



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

**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**Rebecca Kapusta**  
Interim Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** November 26, 2018  
**TO:** Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** LeAndra Stafford, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** November 14, 2018 Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** January 9, 2019  
**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 28 people in attendance. Molly Conrad, Procurement Manager of Refugee Services and Jasmine St. Clair, DCF ESS Community Partner Liaison was in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

### GUEST PRESENTATION

- 1.) Susan Eccher, Military and International Services Regional Manager, American Red Cross, Northeast Region.
  - A. The Red Cross has a program called Restoring Family Links
  - B. This program helps reconnect thousands of families by locating missing loved ones separated by armed conflict or disaster internationally
  - C. The process of locating a family member can start two ways: someone from the US is seeking to locate a family member internationally or someone internationally is seeking to locate a family member stateside
  - D. Some of the tools they use to locate someone is by Red Cross sending an “open letter” containing only family news or picture (nothing political is allowed) or by completing a tracing request (this is done when the member doesn’t know the general location of where they can be found). They also do Health and Welfare messages when contact has been lost abruptly
  - E. Respect and confidentiality is also given to the family member who they are trying to locate, to inform the family member whether or not they want to be found or not
  - F. Red Cross can also assist with Certificates of Detention (The ICRC), International Committee of Red Cross, can go into any international detention centers and get proof or Certificate of Detention for a prisoner. They replace travel documents (one-time service) for people seeking permanent resettlement in a third country
  - G. Red Cross assistance is based on humanity, the human need, impartiality, neutrality, universality, unity, voluntary services, and independence
  - H. The program Restoring Family Links can be a great resource for those refugees who have lost contact with their family members and wish to find them

### REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **World Relief (Jose Vega, Director):**
  - WR had 21 arrivals since Oct. 2018
  - Majority of arrivals are from the Ukraine, Congo, and Eritrea
  - IA has 18 BIS and 4 ICM cases
  - Housing Assistance is available

- **Catholic Charities Bureau (Matt Schmitt, Associate Director):**
  - CCB has 26 who have arrived or is scheduled to arrive since Oct. 2018
  - Majority from DRC and Eritrea
  - 49 Match Grant slots allocated out of the 68 slots available; request for referrals for MG
  - ESOL enrolled 91 new upper class students.
  - They will start GED classes has started, it is available two days per week 11 am to 2 pm for free and they will pay for the GED test
  - They are also offering a Citizenship class on Tuesdays also free
  - IAS currently has 12 cases
  - MG has enrolled 2 (the fifth quarter will end soon)
  
- **Lutheran Social Services (Cristina Parcel, Director):**
  - LSS has 23 arrivals since Oct 2018, 9 more expected to arrive on Nov 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Majority of arrivals are from the Congo
  - Also, through the Lautenberg Program, Parents from the former Soviet Union were reunited with the child (The Lautenberg Amendment of 1990 was first designed to facilitate resettlement of Jews from the former Soviet Union and then was expanded to include persecuted religious minorities in other countries such and Jews, Christians, and Baha'is from Iran)
  - LSS is referring IAS clients to CCB
  
- **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid:**
  - Cubans with electronic devices, are not being given Parolee status anymore and they will not be able to adjust through the Cuban Parole Act. They will now need to present with credible fear for Asylum. With the devices they are given a notice to appear for removal proceedings
  - I730- Principles only have two years to request for family to come over for free. After those two years they will be charged \$535.00 and have to prove they can afford to bring their relatives to the US. Only the Principle on the transportation card can petition for family members in the first two years
  - M648- The Medical Exemption for the Citizenship test (cognitive impairment). Refugees need to be careful in applying for this and be sure whoever is completing the form is not just making a boilerplate application. A medical doctor must complete them and what is put on there cannot be changed. A lot of these applications are saying a person can't take the test because of high blood pressure other non -cognitive diseases. The Pulido group is charging \$300.00 for these documents and they are not correct
  
- **Early Learning Coalition:**
  - No updates
  
- **Department of Health**
  - They are streamlining the clinic to be more efficient and to have staff busy all day on the refugee days. Mondays will be lab days and Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays will be for assessments until January 16, 2019.
  - They are still accepting walk-ins for immunizations at anytime

- Both Labs and Health Assessment must be completed within 90 days of their arrival to US
- Clarification: Refugees have one year to complete immunizations free of cost. After the first year they will have to pay
- It is also important they stick to their immunization schedule. A patient can be complete in his/ her schedule with 8 mons if they keep up their immunization schedule
- Adult vaccines are not covered by Medicaid, they are strictly paid for by the Refugee Program, so if they don't get their immunizations completed within the first year they will have to pay out of pocket.
- Only 1 MMR vaccine will be required for hereon

## **GENERAL UPDATES**

**USCIS** – No Updates

**FSCJ ESOL** – Night classes will be available at the Baymeadows campus

### **The Healing Project** (Christine Rothberg)

- They had 40 sessions for this month
- 53 people were seen last month
- They are starting a community listener program, the volunteers will learn to identify depression, panic attacks, DV and will be trained to guide people to resources that are provided in the community. They will have Mental Health First Aid Training, it is five-hour training. Each month they will convene with Christine to discuss what they are seeing in the community. The training will start Dec 8<sup>th</sup>

### **AHCA** (Dewece Ogden)

- The medical providers in this area (Region 4) have been signed to an additional five years. However, Molina will no longer be in this area and customers may not have the same plan
- The legislators have carved out funds to now offer three different dental plans to adults for preventative dental services. These plans will be separate from the Medicaid medical plans
- Please make sure customers are aware of the changes occurring on Feb 1, 2019 and they may have to choose a new plan and a dental plan
- You may call 1-877-254-1055, for concerns or complaints of the providers

## **NEW ISSUES/ ACTIONS TAKEN**

- 1.) Introduction of new DCF ESS Community Partner Liaison, Jasmine St. Clair
- 2.) Participants enjoyed the end of the year Potluck lunch, they had time to talk to other partners, get to know them, and thank them for assisting with Refugees. Each community partner participated in bringing an item for the Potluck. They seemed to enjoy it very much.