



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 18, 2018
TO: Members of the Miami-Dade Refugee Task Force
FROM: Lourdes Leconte, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: October 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: December 14 2018
Time: 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Location: [Miami Dade College Wolfson Campus](#)
[The Idea Center Bldg. 8](#)
[315 NE 2nd Avenue, RM. 8503 CD Miami, Florida 33128](#)
Contact : Lourdes Leconte
Office : (786) 257-5173
Cell: (305) 401-3374
E-Mail : Lourdes.Leconte@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Miami 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 twenty-five to thirty 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!

401 NW 2nd Avenue, Suite N-812 Miami, Florida 33128

**MIAMI-DADE REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 12, 2018****ATTENDEES:**

Kerry Allen; Sabine Balmir Derenoncourt; Eduardo Chavez; Martha Ferrer; Emilie Goeser; Silvia Lopez; Dorothy Martin; Sergio Mora; Cristobal Perez; Maureen Porras; Marie Philogene; Edilia Romeu; Jose Sanchez; Lilliam Sozano; Carmen Torres; Renata Ruiz-Bresciani; Zulma Ruiz; Ielana Vallejo ; Erica Perdomo; Tera Bivens; Andrea Gordon; Caridad Mas; Emmanuel Vega; Eliana Couch; Luz Reyes; Mistsouko Chatelain ; Carlos Narranjo; Paulina Velez; Pilar Boggs; Michelle Toral; Duncan Sosa; Lourdes Leconte

INTRODUCTION:

Lourdes Leconte, DCF Refugee Services Community Liaison for the Southern Region welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

PRESENTATION:**Arno Lemus, Attorney. Youth Co- op**

Presentation on Level Up Civic Assimilation Program for Refugees & Asylees. This new USCIS funded program at Youth Co – op has a three pronged approach to services that consist of: 1- **Case Management Services:** Interview and screen client’s eligibility Enroll client to the program. Identify the needs of the participant Provide information and guidance Assess the English language level (test CASAS). Tailor to the specific skills and needs of the clients Counseling once a month to see the progress and provide Community resource guide. 2- **Education:** Implementation of an ESOL curriculum according to client’s needs- HANDS on Civics- Hosting local leaders- Community field trips Library or museum tours - Naturalization process. 3- **Legal Services:** Attorney consultation- The Agency immigration department accredited by the Department of Justice will prepare N-400 application and Attorney will accompany client to the interview.

Maureen Porras, Managing Attorney, CWS

Provided a detailed explanation to the group on the USCIS Proposed Changes to “Public Charge” She noted that the Comment period on proposed changes ends 12/10/2018 and is encouraging individuals and organizations to submit comments to USCIS. These changes will apply to those seeking admission, including adjustment of status, an immigrant visa, change of status, and extensions of stay—unless congress expressly exempted a group from the ground of inadmissibility. And very importantly she stated that the following individuals are exempt from the “public charge” ground of inadmissibility: Individuals adjusting under the Cuban Adjustment Act—Cuban nationals, spouses and minor children of Cuban nationals, Asylees, Refugees the group of people being served by Refugee Service Program and other groups of immigrants she also listed. The propose changes will specifically define “public charge” in the regulations, enumerate immigrants exempt and types of benefits considered in the regulations, the Benefits to be considered in “public charge” determination, what amount of Public Assistance received will matter and the proposed threshold for those benefits that can be monetized easily. There will be positive and negative factors that will be taken into consideration in determining public charges and there will be public Charge Bonds.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Conflict Coaches along with other organizations will be hosting a Welcoming event it will be Potluck at the Joe Celestin center on Saturday October 20 at the Joe Celestin Center. All are encouraged to participate and support this community event. December 14 will be our last taskforce for 2018, We will be having our customary luncheon, but we are seeking help from the members of the taskforce, to find another suitable venue to hold the luncheon this year.

Meeting adjourned at 11:49 AM

SOUTH FLORIDA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES MINUTES – OCTOBER 2018

South Florida VOLAG Consortium

October 10, 2018

Attendees:

Name	Agency	Email
Evelin Soto	Catholic Charities	ESoto@ccadm.org
Bojan Bajic	Youth Coop	Bojan.Bajic@ycoop.mail.org
Jose Sanchez	CWS	Jsanchez@cwsglobal.org
Carmen Torres	LRIS	
Lourdes Leconte	DCF - Refugee Services	
Silvia Lopez	ACCESS – CMG	

Refugee Program updates:

- The State Department announced the recommendation for an FY 2019 admission ceiling of 30,000 refugees. This is a new low in the history of the refugee program.
- The total number of refugees admitted in FY2018 is 22,494.
- The State Department will not be able to make a recommendation regarding FY 2019 funding award decisions and placement plans until the Presidential Determination is officially signed.
- CWS resettled 43 refugees in FY 2018 from El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Eritrea, Congo, Vietnam, Burma, Jamaica and Pakistan.

Reception and Placement Program updates (FY 2018)

Agency	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Total
CC	0	0	0	0	0	0							0
CWS	0	8	0	3	0	6	2	5	2	3	8	6	43
IRC	3	1	0	5	0	0							9
LIRS	0	0	0	0	0	0							0
Youth Co-Op	0	0	0	0	0	0							0

TOTAL FY18 (Oct- Mar)		52
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Matching Grant Program updates (FY 2018)

- FY 2018 program year remains extended through December 31, 2018.
- ORR intends to provide supplemental funds for this extension.
- Changes in MG guidelines include the extension of the program enrollment period from 31 days to 90 days after arrival.

Agency	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Total
CC	17	4	2	7	15	4	18	11	11	31	21	19	160
CWS	71	29	26	55	57	30	70	16	37	46	10	7	453
IRC	23	9	7	3	4	11							58
LIRS	17	12	4	2	0	0							35
Youth Co-Op	104	36	17	36	63	60	66	75	98	100	91	38	784
TOTAL FY18													1490

Cuban/Haitian Parolee Orientation Program:

Month	Total	Cuban	Haitian	Left the county
Jan 2018	76	11	65	62
Feb 2018	56	38	18	22
Mar 2018	31	27	4	22
April 2018	33	1	32	27
May 2018	23	2	21	20
June 2018	38	1	37	28
July 2018	6	0	6	1
Aug 2018	0	0	0	0
Sep 2018	1	0	1	1
YTD	270	57	213	186

Other items:

- DCF Refugee Service and Resettlement Agencies are providing the Asylum Benefits Orientation at the asylum unit monthly. The next presentation is October 12, 2018 at 2 pm.
- **Next meeting scheduled: December 5, 2018**

LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – OCTOBER 2018**Immigration and Legal Issues Sub Committee****Minutes for the meeting on September 5, 2018****By: Maria Rodriguez**

Attendees: Maureen Porras, Berta Cassidy, Zulma Ruiz, Maria Avila, Michael Silva, Maria Dominguez, Lourdes Leconte, Miriam J. Garcia, Megan Humphreys, Frances Davila, Carmen Gimenez, Gabriella Perez, Cesar Campos, Christine Reis, Dorothy Martin, Mariana Martinez.

The immigration Subcommittee Meeting was held on September 5, 2018 at the offices of Church World Service. Berta Cassidy provided USCIS updates, Maria Dominguez provided Miami Asylum Office, and Michael Silva provided CBP updates, followed by questions.

TPS DESIGNATION: TPS re-registration period is now open for applicants from Somalia and Yemen. TPS applicants under Somalia's designation who want to maintain their status through the 18-month extension period ending on March 17, 2020, must re-register between August 27, 2018, and October 26, 2018. TPS applicants under Yemen's designation who want to maintain their status through the extension date of March 3, 2020, must re-register between August 14, 2018, and October 15, 2018.

EADs FOR CUBAN NATIONALS: Applicants for Cuban Adjustment may be able to file an initial EAD, under category (c)(9), concurrently with an I-485, even if the applicant has an unexpired 2-year EAD previously issued under a 2-year parole. USCIS has elevated the issue and is awaiting further information.

ASYLUM:

1. Minutes from the last ZMI's Stakeholder's meeting will be posted on USCIS.gov.
2. The Q&A from the last National Stakeholder's quarterly meeting can also be found online at USCIS.gov.

3. UFC cases: In spring 2018, USCIS conducted a pilot offering selected removable asylum applicants who filed their I589s 10+ years after their last entry the opportunity to waive their asylum interviews and be placed directly into removal proceedings with the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) as one-year referrals. A statistically significant number of untimely filed applicants were randomly selected from the pending asylum backlog. Notices were issued to the pilot group (Applicants and Attorneys of Record) on Form I-797 explaining the reason for the Notice as well as an optional Waiver of the Asylum Interview. Slightly over 21% of the pilot applicants elected to waive their asylum interview and were issued Notices to Appear before the EOIR. As of July 2018, the USCIS's asylum backlog contains over 40,000 untimely filed applications that appear to have been filed 10 or more years after the applicant's last arrival in the United States. In early August 2018, the Asylum Division issued another round of Notices of Untimely Filing and Waiver offers to the longest-pending cases in every asylum office jurisdiction. We will be awaiting responses to these Notices through late September. Only signed waivers should be returned to the HQ address. All other correspondence regarding untimely filed cases that are within our jurisdiction such as withdrawal requests, new G-28s, etc. should be directed to our office.

4. Asylum applicants must file their change of address within ten (10) days of having moved.

CBP: Reporting Offsite Arrival-Mobile (ROAM) is a free mobile application that provides an option for leisure boaters to report their U.S. Entry to CBP via their smart devices. Miami International Airport, Terminal E, is using the facial recognition pilot program. In the pilot program CBP will not be stamping passports in Terminal E. All passengers that arrive through terminal E will be provided with a pamphlet with instructions on obtaining their I-94 electronically. The facial recognition pilot program is 98-99% accurate. JetBlue also implemented facial recognition program at the Fort Lauderdale Airport.

Global Entry is a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) program that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival in the United States. Members enter the United States through automatic kiosks at select airports. The fee is \$100 for 5 years, which includes pre-TSA clearance.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at Church World Service, 1924 NW 84th Avenue, Doral, FL 33126, from 10:00 am to 12:00 PM.

REFUGEE HEALTH CLINIC REPORT – OCTOBER 2018

None

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES REPORT – OCTOBER 2018

None

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – OCTOBER 2018

**2018 REFUGEE TASK FORCE
EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

Oct. 12, 2018

- REVEST is enrolling students for the upcoming second Mini Term Fall 2187 from October 24, 2018 until December 21, 2018. So far over 1300 VESOL students are enrolled program wide in this current Mini Term 78.1, and 970 are already enrolled for the second Mini Term 78.2 for Fall Term. Approximately 350 students have been scheduled to test and more orientations are planned. Demand continues for an opportunity to receive VESOL and Vocational classes.
- The REVEST Program has been able to process almost 377 vocational registrations for the current Fall Term despite the latest budget-related challenges. Likewise, we have already processed 130 new CCC and CTEC courses for the next college Term Fall term.

We continue providing training and advisement to advisors to be updated about changing procedures and system issues.

- Faculty meetings were conducted with all REVEST instructors Oct. 4 and 6, 2018. All CASAS testing procedures were reviewed with instructors to ensure a successful testing session. CASAS testing is taking place Oct. 8-12, 2018. We expect completion rates to remain steady. All REVEST students were trained to employ basic test-taking skills. Our Wolfson and Hialeah Centers are now using the ECASAS computer-based test. We are very proud of the hard work of our determined faculty and especially our students.
- REVEST is experiencing challenges due to budget cuts and decreasing enrollment, as all refugee service providers have also been affected. We are concerned that prospective clients may be fearful of accepting benefits due to information and misinformation circulating that such actions could affect their future immigration status. REVEST is engaged in an aggressive calling campaign to reach and recruit new clients. So far, 1351 prospective clients have been called. We are also spreading the word with flyers and announcements.
- REVEST, unfortunately, will be closing the Kendal Outreach Center at the end of 2018. We are working to relocate students to Miami Dade College and our remaining centers. Please note the Hialeah and Wolfson Centers will remain open and are going strong. Please make sure to reaffirm REVEST is open and ready to receive students. We appreciate your clarity in this matter, so all prospective clients know we are ready to assist them and help them create a bright future.
 - The current trimester (SAVES) began on August 20, 2018 and will end on December 21, 2018.
 - The total enrollment in the SAVES program, as of October 11, 2018, was 1582. Of these, 588 are new students to the program and 91 are 16 to 18 youngsters enrolled in the Success Management Academy (SMA) SAVES GED in Spanish Program.
 - Students are returning to school slowly and fearful because of new laws that might impede their chances of becoming permanent resident. SAVES continues to serve eligible students through 14 schools with established SAVES offices and provides vouchers to SAVES students who are interested in vocational/technical courses, not offered at their current schools, to attend other schools. Schools are doing their own marketing to recruit students by participating in open-houses, radio programs, students' orientation, and community events.
- The SAVES contract has been renewed for three (3) years, from 2018-2021.

- SAVES continue to work closely with the M-DCPS marketing department to reach out to the community and disseminate information about the SAVES programs. SAVES is currently advertising via newspaper, radio, career fairs, and opening of school meetings. New SAVES Website and Marketing Video for M-DCPS technical colleges are available through the following links: www.savesdadeschools.com and <https://youtu.be/pttdZJ5ssLw>.
- SAVES students' success stories, which highlight the achievements of some of our students, are uploaded to the SAVES website (www.savesdadeschools.com).
- The next trimester will begin on January 8, 2019 and will end on April 12, 2019.
- The next SAVES District meeting is scheduled for January 30, 2019. If you wish to present at the meeting, please call the SAVES program at 305-823-5020.
- If you have any questions about our program, you can call us at the (305) 823-5024 or visit the SAVES website at www.savesdadeschools.com .

USCIS UPDATE – OCTOBER 2018

USCIS Miami & Caribbean District

October 2018 Update

- ❖ **Proposed Change to Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility**– On Sept. 22, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) posted an advance copy of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) related to the public charge ground of inadmissibility, before formally publishing the NPRM in the Federal Register. The publication of the NPRM in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period allowing members of the public to provide input on DHS' proposal for how the public charge ground of inadmissibility should be administered, and to ensure that the rule can be implemented once it becomes final. After the comment period ends, DHS will carefully consider public comments and eventually publish a final rule in the Federal Register reflecting the date on which that final rule will go into effect.
- ❖ **Online I-90** – We are sending text and email messages about filing Form I-90, Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card online. If you are a lawful permanent resident and your Green Card has expired or is about to expire, or if you need to replace it for another reason, you may file Form I-90 online. Go to the Form I-90 page on our website to begin your online application process.
- ❖ **I-912 Fee Waiver** – USCIS is proposing to revise our Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver, to remove the receipt of means-tested benefits from the eligibility criteria. Members of the public and stakeholders may provide comments on the proposed revision of Form I-912 for 60-days after the Notice is published in the Federal Register.

To read more – <https://www.uscis.gov/news/alerts/proposed-i-912-fee-waiver-form-revision>

To view the Federal Register Notice –

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/09/28/2018-21101/agency-information-collection-activities-revision-of-a-currently-approved-collection-request-for-fee>

- ❖ **USCIS Using Tablets for English Reading/Writing Tests** – On Oct. 1, USCIS began using digital tablets to administer the English reading and writing tests during naturalization interviews as part of the agency’s ongoing business modernization efforts. Although USCIS applicants already use digital tablets to sign or verify parts of their applications, this new approach expands tablet usage, allowing the device to be used for a greater portion of the application process. USCIS will be able to continue using the paper process on a case-by-case basis.

While the eligibility requirements and the subject material of the naturalization test have not changed, applicants are now using a stylus on a digital tablet instead of a paper application. Immigration Services Officers (ISO) will carefully instruct applicants on how to use the tablets before administering the tests:

- For the reading test, a sentence will appear on the tablet and the ISO will ask the applicant to read it.
- For the writing test, several lines will appear on the tablet, replicating the appearance of a piece of blank paper. The ISO will read a sentence aloud and ask the applicant to write it on the tablet.

Applicants will continue to take the civics test verbally, without the tablet.

❖ **Upcoming Naturalization Ceremonies**

Below are scheduled dates for administrative N-400 naturalization ceremonies and the corresponding field offices where the ceremonies will take place (unless otherwise listed). Please note that although these dates are current on the date of issuance of this update, the dates are subject to change without notice.

Miami Field Office	Hialeah Field Office	Oakland Park Field Office	Kendall Field Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 5th • October 12th • October 19th • October 26th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 12th • October 19th • October 26th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 19th • October 26th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 18th <i>(Special Ceremonies at Biscayne National Park)</i> • October 20th • October 26th • October 27th

❖ Outreach Sessions

Below is a listing of our upcoming outreach sessions and events that will take place during the month of October. These sessions are free and open to the public. If you need additional information, please contact – Berta.M.Cassidy@uscis.dhs.gov or Zulma.T.Ruiz@uscis.dhs.gov

Date	Time	Type of Event	Location
October 9th	4:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	West Dade Regional Library 9445 Coral Way Miami, Fl.
October 9th	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	California Club Branch Library 700 Ives Dairy Rd. Miami, Fl.
October 9th	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Weston Branch Library 4205 Bonaventure Blvd., Weston, Fl.
October 10th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Hialeah John F Kennedy Library 190 W 49 St. Hialeah, Fl.
October 11th	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Aventura Branch Library 2930 Aventura Blvd. Aventura, FL
October 13th	3:00 - 5:00 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Temple De Dieu En Christ Uni 10820 NW 7th Ave, Miami, FL 33168
October 15th	1:00 - 4:00 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Kendall Driver's License Center 11735 SW 147th Ave. Suite #23 Miami, Fl.
October 15th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Doral Branch Library 10785 NW 58 St. Doral, Fl.
October 16th	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Stephen P Clark Government Center 111 NW 1st St. Miami, Fl.
October 18th	4:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Kendale Lakes Branch Library 15205 SW 88 St. Miami, Fl.
October 18th	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	Arcola Lakes Branch Library 8240 NW 7th Ave. Miami, Fl. 33150
October 22nd	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Hispanic Library 1398 SW 1st Street, #100, Miami, Fl.
October 23rd	12:30 - 3:30 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Mall of the Americas Driver's License Center 7795 W. Flagler St. Suite #82C Miami, Fl.
October 23rd	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Miramar Branch Library 2050 Civic Center Place Miramar, Fl.
October 23rd	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	SW Regional Library 16835 Sheridan Street, Pembroke Pines, Fl.
October 31st	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Kendall Branch Library 9101 SW 97th Ave, Miami, Fl.