



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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 18, 2020
TO: Members of the Orlando Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: David Draper, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: Feb 12, 2020 Task Force Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2020
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: Senior Resource Alliance
3319 Maguire Blvd. Orlando, FL. 32803
Suite 100.
Contact: David Draper
Office: (407) 317-7335
Fax: (407) 245-2766
E-Mail: David.Draper@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Orlando 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 thirty to thirty-five 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 at the local, state and national level, request for proposals, training, workshops, conferences, discuss refugee service needs and explore solutions to those needs. Meeting participants 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!

400 W. Robinson Street, S1111C, Orlando, Florida 32801

ORLANDO AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

This meeting was held at Senior Resource Alliance. Approximately 27 people were in attendance. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, represented the Florida Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Rosa Chaves, Community Liaison for the Central Region, was also present. Everyone introduced themselves and the agencies that they represented.

Special presentation

I. **Senior Resource Alliance (SRA) – Andrea Neimira/Chief Financial Officer, and Alexandra Mercier**

- The SRA presenters provided an overview of their organization. SRA coordinates, develops, monitors, evaluates, and reviews services and resources for elders in Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Brevard Counties. The presentation discussed several services provided by SRA. Services included assistance with housing, transport, food, healthcare, caregiving, etc.

II. **Bays Florida – Yiny Poveda/Circuit 9 FFT Program Director BAYS Family Connections**

- The presenter provided information about FFT – Functional Family Therapy. The FFT program is funded by the Orange County government. Bays Florida provides free services to youth ages 11 to 18 and to their family members. Bays Florida assists youth referred by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and admits them into their Juvenile Diversion Alternative Program (JDAP).

GENERAL UPDATES/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Anne Packham, Marketplace Project Coordinator, Primary Care Access Network** clarified that the Affordable Care ACT (ACA) is not gone. Her organization continues to assist clients in need of healthcare that want to sign up for ACA health coverage.
- **Debbie Vega, Catholic Charities of Central Florida** announced that most of their new clients are Cuban, Haitian, and Venezuelan. A few Cameroonian and Iraqis arrived and have opened cases in the youth/mentoring program. Catholic Charities has seen an increased number of individuals with mental health concerns due to trauma experienced while crossing the border. Other clients are having issues finding quality affordable housing. Catholic Charities recently hired four new interns (two Spanish speakers and two Haitian Creole speakers) to assist the refugee program.
- **Rae Wilburn, AmeriCorps Vista Program at Catholic Charities** continues to assist the refugee mentoring program. The program needs Arabic, Haitian Creole, and Eritrean-speaking volunteers to assist clients.

- **Jose Aguayo, Working Together coalition** expressed concern over confusion with the public charge rules. He states that lawyers are advising clients not to apply for benefits due to the rule.
- **Martha Ortiz, Refugee Health Case Manager** stated they have received 25 to 40 new clients. Most of the clients are Haitian, Venezuelan, and Cubans.
- **Jan Booher, Unitarian Universalist Justice Florida** announced an event titled Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network that will be taking place on March 13 and 14.
- **Julius Jonas, AmeriCorps Vista Program at Catholic Charities** informed the task force that he is conducting outreach for Catholic Charities. He will be incorporating a Know Your Rights presentation and ACA information in his upcoming outreach efforts.
- **David Draper, DCF Community Liaison Manager** announced that Broward and Palm Beach Counties will now be providing refugee services through a Comprehensive Refugee Services (CRS) service delivery model. He also mentioned that refugee arrivals have declined this year. David also discussed forming a committee to plan for World Refugee Day in June.

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday April 8th, 2020

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Location: Senior Resource Alliance
3319 Maguire Blvd. Orlando, Fl. 32803. Suite 100

Contact: David.Draper@myflfamilies.com (407) 317-7335
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