



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 31, 2015
TO: Members of the Broward Refugee Task Force (RTF)
FROM: Miriam Rosario, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: July 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes

**THE NEXT BROWARD REFUGEE TASK FORCE AND 2015
RECEPTION & PLACEMENT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
MEETING SCHEDULED FOR:**

Date: September 17, 2015
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: Department of Children and Families/North Broward Regional
Service Center
1400 W. Commercial Blvd., Room 203
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309 Phone: 954-375-3353
E-Mail: Miriam.Rosario@myflfamilies.com
Taddese.Fessehay@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Broward 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, 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!

Southeast Region - Circuit 15
111 South Sapodilla Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33401

BROWARD COUNTY REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTIONS

This meeting was held at the Broward County Family Success Community Partnership Community Action Agency. Twenty two people were in attendance. Miriam Rosario, Community Liaison for the Southeast Region represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency they represented. Miriam thanked Audrey Ljung, Human Services Regional Coordinator, Broward County and Family Success and Community Action agency for hosting the meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Kathleen Addison - Strategic Account Executive, Pacific Interpreters/Language Line Solutions provided an overview of the support services and equipment available to persons needing interpretation and/or Language Line assistance. Kathleen also stressed the importance and benefits of having an array of Language Line and Interpretation services available for clients use.

- A dedicated pool of interpreters and translators who are certified to perform specialty services are available to serve the clients. Appointments are available upon the agencies request. Also interpreters are trained as “medically interpreters”.
- Interpretation and translation services are available in over 200 languages 24 hours 7 days a week.

Informational materials were distributed indicating:

- The Materials Reference Guide are free education materials that are available to order for those offices already set up with their own access codes.
- Educational and equipment trainings are available in two options- quick reference guide or language ID cards. These options were created in an effort to support a user friendly system.
- The Training Options Reference Guide outlines the types of training that can be provided to the group or individual offices, already set up with their own access codes.
- Options training to the providers with topic covered can include: when to use a telephonic interpreter, best practices when working with interpreters, cultural competency, as well as legal and compliance obligations, etc. These can be conducted remotely or in-person.
- In-person training can be provided at no additional cost, with a minimum participation of either 2 days or 2 locations, per session.

The Pacific Interpreters /Language Line Solutions, services are available to the State of Florida, Department of Health, and DCF/Refugee Services. Arnold Jean Baptiste (JB) from Children Services Council of Broward recommended 211-Broward as additional resources to Pacific Interpreters Inc. and providers.

REFUGEE SERVICES UPDATE

Debriefing of 2015 World Refugee Day:

Jocelyn Martinez (PR) showed a video of the WRD highlights. The event was hosted by Broward College in collaboration with the Broward and PB Refugee Task Forces. Miriam thanked and congratulated all for their collaboration and for the successful event! World Refugee Day was held on Friday, June 19, 2015 at 10:30am – 2:00pm. (RTF); Elected Officials were present and participated. The event was

attendance by over 700 people. Over 70 organizations were on site, and 200 (100 Broward and 100 Palm Beach County) new United States Citizens were naturalized.

Other WRD activities included:

- WRD Proclamations sponsored by Hon. Dale V.C. Holness - Broward County Commissioner, Hon. Steven Abrams - PBC Commissioner, Hon. Jeri Muoio, West Palm Beach City Mayor, and proclamations accepted by refugee clients and RTF members.
- West Palm Beach Mandel Library dedicated bibliography to WRD – bibliography displayed in the library.
- New Citizen who was a refugee and now staff from Catholic Charities of PBC read the United States Pledge of Allegiance during the USCIS Naturalization Ceremony.
- Web feature stories celebrating WRD displayed at the Palm Beach School District and PBC Library System media system.
- Local Channel 10 reported the event live, and interviewed new citizens.

Adult Education Community-Level Action Plan:

Discussion regarding clients who are not enrolled in RS funded ESOL classes. The need for developing AE Community Outreach Action Plan was discussed. A sub-committee (YCI, CWS, PT, GCJFCS and RS/DCF) was formed to develop a plan to ensure clients who are not enrolled in RS funded ESOL programs are accessing other mainstream programs.

Transportation Disadvantage presentation

Broward County Transit - Joy Mathis, **TOPS** Supervisor offered an excellent presentation regarding Transportation Disadvantage (TD). TD is an income based program and needs to conduct eligibility verification. TD will need to collect the SSA number for government purpose. The TD Bus pass program also requires FL ID or FL Valid Driver's license. The TD bus pass program is for individuals prohibited from using Broward County Transit's (BCT) fixed-route bus services due to financial limitations. The individual need to qualify under the FPL guidelines depends on the number of family members in the household. The bus pass will be mail to the applicant.

Ms. Mathis also mentioned about the ADA transit program which is available to those with a document disability. This program requires proper documentation with diagnosis of the disability. It applies to any type of disability that documents that the individual cannot ride the "bus system". The ADA applicant only needs FL ID and not SSA number. ADA program has access anywhere such as Broward, Palm Beach and Miami. Eligibility is reviewed every 3 years, unless there is a significant change of the disability and also is based on a functional test. Discussion on different types of disability such as "paralysis", "dialysis" ensued. Service needed must be within 5 miles of facility and the category of "the disability needs to prevent rider to ride independently (cannot navigate the bus system). The applications must be mailed or hand deliver not fax or email will be accepted. The Broward system now has new and large bus types.

Miriam provided information about the Palm Beach County Transportation Disadvantage, Palm Tran, Inc. The director of the program advised of the availability of a "Van Pool" services in PBC. Ms. Mathis was not aware of the availability of this service in Broward. She thought this might be an opportunity to be explore.

NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

- RS Community Liaison (CL) Formal Engagement with Clients- Miriam informed members about the statewide initiative for CLs to be available at various service providers' sites to respond to questions clients' might have regarding DCF benefits, mainstream resources, etc. Miriam will be contacting all RS providers to coordinate the schedule. Clients should be notified of this opportunity.

GENERAL UPDATES

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (**USCIS**) - **Berta Cassidy** USCIS representative reported about their Citizenship Public Awareness Initiative, this campaign builds on a similar effort from 2011 and is being launched under the Task Force on New American and President Obama's executive actions on immigration. The media campaign aims to provide those seeking citizenship with information on the Naturalization process and USCIS educational resources. The Broward Library is also a partner with USCIS and Immigration Services officers will visit the libraries to provide general information and forms. Poster available. Immigrant-serving organizations interested in donating media space should send an email to norine.w.han@uscis.dhs.gov. For more information visit, uscis.gov.
- **Department of Children and Families (DCF)** – **Wilber Roney, ESS/DCF pointed out that** internal lines are being added and will eventually reduce/eliminate the delay at the call center. EBT cards have expired and the new cards are being mailed, the EBT cards are being returned for wrong address. Refugees must update their new address within 10 days of change.
- **CareerSource** PBC not present.
- **Department of Health (DOH)** - **Iris Hines** reported on the Free Back to School Immunizations events during the month of August inside the Lauderhill Mall. She stated that Michele Thabuteau, Sr. Community Health Nurse is retiring and a replacement will be announced. Iris reminded all members to inform refugees to call ahead to schedule their appointments.
- **Kid Care/DOH- Yeimy Patino and Liliana Marin**, Kid Care representatives stated Kid Care might have to increase its healthcare premium, from \$153.00 to \$280.00 per child beginning August 1, 2015, final decision will be announced. Also it was reported Children's Medical services (CMS) changes tools affecting some providers are not getting paid and this is affecting some CMS beneficiaries. If they receive this concerns to call Rebecca Miele, Kid Care Outreach Coordinator. Materials for the Kid Care Back to School Immunization Fair will be distributed on 8/22/15 from 10-2:00 pm.

NEW REFUGEE ARRIVAL UPDATE

Gulf Coast Jewish Family Community Services (GCJFCS) –**Clara Jaramillo**, Program Coordinator, reported FFY 2015 to date they resettled 5 families and 12 individuals. She asked for assistance on a new special medical case that arrived and refugee was taken from the airport directly to the hospital in Aventura. Refugee needs to apply for SSA. Wilber recommended to seek assistance with the hospital social worker. Case to be referred also to ESS/DCF. Members agreed to Clara's request for GCJFCS to host a R&P community consultation during the next RTF meeting.

RS CONTRACTED PROVIDER UPDATES

- **Adult Education** – Jocelyn Martinez, **Project RENEW** Administrator reported they enrolled 304, 21 classes scheduled for ESOL this fall. Placement test will be given to new students in a few weeks.
- **Employability Status** –Jean Wesley, **St Thomas University Human Rights Institute** and Omar Novillo, **Catholic Charities Legal Services** stated they have no reports or updates.
- **Employment** – Gladys Sanchez **YCI** reported YTD 748 refugee placements and RCA 68 % employed.

- **Youth** – Gladys Sanchez **YCI** reported they had tutoring, orientation, career development successfully completed, helping one youth to apply for college. They assisted 48 students with Orientation, 44 with Tutoring, 41 with Career Orientation, and 86 Support and Enrichment services. They are offering 5 weeks of educational academic summer program. Their youth student participated during the West Palm Beach and Broward WRD Proclamation this year.
- **Integration Assistance (IA)** — Silvio Padilla, **CWS** stated they are providing assistance in all areas especially thru the Information and Referral services. A new attorney has been hired and they are now offering refugee employability status assistance services and serving refugees residing in the southern part of the county. CWS has scheduled a workshop to be presented by the Delray Police to help their clients with integration.
- **Child Care (CC)** – No representative present. Miriam stated Family Central will be ending services for CC/RS and a new agency will be providing child care services to refugees in Broward starting September and in Palm Beach County starting July.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Miriam stated the RS Eligibly training offered by Yolanda Coto, RS Senior Attorney was completed in two different sessions. Also RS Overview and Immigration concepts training was provided to the PBC Navigators.

NEXT MEETING

Date	Location	Contact person & Phone #
Sept 17, 2015	Department of Children and Families/North Broward Regional Service Center 1400 W. Commercial Blvd., Room 203 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309	Wilber Rodney Phone: 954-375-3353
Nov. 19, 2015	Project RENEW/ Program Broward College	Jocelyn Martinez/ Melinda Rivera 954-201-2670 / 954-201-2672

Contact: Miriam_Rosario@dcf.state.fl.us. Phone: (561) 227-6722
Taddese_Fessehaye@dcf.state.fl.us. (407) 317-7335