



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 12, 2017
TO: Members of the Miami-Dade Refugee Task Force
FROM: Lourdes Leconte, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: February 10, 2017 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: April 14, 2017
Time: 10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.
Location: [Rhode State Building](#)
[North Tower, Room N-425](#)
[401 NW 2nd Avenue, Miami, Florida 33128](#)
Contact: Lourdes Leconte
Office: (786) 257-5173
Cell: (305) 401-3374
E-Mail: Lourdes.Leconte@myflfamilies.com

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE

This task force has been active in the Miami 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!

401 NW 2nd Avenue, Suite N-812 Miami, Florida 33128

**MIAMI-DADE REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 10, 2017****ATTENDEES:**

Kerry, Allen; Bojan, Bajic; Sabine, Balmir-Derenoncourt; Dr. Dina, Birman; Ileana, Bustelo; Jackie, Carrion; Berta, Cassidy; Eduardo, Chavez; Jorge, Costas; Arlene, Diaz; Sonia, Davis; Gustavo, Diaz; Maria, Diaz; Maria, Dominguez; Monica, Farias; Arlene, Diaz; Felica, Gil; Emilie, Goeser; Myriam Haarlammert; Lourdes, Leconte; Juan, Lopez; Silvia, Lopez; Dorothy, Martin; Charlande, Michel; Dasiely, Marrero; Maria, Miranda; Sergio, Mora; Cristobal, Perez; Marie, Philogene; Christine, Reis; Elizabeth, Luz, Reyes; Ringler; Oscar, Rivera; Maria, Rodriguez; Veronica, Rodriguez; Jose, Sanchez; Luisa, Sanchez; Leidy, Sevilla; Leidy, Sosa; Evelyn, Soto; Ana Maria, Teixeira; Carmen, Torres; Ruth, Valenzuela; Ileana, Vallejo; Jose, Vega; Andrea, Gordon; Wendy, Ortiz; Sonia, Colon; Ignacio, Barrluechea; Jennifer, Lange; Maria, Ramos; Nicole, Pritchett; Blenda, Rodriguez; Diana, Paez; Pablo, Gil; Yesenia, Alvarez,; Magda, Erira; Cathiana, Torres; Morgan, Neibich; Gledy, Ortiz; Paulina, Velez; Janet, Collazo; Captain, Ifode; Zoriada, Ballestas; Oscar, Willumesen; Osmin, Bejerano; Alberto, Garcia; Julia, Caldwell; Daniel, Felipe; Michelle, Godoy; Gloria, Alonso; Neelesh, Dewan; Trevor, Bickson, Maria, Ortega; Hayed, Kline; Dr. Cheryl, White; Lucy, Tucker

INTRODUCTION:

Lourdes Leconte, DCF Refugee Services Community Liaison for the Southern Region welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

PRESENTATION:

Paulina Velez, Program Manager at Youth Co-Op for the Refugee Youth Program, provided an overview of the new Refugee Youth Program that began on January 2017. Youth Co-op Offers an exciting new Refugee youth program in Miami, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. This program enhances and motivates refugee youth who have demonstrated educational or employment needs. Youth who are at risk of dropping out of high school, not meeting high school requirements, or need alternatives to traditional high school education. YCI Staff will work collaboratively with the client to develop a Youth Development Plan that outlines the client's short-term and long-term goals. This program offers two possible tracks to the youth: The Academic Pathway or The Career Pathway. The Academic Pathway, with goals of either graduating high school or obtaining a General Education Diploma (GED). It also offers Tutoring (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies). The Career Pathway, with its main goal as Employment of the client and/or completion of vocational studies leading to employment. It also offers referrals to training facilities that offer vocational programs that meet the demands for trained workers in marketable occupations. Pre-Employment Skills Training, includes work culture, job expectations, appropriate attire, resume building, and mock job interviews. The program will rely on referrals from RS providers to broaden its pool and reach the most vulnerable ones.

REFUGEE SERVICES (RS) UPDATE:

Ileana, Bustelo, RS Deputy Director, provided a brief update, in light of the most current immigration policy changes that will surely affect the number of the Refugee Services eligible

population we currently serve. She also touched upon the House bill HB 427 currently being circulated, that seeks to eliminate the State's involvement in the Refugee Program.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Volunteers needed for the planning of World Refugee Day 2017, many participants indicated their willingness to the part of the planning committee for the 2017 WRD celebration

REFUGEE SERVICES UPDATE (*Sent via E-Mail in J*)

- Refugee Services Integration Assistance Services in Broward & Palm Beach Counties
- Invitation to Negotiate (ITN # 01K17BS1 - Adult Education Services for Refugees and Entrants in Duval County)
- ORR Policy Letter 17-01: "Cuban Entrants" Remain Eligible for ORR Benefits and Services
- ORR Grant Published - Refugee Microenterprise Development Program
- Anonymous donor gives \$3 million to UWF for immigrants and refugees

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM

South Florida Volag Consortium February 8, 2017

Attendees:

CWS- Jose Sanchez

CC-Evelyn Soto, Jackie Carrion

EMM-Charlande Mitchel

IRC-Ana Maria Teixeira, Regina Bernadin

LIRS-Carmen Torres

Youth Co-Op-Gustavo Diaz, Veronica Rodriguez, Bojan Bajic

DCF- Lourdes Leconte

Special Guest: Kattia Castellanos, Victim Advocate Coral Gables Police Department

- Presentation on recognizing signs of trafficking and how to use a comprehensive assessment to aid in determining possible trafficking activities.
- Definition of Trafficking vs Smuggling.
- Encouraged attendees to visit the Human Trafficking Academy, where courses are offered for a fee.
- Provided contact information for National Human Trafficking hotline, 888-373-7888 if suspect trafficking.

Reception and Placement Program updates

Agency	January 2017
CC	2
CWS	11
EMM	0
IRC	19
LIRS	6
Youth Co-Op	0
World Relief	0

Presidential executive order on travel ban has created upheaval, along with temporary stay of band. Some agencies reported the rebooking of previously cancelled flights up to the 17th of February.

Discussion of on the reduction of refugee admissions from 110,000 to 50,000. Currently as of Jan. 20th, there were, roughly, 32000 refugees who had entered the country. The remaining 18000 refugees were still to be determined. Impact on additional programs that assist refugees, such as ORR Matching Grant and Preferred Communities were discussed. Currently, all agencies waiting on additional guidance from National offices.

Matching Grant Program updates

Agency	January 2017	Projected FY 17 (as of Jan. 9th, 2017)
CC	95	520
CWS	53	568
EMM	38	500
IRC	109	710
LIRS	34	483
Youth Co-Op	140	1255
World Relief	0	220

All agencies currently awaiting additional guidance from National offices regarding slot allocations.

Parolee Orientation Program updates

January 2017
287 Cuban/Haitian entrants served
96 left Miami Dade County
191 referred to Health Dept.

The POP in 2016 provided orientation to 3320 C/H Entrants. Discussion on finding solutions to properly capture all clients. Access sites had been assisting in guiding parolees to CWS for the POP orientations. the US Embassy in Havana provides orientation letter in the packages of CFRP entrants.

Other items:

- Discussion of meeting held on Jan. 20th at CWS with Todd Henderson, US Refugee Coordinator in Havana. Currently, they are on track to meet the 20000 CHFPRP visas and should meet target by end of the Fiscal year. Discussion of the shrinking applications to the refugee program.
- Community Consultations-
- Additional inquires in reaching out to other government entities and stakeholders.
- Discussion on potentially facilitating one of the county taskforces, but further information is needed by agencies.
- Health Department-
- As of March 1st, the Health department will have available appointment slots. They will be rescheduling clients who had their 2nd and 3rd appointments past June, to an earlier date.
- FY17 has seen already 12,659 registered new refugees.

The next meeting will take place on March 8, 2017 at CWS offices

MIAMI AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE
Immigration and Legal Issues Sub Committee
Minutes for meeting on February 1, 2017
By Miriam J. Garcia

Attendance: Gloria Alonso, Ileana Bustelo, Berta Cassidy, Luz Castilla, Nancy Denis, Maria R. Dominguez, Miriam J. Garcia, Yanelys Garcia, Brad Ginter, Lourdes Leconte, Sandra Maldonado, Dorothy Martin, Lucio Perez-Reynoso, Alexandra O. Yaya.

The Immigration and Legal Issues Subcommittee meeting was held on February 1, 2017 at the offices of Americans for Immigrant Justice (AIJ) where Berta Cassidy provided the USCIS update and Maria Dominguez provided the Miami Asylum Office update, and they answered questions as follows:

- **CHANGES TO PAROLE AND EXPEDITED REMOVAL POLICIES AFFECTING CUBAN NATIONALS.** DHS has eliminated a special parole policy for arriving Cuban nationals known as the “wet-foot/dry-foot” policy. Cuban parole requests will be treated in the same manner as parole requests filed by nationals of other countries. For Cubans who were encountered or made a parole request to USCIS before January 12, 2017, USCIS will consider the requests under the previous policy. The Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program (**CMPP**) was also eliminated. If they were pending, USCIS will continue the process. If the medical professional was paroled into the US prior to January 12, 2017, he must file his or her following-to-join request no later than July 12, 2017. A medical professional paroled into the US on or after January 12, 2017 must file his or her follow-to-join request within 6 months. The **CFRP** program is not affected by this announcement and remains in effect. Cuban nationals who are apprehended at ports of entry or near the border may be placed into expedited removal proceedings in the same manner as nationals of other countries.
- **FEE RULE.** USCIS is reminding everyone that the new Fee Rule became effective December 23, 2016. There are many forms that were published on December 23, 2016 with new revision dates. With the exception of the N-400, USCIS will continue to accept the prior edition until February 21, 2017. After that date they will only accept new editions. Only the December 23, 2016 edition of the N-400 is currently accepted.
- **NEW ONLINE TOOL.** USCIS introduced a new online tool for the Haitian Reunification Parole Program (HFRP) and the Cuban Family Reunification Program (CFRP). The new tool will help petitioners confirm whether they were issued an invitation letter to apply for the HFRP and CFRP program on behalf of their relative(s). To use the online eligibility tool, the petitioner must enter their Department of State case number. For additional information or to use the online eligibility tool you must visit <https://my.uscis.gov/humanitarian/hfrp> or <https://my.uscis.gov/humanitarian/cfrp>.

- **RECOGNITION AND ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.** A new regulation on Recognition and Accreditation became effective on January 18, 2017. The program has been transferred from BIA to the Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP) as of January 18, 2017. The new rule applies to currently-recognized organizations and their accredited representatives who have been approved by the BIA under the former rule, as well as those new organizations that submit an initial application for recognition and accreditation after the effective date of January 18, 2017. Once currently –recognized organizations have re-applied successfully under the new rule, they will be recognized for a 6-year period. **-Recognized organizations lacking an accredited representative on the effective date (by January 18, 2017) of this regulation must apply under the new rule within 1 year of the effective date (January 18, 2018). -Organizations that have been recognized for more than 10 years as of the effective date will need to apply under the new rule within 2 years of the effective date (by January 18, 2019). – Organizations that have been recognized for less than 10 years as of the effective date will need to apply under the new rule within 3 years of the effective date (by January 18, 2020).**
- **MIAMI ASYLUM OFFICE.** Gloria Alonso introduced herself as ZMI’s Staff Assistant (SA) and announced she will now be attending the monthly meetings. ZMI reminded attendees the ASC will now provide specific biometric appointments for applicants filing I-589s. TO Dominguez distributed copies of the Stakeholders meeting registration page, scheduled for Tuesday, 2/7/2017 as well as the December 2016 statistics page on pending asylum applications. SA Alonso provided her contact information to AFSC representative to assist in obtaining information regarding two pending NACARA cases. TO Dominguez addressed questions from the audience regarding the expedited removal process and other general questions regarding the current backlog.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, 2017 from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. at the offices of Church World Service (CWS) 1924 NW 84th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33126 and Bruce Marmar will be covering for Berta.

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – FEBRUARY 2017**February, 2017 REFUGEE TASK FORCE****EDUCATION SBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

- REVEST successfully began classes for the current cycle on January 4, 2017 and we currently have over 2852 students registered for VESOL classes in our four Centers. The term will end April 22, 2017. Regarding the Summer Term (May-August, 2017) 49 Orientation Sessions are scheduled. About 1720 students will be tested using the Pre CASAS placement test. 140 classes are programmed for the Summer Term.
- During the current Term Spring 2173, REVEST Program has successfully served almost 200 Vocational students registered in over 330 training courses. We continue the process to obtain approval for new Community Education bundles, which will help students specialize in specific areas and receive a certificate. We continue to hold Vocational retraining sessions for advisors based on the new changes in the MDC Information System.
- Faculty meetings were conducted with all REVEST instructors Jan. 12,20 2017. Topics included establishing I.D. requirements for instate tuition residency, professionalism in the workplace, and strategies to enhance the interactive classroom.
- The total SAVES Program enrollment as of January 31, 2017 is 3,679. Of these, 1,333 are new students to the program, and 318 are 16 to 18 youngsters enrolled in the SAVES GED in Spanish Program. The enrollment of the SAVES GED in Spanish Program is steadily increasing. The current trimester ends on April 7, 2017. The next academic trimester will begin on April 17, 2017.
- A SAVES District meeting was held on January 25, 2017. Important information was discussed with the school staff. The next SAVES District meeting is scheduled for March 29, 2017.
- SAVES will be collaborating with Youth Co-Op to assist 16 to 24 SAVES students in health occupation programs to find employment. In addition, Youth Co-Op will provide paid work experience for adult students in any occupation.
- The SAVES voucher program is very successful providing opportunities for students to benefit from vocational courses not available in their SAVES schools. Students and school personnel frequently share with the SAVES district office the excellent job

opportunities offered to the students as they complete their vocational courses in areas of avionics, road technician, and others.

- A graduation ceremony was held at Hialeah-Miami Lakes Adult and Community Education Center on Tuesday, December 20, 2016. Thirty-four (34) students graduated in this ceremony, 6 of them received honor scores in one or more areas tested. Ms. Maria Miranda was the keynote speaker and a recently arrived student shared his experiences in the United States at the ceremony.
- SAVES will be participating in a University of Miami research project to study the resettlement challenges of youth refugees in Miami-Dade County. This research project was approved by the M-DCPS Research Committee and will begin gathering data in the near future.
- The GED in Spanish program is expanding and is now available in 8 schools around Miami- Dade County: 1. Hialeah-Gardens SHS, 2. Westland Hialeah SHS, 3. Hialeah Adult Education Center, 4. Hialeah-Miami Lakes Adult Education Center, 5. Miami Springs Adult Education Center, 6. Jose Marti MS, 7. Robert Morgan Educational Center and Technical College, and 8. Miami Coral Park Adult Education Center.
- New SAVES success stories, which highlight the achievements of some of our students, have been uploaded to the SAVES website (<http://saves.dadeschools.net>)
- If you have any questions about our program, you can call us or visit the SAVES website at <http://saves.dadeschools.net>

REFUGEE HEALTH CLINIC REPORT – FEBRUARY 2017

None

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES REPORT – FEBRUARY 2017

None

USCIS UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2017

USCIS Miami February 2017 Update

- ❖ **Important Reminder** - On Dec. 23, 2016, our new fees took effect and we published updated versions of our forms. We strongly encourage customers to go to uscis.gov/forms to download and submit these new versions, which are updated with the new fees and have an edition date of 12/23/16.

Starting Feb. 21, 2017, we will only accept new editions of these forms. See our complete list of the new fees at uscis.gov/forms/our-fees and make sure you are including the correct amount. You must include the new fee or USCIS will reject and return your filing.

The updated forms are currently available at uscis.gov/forms, where all of our forms can be downloaded for free. Additionally, you can request paper copies through our forms request line (800-870-3676) and [forms by mail](#) service.

- ❖ **Upcoming Outreach Sessions** - Below is a listing of our upcoming outreach sessions and events. These sessions are free and open to the public. If you need additional information, please contact – Berta.m.cassidy@uscis.dhs.gov

Date	Time	Type of Event	Location
February 15th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	West Regional Library, 8601 W. Broward Blvd. Plantation, FL
February 16th	4:00 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Kendale Lakes Branch Library, 15205 SW 88 St. Miami, FL.
February 16th	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	Arcola Lakes Branch Library, 8240 NW 7th Ave. Miami, FL.
February 21st	10 am - 1pm	USCIS Information Desk	Stephen P. Clark Government Center, Lobby, 111 NW 1st St. Miami, FL.
February 21st	5:30 - 7:00 pm	Library Information Desk	North Regional/Broward College Library, 1100 Coconut Creek Blvd, Coconut Creek, FL
February 22nd	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Miramar Branch Library, 2050 Civic Center Place Miramar, FL.
February 27th	12:30 - 3:30 pm	USCIS Information Desk	Mall of the Americas Driver's License Center, 7795 W. Flagler St., Suite #82C, Miami, FL
February 27th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Miami Lakes Branch Library, 6699 Windmill Gate Rd. Miami Lakes, FL.
February 27th	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Library Information Desk	Northwest Regional Library, 3151 University Drive, Coral Springs, FL

❖ **Upcoming Naturalization Ceremonies** - Below are scheduled dates for administrative N-400 naturalization ceremonies and the corresponding field offices where the ceremonies will take place (unless otherwise listed). Please note that although these dates are current on the date of issuance of this update, the dates are subject to change without notice.

- Miami Field Office –
 - February 17 and 24
- Hialeah Field Office –
 - February 25
- Kendall Field Office –
 - Feb 17, 24, 27 and 28
- Oakland Park Field Office –
 - February 17 and 24