



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 17, 2018
TO: Members of the Miami-Dade Refugee Task Force
FROM: Lourdes Leconte, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: August 10, 2018 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: October 12 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
AUGUST 10, 2018**

ATTENDEES:

Kerry Allen; Bajic Bojan; Sabine, Sherry Capers; Miriam Garcia; Emilie Goeser; Juan Lopez; Dorothy Martin; Arnold Muñoz; Oscar Rivera; Jose Sanchez; Leidy Sevilla; Evelyn Soto; Ileana, Vallejo; Maureen Porras; Renata Ruiz-Bresciani; Zulma Ruiz; Dr. Cheryl White; Lucy Tucker; Michelle Ramirez; Lisette Fernandez; Pavinovmatha Ketheeswaran; Maria Hernandez; Marieleis Amador; Osmin Bejerano; Sheryl Lafrance; Jennifer Weiss; Juanita Giraldo; Olivia, Milian ; Thomas Davis; Ulises Pacheco; Maria Rodriguez; Trecia Hosen; Lourdes Leconte

INTRODUCTION:

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

PRESENTATION:

Thomas Davis, Jr., MPA, Child Fatality Prevention Specialist Department of Children and Families, did a presentation on Child Fatality Prevention. The Department of Children and Families' campaign on Preventing Child Fatalities has a Community Approach that involves everyone at all levels. The Community is urged to report suspected Child Abuse to the Florida Abuse Hotline. In 2018 the state has recorded 248 fatalities thus far. Children under 3 represent 84% of fatalities and the leading culprit is sleep related deaths, followed by drowning. He reiterated the ABCs of Safe Sleep Alone: babies should be alone in their crib or a safe sleep space; Back: babies should always be on their back; Crib: babies should always sleep in their crib. Also, the importance to learn to swim and teach children how to swim. He highlighted that flotation devices and swimming lessons are not a substitute for adult supervision. Remove toys from in and around the pool area, especially riding toys. He encouraged providers to share these tips with front line staff to educate and advise newly arrived refugee clients for they can potentially avoid accidents and/or a fatality.

Olivia Milian-Rodriguez, M.S. Region Planner, Department of Children and Families

She did a Presentation on Hurricane Preparedness. She stated the Hurricane season is very active and is considered slightly above average. The predictions do not matter and it only takes one Hurricane to have an active year. The best advice is to be prepared. She encouraged providers to have a plan for their organization and a personal plan as well. She provided a hurricane preparedness disaster supply list. This information can be very handy when making preparation before a storm.

Renata Bresciani, Fundraising and Marketing Specialist, CWS, the newest addition to the CWS Miami team presented herself to the taskforce members. She has offered to help members of the groups if they have any needs in the areas for media and marketing.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Volunteers are needed for the planning of an activity for the 2018 Welcoming Week September 15-24. A non-Profit Organization Family in Distress led by Dr. Cheryl White is putting together a potluck for Welcoming Week and is inviting all the other organizations at the task force to join her in this activity. She is still looking for a venue.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM**SOUTH FLORIDA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES MINUTES – AUGUST 2018****South Florida VOLAG Consortium**

August 8, 2018

Attendees:

Name	Agency	Email
Evelin Soto	Catholic Charities	ESoto@ccadm.org
Bojan Bajic	Youth Coop	Bojan.Bajic@ycoop.mail.org
Ana Maria Teixeira	IRC	Anamaria.teixeira@rescue.org
Jose Sanchez	CWS	jsanchez@cwsglobal.org
Gustavo Diaz	Youth Co-op/USCRI	Gustavo.Diaz@ycoop.mail.org

Refugee Program updates:

- The FY 2018 presidential determination was set at 45,000 refugees and 15,000 SIVs. The Refugee Program projects a total of 22,000 refugees and 9,000 SIVs arriving.
- There have been 18,300 refugees admitted to the US through USRAP.
- Top nationalities are: DR Congo, Burma, Bhutan, Ukraine, Eritrea, Afghanistan and El Salvador.
- There are 85,000 refugees approved overseas or pending DHS adjudication in the USRAP.
- In April 2018, the request for funding opportunity to administer the Reception & Placement (R&P) program in FY 2019 was released to the public. PRM does not anticipate awarding the R&P contract to all nine national agencies in FY 2019. It is expected that few agencies will stay with the resettlement contract.
- CWS is the only agency with an active refugee resettlement program in South Florida with 37 refugees resettled from El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Eritrea, Congo, Jamaica and Pakistan.

Reception and Placement Program updates (FY 2018)

Agency	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Total
CC	0	0	0	0	0	0					0
CWS	0	8	0	3	0	6	2	5	2	3	29
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)											38

Matching Grant Program updates (FY 2018)

- FY 2018 program year now extends through December 31, 2018.
- ORR intends to provide supplemental funds for this extension, these funds are subject to refugee arrivals.
- Once PRM has completed its FY 2019 planning for the refugee program, then, ORR plans to send invitations to MG programs for the upcoming fiscal year that will run from January 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019

Agency	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April		May	June	July	Total
CC	17	4	2	7	15	4	18		11	11	31	120
CWS	71	29	26	55	57	30	70		16	37	46	436
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					100	655
TOTAL FY18 (Oct-Jan)												1304

During last quarter, Matching Grant Program outcomes were lower than usual due to EAD delays. Programs reported that EAD processing was taking up to 6 months. Agencies elevated this concern to national headquarters and USCIS.

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
YTD	263	81	183	182

Other items:

- Next meeting scheduled: October 10, 2018

LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – JULY 2018**Immigration and Legal Issues Sub Committee****Minutes for the meeting on July 11, 2018**

By: Maria Rodriguez

Attendees: Brad Ginter, Maureen Porras, Maria Avila, Berta Cassidy, Javier Arce, Haydee Canas, Miriam J. García, Amanda St. Jean, Dayelis Orozco, Sheryl Lafrance, Lucio Perez-Reynoso, Maria Mejía, Maria R. Domínguez, Iris De Jesús; Adrian Armas.

Note: The Asylum Office and Berta Cassidy will not be attending our next meeting. Zulma Ruiz will be appearing on behalf of USCIS.

The immigration Subcommittee Meeting was held on July 11, 2018 at the offices of Church World Service. Berta Cassidy provided USCIS updates, Maria Dominguez provided Miami Asylum Office updates, Amanda St. Jean provided EOIR Department of Justice updates, followed by questions.

First, Berta Cassidy introduced Section Chief Officers for the Oakland Field Office, Gina Sankar and Adam Chioffe who participated in our Subcommittee Meeting.

HAITIAN TPS: DHS has terminated TPS designation for Haitians effective July 22, 2019. Some EAD recipients have not received their EADs.

EAD RECALL: Approximately 800 Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) issued in conjunction with Form I-589 were recalled. The cards contain a production error that transposed the first and last names of the individuals receiving the EADs. These cards were mailed to recipients in April and May 2018. USCIS will send notices to individuals who received the incorrect EADs, as well as to their attorneys or accredited representatives, if a G-28 was submitted with the corresponding Form I-589. The affected individuals should return their incorrect EADs to USCIS in the provided pre-paid envelope within 20 days of receiving the notice. Recipients may also return their EADs to a USCIS field office. Replacement EADs will be sent within 15 days of receiving the incorrect card.

NTA: USCIS officers will now issue an NTA in a wider range of cases where the individual is removable or where an applicant is denied an immigration benefit and is unlawfully present in the United States.

The revised policy generally requires USCIS to issue an NTA in the following categories of cases in which the individual is removable:

- Cases where fraud or misrepresentation is substantiated, and/or where an applicant abused any program related to the receipt of public benefits. USCIS will issue an NTA even if the case is denied for reasons other than fraud.
- Criminal cases where an applicant is convicted of or charged with a criminal offense or has committed acts that are chargeable as a criminal offense, even if the criminal conduct was not the basis for the denial or the ground of removability. USCIS may refer cases involving serious criminal activity to ICE before adjudication of an immigration benefit request pending before USCIS without issuing an NTA.
- Cases in which USCIS denies a Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, on good moral character grounds because of a criminal offense.

- Cases in which, upon the denial of an application or petition, an applicant is unlawfully present in the United States.

The link to the new NTA Memo was forwarded to subcommittee members.

HUMANITARIAN PAROLE: They are being interviewed and being issued in Havana.

NTA FILINGS WITH EOIR: the EOIR was rejecting NTAs filed without a date and place of hearing. Amanda St. Jean provided an update that same day that EOIR was **no longer** rejecting NTAs without this information.

ASYLUM EAD CLOCK CALCULATION: An asylum applicant may have accumulated more time on the 180-day Asylum EAD Clock than the number of days reported on the EOIR hotline. Although “lodging” an I-589 at the window will start the EAD clock, it will not be reflected in the information provided on the EOIR hotline. The number of days reported on the EOIR hotline does not include:

- The time an applicant accumulates toward the EAD Clock when the applicant has lodged an asylum application with an immigration court prior to filing the application with the immigration court; or
- The time that USCIS may credit to an applicant’s EAD Clock if the asylum application was remanded to an immigration judge by the Board for further adjudication of an asylum claim. I-589 applications may be “filed” at the court window or at a hearing. If an I-589 application is denied by the court and the respondent appeals, the Asylum clock will NOT continue to run during the pendency of the appeal.

ASYLUM PRIORITIES: Affirmative Asylum scheduling priorities remain the same. Humanitarian exception to expedited interview – family member in country of persecution is facing imminent danger, death, and/or threat of death. The family must describe why they are in imminent danger and why family were left behind.

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING: Next Stakeholders meeting will be held August 7, 2018 from 2-4 PM. Please visit USCIS.gov to register for the meeting. This will be the last meeting for Fiscal Year 2018.

CBP: Suggests traveling with as much documentation as possible.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 1, 2018 at American for Immigrant Justice, 3000 Biscayne Blvd, Suite 400, Miami, FL 33137, from 10:00 am to 12:00 PM.

REFUGEE HEALTH CLINIC REPORT – AUGUST 2018

None

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES REPORT – AUGUST 2018

None

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – AUGUST 2018**EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING****August 10, 2018**

- REVEST is enrolling students for the upcoming Fall term 2187 beginning September 4 until October 20, 2018 (8 week classes). So far over 1900 VESOL students have been enrolled program wide and more are expected. Approximately 600 have been tested and more orientations are planned. Demand continues to grow for on opportunity to receive VESOL and Vocational classes.
- REVEST has Finalized vocational registrations for Summer 2183. REVEST began registrations for Fall 2185 beginning on September 2018. So far, we have enrolled over 160 new students. Training and advisement to advisors to be updated about changing procedures and system issues.
- Faculty meetings were conducted with all REVEST instructors July 26 and 28, 2018. All CASAS testing procedures were reviewed with instructors to ensure a successful testing session. CASAS testing is taking place August 6–10, 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.
- World Refugee Day was celebrated on Wednesday, June 20, at Miami Dade College's Wolfson Campus. Festivities included presentations, speakers, and a concert that highlighted the contributions of refugees to this nation. Refugee services organizations were present to assist and provide information. We would like to thank all involved that made this special event possible.
- REVES is pending contract signature and ready to continue providing excellent service to our clients.
- Total SAVES Program enrollment as of July 27, 2018, is 1,946. Of these, 490 are new students to the program and 122 are 16 to 18 youngsters in the eight SAVES GED in Spanish Program centers. The current trimester ended on August 1, 2018. The next academic trimester will begin on August 20, 2018.
- The new SAVES contract XK056 was approved by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Board on July 25, 2018 for 2018-2021. Priorities for the SAVES program have been established to provide direct services to the students.

- The SAVES program was relocated for the summer to the M-DCPS School Board Administration building due to major construction at Hialeah-Miami Lakes Adult Education Center. SAVES staff will be returning to the school in mid-August.
- M-DCPS School Operations and the Office of Public Relations are assisting the SAVES program in launching a major marketing campaign to recruit inactive students to return to school. The campaign is paying big dividends by helping the program to maintain present enrollment.
- The Voucher program is very successful and is assisting students in enrolling in non-SAVES schools such as George T. Baker and Miami Lakes Technical College in courses not available at the students' school sites. These schools are maintaining its SAVES enrollment. The completion rate and student achievement of students in these schools are surpassing the program performance goals.
- SAVES performance measures results were published by DCF for the Fall term 2017 2. SAVES surpassed all contract goals. We are very proud of these results.
- SAVES students with good attendance and making progress are given the opportunity on a one-to-one basis to complete vocational courses beyond three trimesters. Many students are taking advantage of this opportunity.
- SAVES and the REVEST program continue collaborating to assist students who completed their GED and are interested in pursuing a college education. Miami-Dade College provides counseling services to students refer by the SAVES program to help them with registration, applying for financial aid and mapping their career.
- SAVES schools held graduations at the end of each trimesters. Many SAVES students graduated from the GED and vocational courses.
- A SAVES District meeting was held on May 30, 2018. Important information was discussed with the school staff. Next SAVES District meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2018. Please contact us if you would like to be in the agenda.
- New SAVES success stories, which highlight the achievements of some of our students, have been uploaded to the SAVES website (<http://saves.dadeschools.net>) If you have any questions about our program, you can call us or visit the SAVES website at <http://saves.dadeschools.net>

USCIS UPDATE – AUGUST 2018

USCIS Miami & Caribbean District**❖ Introducing our New Chief of Staff**

We would like to give a warm welcome to **Bettina M. Chwat**, and congratulate her on her selection as the **Chief of Staff** for the Miami and Caribbean (MAC) District. Ms. Chwat will join the MAC leadership team on August 5th, 2018.

❖ Acting Miami Field Office Director

We would also like to give a warm welcome to Erin Fatica, the Acting Miami Field Office Director (FOD). Ms. Fatica began her role as Acting FOD on July 23rd and will be with us until November 4th.

❖ REMINDER - Temporary Protected Status Designated Country: Honduras

On May 4, 2018, Secretary of Homeland Security, Kirstjen M. Nielsen announced her decision to terminate the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Honduras with a delayed effective date of 18 months, on January 5, 2020. Current beneficiaries who want to maintain their status through the effective termination date, must **re-register between June 5, 2018, and Aug. 6, 2018**.

For further information, please visit – <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status/temporary-protected-status-designated-country-honduras>

❖ Haiti TPS EADs - The [TPS Haiti](#) page has been updated with information. USCIS is automatically extending the validity of certain employment authorization documents (EADs) issued under TPS Haiti [through Jan. 17, 2019](#). Stakeholders can visit the webpage and see the Automatic Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Extension section for more information.**❖ USCIS Updates Policy Guidance for Certain Requests for Evidence and Notices of Intent to Deny** – USCIS recently posted a [policy memorandum](#) (PM) that provides guidance to USCIS adjudicators regarding their discretion to deny an application, petition, or request without first issuing a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID) when required initial evidence was not submitted or the evidence of record fails to establish eligibility.

This updated guidance is effective September 11, 2018 and applies to all applications, petitions, and requests, except for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) adjudications, received after that date. Due to preliminary injunctions issued by courts in California and New York, this new PM does not change the RFE and NOID policies and practices that apply to the adjudication of DACA requests.

The policy implemented in this guidance restores to the adjudicator full discretion to deny applications, petitions, and requests without first issuing an RFE or a NOID, when appropriate. This policy is intended to discourage frivolous or substantially incomplete filings

used as “placeholder” filings and encourage applicants, petitioners, and requestors to be diligent in collecting and submitting required evidence.

To read the News Release, please visit – <https://www.uscis.gov/news/news-releases/uscis-updates-policy-guidance-certain-requests-evidence-and-notices-intent-deny> To read the Policy Memorandum, please visit - https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Laws/Memoranda/AFM_10_Standards_for_RF_Es_and_NOIDs_FINAL2.pdf

❖ Outreach Sessions

Below is a listing of our upcoming outreach sessions and events that will take place during the month of August. 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
August 1st	4:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	South Dade Regional Library 10750 SW 211 St. Cutler Bay, FL.
August 2nd	2:30 - 4:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Hialeah John F Kennedy Library 190 W 49 St. Hialeah, FL.
August 2nd	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	Shenandoah Library 2111 SW 19th St. Miami, FL.
August 4th	2:00 - 3:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Miramar Library and Education Center 2050 Civics Center Place, Miramar, FL.
August 6th	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Hispanic Library 1398 SW 1st Street, #100, Miami, FL.
August 8th	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Kendall Branch Library 9101 SW 97th Ave, Miami, FL.
August 9th	12:30 - 5:30 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Voice of Love 8863 NW 117th St. Hialeah Gardens, FL.
August 13th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Doral Branch Library 10785 NW 58 St. Doral, FL.
August 14th	4:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	West Dade Regional Library 9445 Coral Way Miami, FL.
August 14th	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	California Club Branch Library 700 Ives Dairy Rd. Miami, FL.
August 14th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Tamarac Branch Library 8701 W. Commercial Blvd. Tamarac, FL.
August 14th	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Homestead Branch Library 700 N. Homestead Blvd. Homestead, FL. 33030
August 16th	4:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Kendale Lakes Branch Library 15205 SW 88 St. Miami, FL.
August 16th	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	Arcola Lakes Branch Library 8240 NW 7th Ave. Miami, FL. 33150
August 20th	1:00 - 4:00 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Kendall Driver's License Center 11735 SW 147th Ave. Suite #23 Miami, FL.
August 20th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	West Regional Library 8601 W. Broward Blvd. Plantation, FL. 33324
August 21st	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Stephen P Clark Government Center 111 NW 1st St. Miami, FL.
August 22nd	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Naturalization Information Session	West Dade Regional Library 9445 Coral Way, Miami, FL.
August 25th	10:30 am - 12 pm	Naturalization Information Session	Palm Springs North Library 17601 NW 78th Ave, Hialeah, FL.
August 27th	6:30 - 7:45 pm	Library Information Desk	Lauderhill Towne Centre Library 6399 W Oakland Park Blvd. Lauderhill, FL.
August 28th	12:30 - 3:30 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Mall of the Americas Driver's License Center 7795 W. Flagler St. Suite #82C Miami, FL.
August 28th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Miramar Branch Library 2050 Civic Center Place Miramar, FL.

❖ 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.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Miami Field Office• August 3rd• August 7th• August 10th• August 17th• Hialeah Field Office• August 11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oakland Park Field Office• August 17th• August 24th• August 25th• August 28th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kendall Field Office• August 17th• August 18th• August 24th• August 25th
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