



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 4, 2016
TO: Members of the Jacksonville Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: Debbie Ansbacher, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: November 4, 2015 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: January 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
Office: (904) 485-9540
Cell: (904) 524-1316
E-Mail: Debbie.Ansbacher@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

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

JACKSONVILLE AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held at the Jacksonville Baptist Association. Debbie Ansbacher, Community Liaison represented the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program. There were 26 people in attendance. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

GUEST PRESENTATION

Marcus Thompson, Lead Specialist, Child & Family Resources, Early Learning Coalition of Duval spoke about the Refugee Services (RS) funded childcare available to eligible families. Mr. Thompson indicated there is a two week wait for an appointment. He discussed the priority list of refugees/entrants in need of RS subsidized child care services after client eligibility has been determined. The priorities are for those who are employed and those who are enrolled full time in Adult Education classes. The childcare should be obtained through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) if the family is eligible for TANF rather than using RS funded childcare.

Katie Sullivan, Volunteer Coordinator, World Relief, gave a presentation on the World Relief Volunteer Program. Ms. Sullivan described some of the volunteer opportunities available including friendship partners, group outreach, and office support. She also outlined the process to volunteer at World Relief from submitting an application to placement in a position.

REFUGEE SERVICES CONTRACTED PROVIDERS UPDATE

- **Adult Education:** Michelle Karolak, Director, Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement, provided the following information for the Adult Education Program. Please contact case workers listed below to make appointments for intake or for any issues related to 100-400 level classes or classes for eligible clients less than 5 years at Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ) for levels 500-800. All ESOL intakes for refugees, asylees and eligible parolees are done at Catholic Charities ESOL office regardless of level. Fees are covered for eligible clients:
 - Michel Sanon, msanon@ccbjax.org,
 - Akbar Hakimzoda, ahakimzoda@ccbjax.org,
 - Sarah Maley, smaley@ccbjax.org,
 - Sara Coggin, Scoggin@ccbjax.org, or
 - Orlando Berrios, oberrios@ccbjax.org
- **Employment:** Bill Brim, Employment Program Manager for Lutheran Social Services, reported they continue to accept walk-in intakes every Thursday from 10am-12pm.
- **Refugee Screening Clinic:** Tawanda Washington reported the Beaches clinic has pediatric appointments available. The Duval County Health Department is also looking at a processes streamline the acceptance of more refugees into other Pediatric Clinics,
- **Youth:** Jerome Crawford, Director, Lutheran Social Services, reported they no longer are funded to provide services in the elementary and middle schools under the Youth program.

- **Ethnic Community Based Organization (ECBO):** Brenda Boydston, Project Director, reported the office is hosting a one year open-house November 20th from 11am to 2pm.
- **Legal/Employability:** Nancy Hale, Director, Immigration Project, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, voiced concern that the new Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDS) rule could make some refugees ineligible for SNAP benefits and affecting the Fee Waiver for Cuban parolees.

GENERAL UPDATES

- **AHCA:** Deweece Ogden addressed a question about how to see a specialist when the Medicaid Plan does not have a provider with the specialty needed. Ms. Ogden said to contact the plan to see if an out of network provider can be approved.
- **Children's Home Society:** Ciin Donnie reported the Early Head Start Program is accepting applicants with children ages 0-3. The home visitor works with the family 1½ hours each week.
- Debbie Ansbacher encouraged anyone with clients that may benefit from private school to apply for the Step up Scholarship. We anticipate the enrollment period opening soon. Candidates for private school should plan to apply for the scholarship during the upcoming enrollment period for the Fall 2016 school year.
- Debbie Ansbacher shared information on the Lawyers in Libraries program where clients could be referred. The dates of topics are listed at the jaxpubliclibrary.org website.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 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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