



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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 15, 2021
TO: Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: David Draper, DCF Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: July 14, 2021 - Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: September 8, 2021
Time: 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Location: TBD
Contact: LeAndra Stafford
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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. Approximately 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

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 Microsoft Teams. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program and facilitated the meeting. There were approximately 30 people in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants identified themselves by agency.

GUEST PRESENTATION

- 1.) Robert Vaden, Community Outreach and Resource Planning Specialist, US Department of Labor – Wage and Hour Division
 - Gave a presentation titled Essential Workers and Essential Protections that discussed the ways the Wage and Hour Division was working to ensure fair pay for all workers. They discussed enforcing the minimum wage, ensuring people received overtime pay when entitled, and enforcing child labor laws. For more information, contact Rob Vaden at Vaden.robert@dol.gov or 850-942-8712.

REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **Lutheran Social Services (Laura Cook, Refugee Services Program Manager):**
 - Gave an update on programmatic operations.
 - Provided 72 clients with tiered case management
 - 8 youth are in the mentoring program and 8 in the youth program
 - LSS conducted 46 initial assessments
 - LSS placed 14 individuals in employment
 - Through Reception and Placement 16 individuals were served
 - arrive in the upcoming weeks.
- **Catholic Charities Bureau (Anna Lindler, Associate Director):**
 - Through R&P, there have been 31 arrivals this FFY
 - An SIV family arrived recently
 - Catholic Charities Matching Grant program has been able to place refugees in employment very quickly.
 - Michel with the ESOL program that said they are doing a mix of online and in-person ESOL classes
 - They have had 38 ESOL intakes and 140 enrolled overall (many Cubans and Haitians)

- **Department of Health (DOH)(Colleen Lenfestey, Refugee Health Program)**
 - It was announced that Colleen Lenfestey has taken over for Sue Higgins
- **Duval DOH:**
 - Trying to reach minorities to help give them access to COVID vaccine

GENERAL UPDATES

AGAPE:

- AGAPE is operating a mobile vaccine unit in Duval. Through that unit, they are offering all 3 vaccines and COVID testing

Lutheran Services Florida

- Bill Brim announced LSF's 'Vision is Priceless' program which provides eye exams and glasses.
- LSF is also working with the Vincent Health Unit on promoting preventative care.

YMCA

- Gave updates on the New American Welcome Center
- The Center is providing case management for refugee and immigrant clients
- They are also offering citizenship classes

Red Cross

- Described the Restoring Family Links Program
- Red Cross reminded the Task Force about Hurricane Preparedness (materials provided)
- Described the Home Buyers Safety Program

Beyond 90

- Beyond 90 has provided 350 hours of therapy since January

NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN

David Draper, Community Liaison Supervisor

- 1.) Arrivals are increasing statewide (primarily Cubans and Haitians).
- 2.) Continue to check DCF COVID-19 webpage for updates on services and benefits