



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

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Shevaun L. Harris**  
Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 17, 2021  
**TO:** Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** LeAndra Stafford, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** May 12, 2021, Meeting Minutes

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**THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:**

**Date:** July 14, 2021  
**Time:** 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.  
**Location:** TBD  
**Contact:** LeAndra Stafford  
**Office:** (904) 485-9540  
**Cell:** (904) 524-1316  
**E-Mail:** Leandra.Stafford@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Jacksonville 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!***

5920 Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, Florida 32211

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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

## JACKSONVILLE AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

### INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held via video remote meeting. LeAndra Stafford, Community Liaison, represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program and facilitated the meeting. There were 26 people in attendance on Microsoft Teams virtual meeting. Guests included: Lance Gambis, FBI and Shontrell Anderson, Dept of Labor. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, as well as several DCF staff was also in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants identified themselves by agency.

### GUEST PRESENTATION

- 1.) Yulonda Thompson, NER Care Coordinator Supervisor, Department of Children and Families

#### *DCF Care Coordination Program*

- The Department of Children and Families, Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency is excited to announce our Care Coordination program in the Northeast Region.
- Our Care Coordinators will assist customers One on One to help them identify and overcome barriers so they can be self-sufficient. With the help of our partners, we aim to help members of our community attain economic independence.  
The NER has 15 care coordinators:
  - ❖ **Duval has 9:**
  - ❖ **Volusia has 4:**
  - ❖ **Alachua has 2**
- The referred client must live in the Northeast Region.
  - ❖ The referred client must be receiving SNAP and/or TANF benefits for at least 6 months and no more than 21 months.
  - ❖ The referred client must be between 18 and 49 years old.
  - ❖ The referred client must indicate they would like to participate in the program and are willing to meet with a Care Coordinator.
  - ❖ Clients that have been determined **disabled** and therefore unable to work will not be included in the program. However, clients that have a **temporary disability** and **will be able to return to work will be included on a case-by-case basis.**
- Our Care Coordination Senior Clerk (Senior Clerk) will screen the referrals to ensure the clients referred meet the eligibility criteria. Once the client has been deemed eligible then they will be assigned to a Care Coordinator. The Care Coordinator will then contact the client to schedule a meeting within (2) business days of receiving the referral.
- During the initial meeting, the Care Coordinator will complete an assessment to identify the client's primary barriers. Once the assessment is completed and barriers have been determined a Care Plan will be created. The Care Plan will

contain the barriers that the client sees as preventing them from becoming self-sufficient, as well as the steps and services needed to remove those barriers.

- Each Care Plan will be written based on the unique barriers and needs of each client. However, the goal will always be the same of becoming economically self-sufficient, no longer in need of or reducing their dependence on SNAP and/or TANF benefits. Then the Care Coordinator will determine what services are available in the community to eliminate the client's barriers.
- Our Care Coordinators goal is to improve our clients experience of receiving government assistance and to help reduce per capita costs in the process. For this program to be successful it is going to require many moving parts: Internal and external partnerships-Economic Self-Sufficiency, Adult Protective Investigations, Child Protective Investigations, and our community partners.
- At any given time, the client can request to no longer participate in the program. There is no penalty, should the client have a change of heart at any given time they can come back to the program. However, a new assessment will be required. The only way a client will be discharged from the program is if: the client fails to cooperate with the program and if the client is no longer receiving benefits.
- The outcome achieved will be success, opportunity, and future self-sufficiency
- Community partners can make a referral or ask question for care coordination to [yulonda.thompson@myflfamilies.com](mailto:yulonda.thompson@myflfamilies.com) to submit a referral

### **REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE**

- **Lutheran Social Services (Laura Cook, Refugee Services Program Manager):**
  - **CRS Summary**
    - ❖ Lutheran Social Services (LSS) continues to operate. They are now open to the public and serving everyone
    - ❖ The food pantry is now open 5 days per week 10 am – 12 pm for those in need. Feeding Northeast Florida will do a big food give away on 05/21/21
    - ❖ The Second Vaccination will be on site.
  - Employment: LSS made 13 full time and 1 part time placement in the last month.
  - Youth Program is currently serving 14 clients
  - Mentoring program have 27 mentees
  - TCM served 54 clients in Tier 1, 3 clients in Tier 2, and served 48 walk-in clients
  - R&P received its first arrival on last Friday and 14 more are scheduled to arrive in the upcoming weeks.
- **Catholic Charities Bureau (Anna Lindler, Associate Director):**
  - CCB is getting back in the building and opening to clients.
  - R&P has one open case and is expecting more. For FFY22, they are proposing 125 refugees and 25 SIVs.
  - Match Grant: 4 MG open cases.

- Tier Case Management Program: 10 new cases in Tier 3, 3 cases in Tier 1. Cuban clients are increasing
- ESOL: Class enrollment is increasing
  - ❖ Had 96 participants in class last month
  - ❖ 20 new intakes, tested 30 clients (Testing is conducted on Thurs and Fridays at CCB)
  - ❖ Night classes have been very large
  - ❖ 226 hours of guidance and retention
  - ❖ 37 in refugee specific classes
  - ❖ For the upper level classes (vouchers to FSCJ), they had 20 voucher referrals, there is a concern with the dropout rate after enrollment
  - ❖ FSCJ is currently enrolling for Summer A & B classes.
- **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid:**
  - No Updates
- **Early Learning Coalition (ELC):**
  - No Updates
- **Department of Health (DOH)(Sue Higgins, Refugee Health Program)**
  - ORR is very mindful of the challenges in getting health assessments completed at this time, ORR released a policy letter allowing a grant waiver to extend the time frame for health assessments from 04/2019 to 09/30/21.
  - Please be aware of the COVID precautions still in place concerning new arrivals. According to the CDC, new arrivals will quarantine for 14 days. [Newly Resettled Refugee Populations | COVID-19 | CDC](#)
  - ORR Emergency Preparedness materials in multiple languages: [Emergency Preparedness | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)
- **Duval DOH:**
  - The Refugee Clinic have seen an increase in arrivals, mostly Cubans.
  - Most new patients they are seeing in the refugee clinic have already received at least the 1<sup>st</sup> vaccine. If they have not received it then they do counsel them about it and offer it to them.

## **GENERAL UPDATES**

### **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)**

- To reschedule appointments applicants, need to call 1-800-375-5283.
- For the latest news and updates on USCIS: [News | USCIS](#)

### **ACHA**

- No Updates

**FSCJ ESOL**

- No Updates

**YMCA**

- They continue to provide support services. Clients are being seen on site with social distance practices/ precautions
- They are assisting clients with benefits, food stamps, school enrollments for families over 5 years or immigrants
- They also provide Basic English Classes and Citizenship Classes in the evenings
- They are providing food pantry three days per week, with a concentration to assist residents in the Dupont area, however, all are welcome to get food
- Started English and Citizenship classes, the classes will be smaller due to pandemic

**Red Cross**

- Restoring Family Links Program – Reconnecting loved ones
- Red Cross reminded the Task Force about Hurricane Preparedness (the storm season has been extended this year)
- Red Cross is reaching out to all vulnerable communities to educate the on home, fire, and safety.
- People can receive smoke detector with a 10 year battery warranty at no cost through the hotline **1-833-244-0724** and email [NFLhomesfirecampaign@redcross.org](mailto:NFLhomesfirecampaign@redcross.org)

**Center for Language & Culture (CLC)**

- Applications for summer school is currently open till May 14<sup>th</sup>
- Currently testing students for kindergarten
- Upcoming Workshops:
  - THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children's Hospital  
Informative Workshop  
Home Safety Topics, Child Passenger Safety,  
and Florida KidCare/Food Assistance Public Benefits  
May 13, 2021 @ 11:00 a.m.  
[Join Skype Meeting](#)
  - Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida  
Financial Opportunity Center – Steps 2 Success  
Job Searching Basics  
May 20, 2021 @ 11:00 a.m.  
[Join Skype Meeting](#)

**UNF**

- No Update

**Beyond 90**

- No Updates

**NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN**

David Draper, Community Liaison Supervisor

- 1.) Information on DCF's response to COVID-19 can be found on the DCF website.
- 2.) Arrivals are increasing over the last few months
- 3.) Federal funding available through DCF for rental assistance due to COVID. May apply at [www.ourflorida.com](http://www.ourflorida.com)
- 4.) There is an anticipation of an increase in the number of arrivals