisting with the children's tutoring program.
- 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. Also discussed was the transportation disadvantage. They can obtain the form online or at any Clerk & Comptroller's branch locations. However you

may only record the domiciles at the main court house at 205 North Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach. Some acceptable legal documentation are state issued identification card (ID) or Driver's license issued by the Department Of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV).

- Serena Johnson of DHSMV gave an update on Free Florida IDs. Serena stated in PBC there is a \$6.50 fee due to the county tax collector's office, but will check to see if that could possibly be waived.

NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

- Miriam and Taddese facilitated discussion regarding Adult Education Community-Level Action Plan. Miriam stated Refugee Services (RS) conduct uptake analysis of adult education services to determine which client populations are accessing or not accessing services. Miriam reported base 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 to 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 and Taddese informed everyone that they had a good 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 Transportation System. The idea of using van pool will be shared with the employment provider.

GENERAL UPDATES

- Don Jarrell, D10 Community Relations Officer, (West Palm Beach and Orlando areas) U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) spoke about Employment Authorization Card delay over 90 days. Don also provided brief overview of the original 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) guidelines and the renewal process. USCIS is implementing the expanded DACA guidelines, given that the injunction does not affect the existing DACA process. USCIS is continuing to process requests for two-year initial and renewal grants of DACA under the original 2012 guidelines listed at uscis.gov/daca.
- Teresa Hernandez and Teresa Janeczek were present, but had no update.
- Marta Roque, CareerSource PBC spoke about their TANF program for clients to apply online and for the orientation they will need a Social Security number. Marta will continue to assist refugees at the Youth Co-op, Inc. location.
- Glenna Willis, RNBSN, Nursing Supervisor, representative from the Palm Beach Department of Health reported on clients' needs for mental health services and the need for a new contact person. Chris Irizarry provided her with the name of the new contact person.

NEW REFUGEE ARRIVAL UPDATE

- **Youth Co-Op, Inc. (YCI):** Sindy DeLeon, Supervisor, reported as of May 30, 2015 they resettled 38 cases (74 individuals, 16 children - Cuba-27, Iraq-4, Colombia-4, and Burma-2).
- **Catholic Charities:** Yamilet Vargas, Program Administrator reported that they have a reduce number in R&P assurances. R&P arrivals are very slow. Their Match Grant program is now offering ESOL classes and providing bus passes. They are contemplating the possibility of expanding the capacity to receive free cases.
- **Church World Service (CWS):** Oscar Rivera, Director, reported that they resettled 21 free cases most from Colombia. They are approved for 100 in Match Grant.

RS CONTRACTED PROVIDER UPDATES

- **Adult Education:** Antonio and Luisa, Project Transition, stated that as of January 2015 the responsibility of managing the vocational training has been transferred to Youth Co-Op's employment program.

- **Employability Status:** Aimee Cernicharo, Senior Staff Attorney, St Thomas University Human Rights Institute (STUHRI) spoke regarding EAD delays. She indicated the program has been very busy as a result of increased arrivals. Appointments are pending for three months. Advised that refugees should contact CWS to 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:** Sindy DeLeon reported that they have placed 3 refugees on OJT; 7 new employers.
- **Youth:** Sindy DeLeon reported they had tutoring, orientation, career development successfully completed. They assisted a youth to apply for college. Their youth student will be accepting the WRD West Palm Beach Proclamation this year.
- **Integration Assistance (IA):** CWS is providing assistance in all areas especially thru the Information and Referral services. A new attorney has been hired and they are now offering refugee employability status assistance services and serving refugees residing in the southern part of the county.
- **Child Care:** The Early Learning Coalition (ELC) will be the new agency providing child care services to refugees in PBC starting July. ELC representative's staff were present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Miriam I. Bracero-Rosario reminded members that there will be information distributed by email to task force members to update their contact information.
- Miriam I. Bracero-Rosario announced registration available for the RS Advance Eligibility training next 6/25/15 at the CSC of PBC from 10-12.

NEXT MEETING

Date	Location	Contact person & Phone #
July 17, 2015	WPB City Hall	J. Tagle
Sept 18, 2015	TBA	TBA
Nov. 20, 2015	TBA	TBA

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