



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 27, 2018
TO: Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: LeAndra Stafford, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: July 11, 2018 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: September 12, 2018
Time: 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Location: Baptist Association of Jacksonville
2700 University Boulevard South
Jacksonville, Florida 32216
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

JACKSONVILLE AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held at the Jacksonville Baptist Association. LeAndra Stafford, Community Liaison represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program facilitated the meeting. There were 22 people in attendance. Patti Grogan, Managing Director of Refugee Services was in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

GUEST PRESENTATION

- 1.) Cristina Parcell, Lutheran Social Services, International Program Manager.
 - A. Cristina gave a presentation on the current Job Market Survey for the Northeast Region.
 - B. Jacksonville is the ideal location for Job expansion due to the welcoming aspect of the city.
 - C. There has been an effort to better educate the citizens and employers about the Refugee population.
 - D. Available jobs in the Northeast Region are: Manufacturing, Logistics, Culinary & Hospitality, Finance, IT, and Healthcare.
 - E. Cristina gave examples of several successful employment placements for refugees.
- 2.) Patti Grogan, Department of Children and Families, Director of Refugee Services
 - A. Gave context for the reason Lutheran Social Services presented their Annual Jobs Analysis. She explained since job markets change from year to year, it is important to know these markets and what is available today and in the future. Having this information allows the case manager to give up to date career laddering plans that are achievable for refugees.
 - B. Patti thanked everyone for the participation in World Refugee Day and gave some highlights of the World Refugee Day Events from around different regions.
 - C. As of 07/06, the total number of refugee arrivals in Florida including Asylees: 4508.
 - D. The factor for this number is the increase in Venezuelan Asylees. Also, the Cubans are being processed through Guyana due to the US Embassy being closed in Cuba.
 - E. The State Department is currently deciding on which resettlement agencies they will continue working with. They are decreasing from 9 to 7 agencies.
 - F. In Florida active Resettlement Agencies have been reduced from 25 to 12. The Miami Region will be down to 2 in the Fall.
 - G. Jacksonville currently has 7 contracts with the consolidation it will be downsized to 1.
 - H. The ITN bid was due in June and no one submitted a bid. Because there were no applicants it frees DCF from competitive bidding and they pick someone to work with. If one of the local resettling agencies decides not to work with DCF then they will be forced to pick an agency from out of town to get the

Consolidation completed. The goal of the Consolidation to one contract is to be more flexible within the services to meet the needs of the refugees.

- I. In the interim, the contracts will be extended for at least 6 months (end March 30, 2019). The ECBO contract will not be renewed and one of the IAS contracts will not be renewed.

REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **World Relief (Jose Vega, Director):**
 - WR had 69 arrivals since Oct. 2017
 - 2 arrivals from the Ukraine
 - Match Grant has 36. However, no more enrollments due to shortage of funding
 - Preferred Communities have 22 people enrolled for youth mentoring and single mothers
 - Summer Camp will be held at Faith United, ages: 5-12. They have 33 children participating this year.
 - The soccer league finished there were 225 players and it will start again August 25th. They now have their own website.

- **Catholic Charities Bureau (Michelle Karolak, Director):**
 - CCB had 49 arrivals since Oct. 2017
 - 5 arrivals scheduled for tomorrow and 1 unaccompanied minor
 - 41 Match Grant slots available
 - ESOL did 241 intakes, 368 students tested, 370 were enrolled in the lower levels and 360 vouchers so far for this fiscal year.
 - They are working hard to recruit more students and to get return students. They are currently trying a mailout card.
 - There are no pending child care issues pertaining to ESOL.
 - July 22nd, They will Multicultural celebration at Christ the King Church

- **Lutheran Social Services (Cristina Parcel, Director):**
 - LSS is expecting 2 individuals from Burma to arrive in the coming week
 - Employment numbers decreased last month but they are making phone calls in attempt to meet new employers
 - IAS has 19 new Cuban in the program, they are still coming through Mexico.
 - The Youth program is accepting placement for summer camp; one component of the program will allow the students to be paid to attend training. They are taking safety around water classes through the YMCA, and arts course with the United Way

- **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid:**
 - Attorney General Jeff Sessions rescinded a memo for refugees and asylees Discrimination for EADs (once they have expired).
 - A lot of refugees are letting their green cards expire which is now creating a problem. They must make sure their Green card is still valid or apply for a renewal before it expires.

- When clients are married in their home country some are not getting a marriage license. When they arrive to US they need to be educated about the consequences of not have a legal marriage license in order to receive their spouse's benefits.
- **Early Learning Coalition:**
 - Have 31 children enrolled with no waitlist. Funds are available

GENERAL UPDATES

USCIS – No Updates

FSCJ ESOL – No Updates

The Healing Project (Christine Rothberg) – No Updates

Out of the Box Stories – LeAndra Stafford, Community Liaison, introduced the concept of this section. Out of the box stories is met to highlight difficult cases that took unique solution to help refugees integrate and be successful. None of us have all of the answers but by sharing we can learn from each other and maybe together share other solutions to assist in other difficult cases. Every story shared does not have to have their personal information or picture shared (unless they agree with a signed release). Mainly we want to focus on the solution and how you think it could help solve case that may have similar complications. As we all know the number of arrivals is decreasing, so we have more time to really help those who are here be successful. The first story was introduced by Molly Irazuzta of Catholic Charities. The story was of a teenager who did not fit in a regular school system. He missed school and hanging out with the wrong crowd. The IAS case manager enrolled him into a specialized charter school and he discovered Crew (A Rowing Team). He fell in love with the sport and won several medals. He now looks forward to attending school and his new sport. Finding a way for him to succeed has made a difference in his life and his mother is very proud of him.

NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN

- 1.) Agape Clinic has relocated to 3900 University Blvd. Suite 2; Monday and Wednesdays are for Adult appointments and Tuesday, Thursday, and Fridays are children.