



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun Harris
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 20, 2022
TO: Members of the Broward Refugee Task Force
FROM: **Miriam Rosario** (RS)
SUBJECT: March 17, 2022, Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: May 19, 2022
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Location: TBA
Contact: Miriam Rosario
Office: (561) 227-6722
Cell: (561) 459-6098
E-Mail: Miriam.rosario@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Broward area in the past few years. The participants are representatives of various government agencies, private not-for-profit organizations, and volunteer groups. An average of about twenty to twenty-five 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

BROWARD COUNTY REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and Miriam Rosario, Southeast Region (SER) Community Liaison (CL), Refugee Services (RS) Program, Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) facilitated the Refugee Task Force (RTF) meeting. Miriam thanked and welcomed all participants for calling in and joining the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves, services, and the agency they represented. Approximately 35 people joined the call.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- **Language Line by Joe Matthews, Strategic Account Executive for Language Line Solutions.** Joe Matthews, Strategic Account Executive for Language Line Solutions provided presentation on the language line services and recommendation to utilize services. This agency is the contracted interpreter provider for all refugee services programs. Currently the need is at an all-time high for interpreters speaking Dari and Pashtu and recruiting is ongoing. Wait times will be a bit longer for these two languages but with more interpreters being hired and trained, they expect wait times to go down in the near future. For more information on this program go to <https://www.languageline.com/s/> Power point presentation shared.
- **Cultural Considerations for Afghan Refugees and Resettlement”:** Dr. Adam Silverman Technical Lead, Senior Subject Matter Expert, and National Security Consultant, Helios, Global Inc. The presentation was given by Dr Adam Silverman, who currently serves as technical lead, senior subject matter expert, and national security consultant with Helios Global, Inc and specializes in cultural considerations for strategy, policy, and operations. Dr Silverman gave a presentation on Cultural Considerations Regarding Afghan Refugees & Resettlement. Questions and answers were addressed and PPP will be share.

GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Roketa Mansfield, Community Relations Officer (CRO), USCIS, Miami and Caribbean District, participated. Roketa Mansfield provided USCIS updates. USCIS continues with outreach in local communities with partnership such as the library branches.

Legal Aid Service of Broward County: Andrea Crumrine, Legal Aid Service of Broward County. They provide free services to immigrants in Broward County. Applicants seeking help can apply online at <https://www.browardlegalaid.org/what-we-do/areas-of-legal-service/immigration/>

Broward County Family Success Administration Financial Capability Program; Wilma Jacobs, Broward County Family Success Administration Financial Capability Program. Provide one on one coaching, match saving grant funds <https://www.broward.org/FamilySuccess/Pages/FinancialCapabilityProgram.aspx>

US Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (WHD): Ariel G Rivera Maldonado Community Outreach and Resource Planning Specialist– Posted information regarding DOL, WHD guidelines.

Department of Health-Broward County (DOH): Migdalia Diaz, supervisor provided updates. All clients are being seen, even with the high influx of referrals. They are providing COVID & Flu vaccines, children’s school vaccine, WIC, and dental services. For information regarding eligibility and services please see the Florida Department of Health Refugee Health Program website.

Broward County Library (BCL): Vonda Ward Bryant, Learning Services Coordinator Broward County provided information regarding all free services. Vonda Bryant from Broward County Library for all programs, resources and online services go to Broward.org/Library

American Red Cross Cruz, Jaime Director International Affairs; Families are assisted by American Red Cross to get critical information to family members overseas.

Church World Service/Legal; Natalia Patino, Supervising Attorney, Church World Service Email: npatino@cwsglobal.org Provided updates regarding CWS legal services and serving the Cuban and Haitian clients.

Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency, Southeast Region (ESS/DCF)-: When someone sends an email to Claudia Arce regarding issues with clients, please copy Ms. Moise as well. Ernsth can be reached at Ernsth.Moise@myflfamilies.com and Claudia can be reached at claudia.arce@myflfamilies.com

Refugee Services Program (RS/DCF) – Florida has experienced an increase of new arrivals from Cuban, Haiti, and Afghanistan. Regarding the Ukrainian population, unless an individual has been approved for asylum (or has some other eligible status like ‘victim of human trafficking’) they would not be eligible for refugee services at this time. However, they may be eligible for temporary protected status (TPS).

RS Contracted providers:

Comprehensive Refugee Services (CRS); Edele Firmin, CRS/CWS updated the task force on CRS services including the challenges of new cases with a longer wait time to obtain EAD. CRS continues to help recent arrivals and have seen increases in Cubans and Haitians. CRS continues to provided; case management, referrals and employment orientations

St Thomas University, Human Rights Institute. (STHRI) ; Jennifer Volmar, Attorney Director; Introduction and Welcome of the new STHRI Director Attorney Volmar. Most new clients/recent entrants are offered appointments for orientations and then given appointments depending on their need

Church World Service (CWS): CRS/CWS. CWS has seen an increase in the number of new clients, especially Cuban clients.

Project RENEW: Jocelyne Martinez, Broward Colle/project RENEW (PR/BC) Director Adult Education provided updates. PR/BC provides educational programs serving over 500 students. Enrollment/registrations are continuous. BC does registrations every day.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Meeting: **Thursday, May 19, 2022**
Time: 10:00 AM to 12PM
Location: TBA

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