



State of Florida  
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott  
Governor

Mike Carrol  
Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** July 8, 2016  
**TO:** Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** Debbie Ansbacher, Refugee Services (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** May 11, 2016 Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** July 13, 2016  
**Time:** 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.  
**Location:** Baptist Association of Jacksonville  
2700 University Boulevard South  
Jacksonville, Florida 32216  
**Contact:** Debbie Ansbacher  
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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. 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. Debbie Ansbacher, Community Liaison and Taddese Fessehaye, Refugee Services Community Liaison Manager, represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program. There were 29 people in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

### GUEST PRESENTATION

A presentation was given by Ericka Curran, Director of Clinical Programs, Coastal School of Law Legal Services gave an overview of their programs and information on the Immigration Clinic at the Law School. The clinic accepts cases and the students are overseen by attorneys. They are also starting a new Business and Entrepreneur Law Clinic. This clinic will be for new business start-ups.

Claudia Perez, Immigration Counselor from the Catholic Charities Bureau, Immigration and Legalization program also presented an overview of the services their clinic provides. These services include Deferrer Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Renewal of Authorization to Work, Fiancé Petitions and more. They have 4 case workers, all Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) certified.

### REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **Adult Education:** Michelle Karolak, Director of Refugee Resettlement with Catholic Charities Bureau, reported they tested 76 students in April for ESOL placement and 116 are enrolled for summer session at FSCJ. Catholic Charities ESOL has added a new class at their downtown site for levels 300/400.
- **Childcare:** Not present.
- **Employment:** Bill Brim, Employment Program Manager for Lutheran Social Services, reported they have a new employer coming on board. The employer is building out a large new processing plant. The first hires have started and will be ramping up to hire more.
- **Youth:** Kasey Guenther, Program Manager with Lutheran Social Services Refugee Youth program, reported many of the refugee youth in their program were nominated to receive ESOL awards at the end of the school year. Uli Decker from the World Affairs Council asked for Cuban youth to be identified to serve on a panel at the Great Decisions in High Schools program kickoff dinner in the fall.
- **Refugee Clinic:** Tawanda Washington reported they have hired a new Spanish speaking physician who will work in the clinic two days a week.

- **Legal:** Nancy Hale, Immigration Project Director, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, reported the N-400 is being revised by USCIS and they are proposing a fee increase.

**GENERAL UPDATES**

**World Refugee Day:** A planning group meeting is scheduled. The events planned include a naturalization, children’s fashion show, and a film.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, July 13, 2016  
1:30 P.M.-3:30 P.M.  
Baptist Association of Jacksonville  
2700 University Boulevard South  
Jacksonville, Florida 32216

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