



State of Florida  
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis  
Governor

Chad Poppell  
Secretary

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 5, 2021  
**TO:** Members of the Broward Refugee Task Force  
**FROM:** Miriam Rosario (RS)  
**SUBJECT:** March 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

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

**Date:** May 20, 2021  
**Time:** 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
**Location:** TBA  
**Contact:** Miriam Rosario  
**Office:** (561) 227-6722  
**Cell:** (561) 459-6098  
**E-Mail:** Miriam.rosario@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Broward area in the past few years. The participants are representatives of various government agencies, private not-for-profit organizations and volunteer groups. An average of about twenty to twenty-five 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

### INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held via a conference call and Miriam Rosario, Southeast Region (SER) Community Liaison (CL), Refugee Services (RS) Program, Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) facilitated the Refugee Task Force (RTF) meeting. Miriam thanked and welcomed all participants for calling in and joining the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves, services, and the agency they represented. Approximately 40 people joined the call.

### SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Liza Zamd, Senior Trial Attorney, **U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Immigrant and Employee Rights Section**, provided an overview presentation on their Immigrant and Employee Rights (IER) services to the nation. She focuses on the refugee community and how DOJ services and their relationship with other US department can collaborate for the best of all. Some of the topics; specifically cover how employers can hire workers who have not yet received their SSNs, she discuss less traditional employment documents like Transportation Boarding Letters and asylee foils, and ways in which IER can help refugees/asylees beyond the work DOJ do. For example, if a DMV incorrectly rejects an I-94 as proof of status, IER can call the DMV to try to remedy the situation. Similarly, if a bank does not give a refugee/asylee a loan because the person does not have an EAD, IER can call the bank to explain refugee/asylee permanent work authorization. Please see examples of IER outreach materials regarding refugee/asylee issues:

- For employers: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/page/file/1132626/download>
- For workers: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/page/file/1119566/download> (available in Spanish, Arabic, Eastern Punjabi, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Tagalog, Traditional Chinese, Urdu, Vietnamese, Western Punjabi)
- For workers: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/case-document/file/1132566/download>

The members stated, this was extremely important topic for our population (and our refugee task force members) and a learning opportunity provided was be very helpful. Also, in addition to the flyers inked – we shared the PowerPoint presentation to the providers/task force members.

Liza answered several question from the members and shared her contact information; 202-353-5195 or best at [liza.zamd@usdoj.gov](mailto:liza.zamd@usdoj.gov) .

### NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

Rebecca Miele, Florida KidCare (KC), Outreach Program Manager, Florida Department of Health, Broward provided the **KidCare and Market Place update**. Discuss the Florida KidCare Program, information to educate partners on matters of importance to families, discussed issues and barriers with enrollment and assist partners with resolution of client issues; areas of concerns such as especially the announcement for the breach and how to direct the families. Broward county/ Statewide Enrollment numbers – KC is going down since 1/2020 Medicaid is increasing. Medikids Full Pay Program has increased. The full pay program was \$157 per child, which has now increased to \$187.96 per child. Rebecca provided the information for the KC Early Tax Season Documents and HealthyKids Website and System Information Breach and the resources

available for parents. Rebecca indicated Hispanic Unity is providing VITA Taxes Services. The number to call for Rebecca is Office: 954-847-8082 and Cell: 954-895-5563, Email; [Rebecca.Miele@flhealth.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Miele@flhealth.gov). Florida KidCare Broward - 954-467-8737; <https://www.healthykids.org/>

**COVID-19 Vaccine Update DOH, Florida Department of Health,** Broward DOH representative was not present due to assisting with vaccination distribution. A list of free COVID vaccine and testing sites was distributed. The telephone number to call for the COVID hot line is 1-866-779-6121.

### **GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS),** Roketa Mansfield, Community Relations Officer (CRO), USCIS, Miami and Caribbean District, participated. Roketa emailed and spoke about USCIS and services during the Covid-19. USCIS updates: G-884, Request for the Return of Original Documents. Use this form to request the return of original documents submitted to establish eligibility for an immigration benefit. <https://www.uscis.gov/g-884>.

Designation of Venezuela for TPS and Implementation of DED Venezuela:

The Department of Homeland Security today published a Federal Register notice (FRN) announcing the designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months, effective March 9, 2021, through Sept. 9, 2022. <https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/public-charge>

The FRN details the eligibility criteria Venezuelan nationals (and individuals without nationality who last habitually resided in Venezuela) must meet and describes procedures necessary to submit an initial TPS application and apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

Additionally, the FRN provides information about Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for covered Venezuelan nationals (and individuals without nationality who last habitually resided in Venezuela) and how to apply for DED-related EADs.

More Information:

USCI are planning outreach opportunities regarding the new designation of Venezuela for TPS to provide information and answer questions from the public.

For the most current information related to USCIS humanitarian issues, please visit [uscis.gov/humanitarian](https://uscis.gov/humanitarian).

For more information on USCIS and our programs, please visit [uscis.gov](https://uscis.gov) or follow us on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

The Public Charge Final Rule:

On March 9, 2021, the Seventh Circuit lifted its stay and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois' order vacating the Public Charge Final Rule went into effect. When the vacatur went into effect, USCIS immediately stopped applying the Public Charge Final Rule to

all pending applications and petitions that would have been subject to the rule. USCIS continues to apply the public charge inadmissibility statute, including consideration of the statutory minimum factors in the totality of the circumstances, in accordance with the 1999 Interim Field Guidance that was in place before the Public Charge Final Rule was implemented. In addition, USCIS will no longer apply the separate, but related, “public benefits condition” to applications or petitions for extension of nonimmigrant stay and change of nonimmigrant status. For more information, see our main public charge webpage, our public charge litigation page, and DHS’s news release.

#### Important Updates Regarding the 2020 Version of the Civics Test:

On Dec. 1, 2020, USCIS implemented a revised version of the civics test for naturalization (2020 civics test). Due to recent policy changes, some applicants required to take the 2020 civics test may now have a choice to take the 2020 test or the 2008 civics test. Please note that beginning on April 19, 2021, USCIS will only offer the 2008 civics test at the initial interview appointment regardless of filing date.

For more information, visit the [2020 Version of the Civics Test](#) page.

- If you are taking the 2020 civics test, find study materials on the [Study for the Test \(2020 version\)](#) page.
- If you are taking the 2008 civics test, find study materials on the [Study for the Test \(2008 version\)](#) page
- If you filed your Form N-400, Application for Naturalization on or after December 1, 2020 and before March 1, 2021, and are currently scheduled for your initial examination (interview) before April 19, 2021, you may choose to take the 2008 or 2020 civics test. All others will be required to take the 2008 civics test.
- To help determine if you are required to take the 2008 civics test, or if you can choose between the 2008 and 2020 civics test, follow these two steps:
  - 1) Check your filing date, also known as a “received date” on your N-400 notice at the top left corner (see sample notice to the right).
  - 2) Once you have your received date, go to the table below and find which scenario applies to you based on your filing and initial examination dates.
- Which civics test will I take?

My filing date (also known as a received date) for my N-400 is...

My initial examination (interview) is scheduled...

Which test will I take at my initial examination (interview)?      If I fail the civics test, which test will I take at my re-exam?      Which test will I take at my N-336 hearing?

\*Applicable for applicants whose N-400 was denied and a request for hearing was filed... before December 1, 2020 (12/1/2020).      on any date.

2008 Civics Test on or after December 1, 2020 (12/1/2020) and before March 1, 2021 (03/01/2021). before April 19, 2021 (04/19/2021). You can choose between the: 2020 Civics Test or 2008 Civics Test

You can choose between the: 2020 Civics Test or 2008 Civics Test on or after December 1, 2020 (12/1/2020) and before March 1, 2021 (03/01/2021).      on or after April 19, 2021 (4/19/2021). 2008 Civics Test 2008 Civics Test on or after March 1, 2021 (03/01/2021). on any date.

- Note: USCIS will offer both the 2008 and 2020 tests for a certain time period. For more information, refer to the USCIS Policy Manual Volume 12, Part E, English and Civics Testing and Exceptions, Chapter 2, English and Civics Testing.

Link: <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/study-for-the-test>  
Roketa Mansfield, can be reach at Office: 305.762.8211 and Cell: 786.351.9497 or email to: [roketa.f.mansfield@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:roketa.f.mansfield@uscis.dhs.gov) .

**Broward County Library:** Vonda Ward Bryant, Learning Services Coordinator, Broward County Library provided information regarding all free services, including: Workforce Ready program, Checkout Chrome and Hot Spot devices for 30-days (with one renewal), complete the feedback survey (paper copy or online), view the online safety tutorial videos, take good care of the devices so others can benefit from this program after you. Search for jobs! Update your resume! Participate in an online interview! All from the convenience of the home. Broward County Library- English, Citizenship and Spanish classes, Online resources, Etutor Live Homework Help, Rosetta Stone Career Online High School, E-media music, books, and movies - go to [Broward.org/Library](http://Broward.org/Library) for access to all of the above and our library branches and hours of operations. Visit [www.broward.org/library](http://www.broward.org/library) for updated information.

**CAIR-Florida:** Wilfredo Ruiz, Esq. Communications Director, Email: [wruiz@cair.com](mailto:wruiz@cair.com) - CAIR-Florida [Civil Rights Org] [www.cairflorida.org](http://www.cairflorida.org) Wilfredo briefly offered an overview of their organization. The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a federation of legally independent, governed and managed chapters across the country that work together to defend the Civil Liberties of Americans. The Council on American-Islamic Relations Florida, Inc. (CAIR Florida, Inc.), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was established in 2001 to challenge stereotypes of Islam and Muslims and defend civil liberties. CAIR Florida Inc, has four offices: Tampa, South Florida (Sunrise), Orlando, and Panama City. The vast majority of CAIR Florida's work deals with civil rights and anti-defamation. CAIR-Florida provides Islam 101 sessions for law enforcement officials to help them understand Islam, encourage dialogue, and promote justice for American Muslims. CAIR-Florida organizes 'Know Your Rights' workshops in various mosques, colleges, Islamic centers, etc. in the state of Florida. CAIR has advocate for other immigrants such as asylee Venezuelan cases. CAIR Florida's vision is to be a leading advocate for justice and mutual understanding.

**US Department of Labor:** Miriam Knudsen with the US Dept of Labor/ Wage and hour Division. [knudsen.miriam@dol.gov](mailto:knudsen.miriam@dol.gov) reported on their agency efforts to safeguard employers right. Ariel G Rivera Maldonado, Community Outreach and Resource Planning Specialist, U.S. Department of Labor / Wage and Hour Division, will be available for a presentation next May.

**Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency, Southeast Region (ESS/DCF)-:** Claudia Arce, ESS/DCF, Program Office's representative, reminded all applicants to upload their documentation with the DCF benefits application to help with the eligibility process. Claudia update the latest regarding ACCESS and benefits; such as DCF stores front are offering a box to drop any documents listed for benefits and these boxes will be pick up daily and documents can also be scan and fax to DCF. Additional information can be located at DCF website; [myflflorida.com](http://myflflorida.com).

**RS/DCF** – David Draper, CL RS Manager informed the task force that DCF now has a new Secretary, Shevaun Harris. Ms. Harris have worked in multiple roles at the Agency for Health Care Administration, most recently serving as the Acting Secretary. He also announced that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) has a new Director, Ms. Cindy Huang.

**Career Source of Broward (CSB)**- Jaime Connelly, BSW, FCWP, Program Manager Welfare Transition & Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs stated Customers who have applied for Temporary Cash Assistance are encouraged to complete work registration and Orientation online. Career development and training programs help job seekers acquire the education and skills needed to succeed in today's labor market. CSB offers Employment and training programs for welfare recipients. To contact one CSB centers via telephone:

North Broward: 954-969-3541

Central Broward: 954-677-5555

South Broward: 954-967-1010

Anyone can receive up to date information regarding our offices and services by visiting our website at <https://careersourcebroward.com/> If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Jaime at (954) 202-3830 Ext. 3126.

CRS/CWS will work with Career Sources for work registration requirements. CRS/CWS will signed the DCF letter for those clients that require registration.

Updates from the MST chat:

**Bilingual/ESOL Department - Broward County Public Schools.** Monica Nelsas: - Parent Outreach Specialist - Bilingual/ESOL Department - Broward County Public Schools. Our office works with immigrants and newcomers, supporting their adaptation to the American School System and supporting their journey as they learn English and a new culture, including refugees and all others. Contact us at: [esolparents@browardschools.com](mailto:esolparents@browardschools.com) or [monica.nelsas@browardschools.com](mailto:monica.nelsas@browardschools.com)

**Harmony Development Center (HDC):** Gloria Gonzalez Program Manager HDC provide services for the Kinship families also for the unaccompanied minors and refugees who are living with any relatives. We provide case management, legal aid and immigration services. Contact information Gloria Gonzalez Program Manager, 954 708-8516.

### **RS Contracted providers:**

**St. Thomas Human Rights Instituted (STHRI):** Christine Reis, Director Attorney, STHRI, reported various challenges for Cuban and Haitian arrivals including lack of employment authorization document (EAD) or an avenue to obtain work permit and difficulty to apply for asylum. Carlos Naranjo, Resettlement Coordinator, CWS, noted a recent EAD applications are being processed more quickly. Christine Reis, Director Attorney informed the task force that they are providing RS legal services in Broward at a co-location with CWS. The telephone number is 954-361-3350.

**Project RENEW/Broward College (PR/BC):** Jocelyn Martinez, PR/BC Director reported on their 202 enrollments for this semester. PR/BC offers orientation including access to computer usages and application. The students will need further contact refresher in computer skill. To help the students the classrooms are virtual or open in campuses with smaller groups following DC guidelines. Teacher spend lots of time educating on basics computers skills. PR/BC is still offering 25 laptops, to borough and as a n incentive to reregistering to the next semester.

**Comprehensive Refugee Services (CRS)**; Francisco Figueroa, Program Administrator, Church World Service (CWS) provided overview information on the World Refugee Day. The CRS organizations will get together and will organize other activities as last year. Last year activities were virtual such as presentations by different refugees from different countries while they shared their journey into USA and while cooking native receipts. Also, Broward College recognized the refugees by sharing successful stories a of different refugees in their website. Due to the Pandemic this year it will be the same. The CWS/Broward telephone number is 954-689-6466 and the contact staff are: Francisco Figueroa (Administrator) and Edele Firmin (Coordinator). Edele shared the increases in new arrivals seeking ACCESS application and how these is becoming overwhelming for the staff. The higher numbers of new arrivals only speak Creole and have not computer skills. DCF store front continue to be close. Yuliet Alonso, **Community ACCESS Partners** will share with CWS the list of over 200 community partners helping with the DCF benefits applications. DCF also has the toll-free telephone number the applicants can call. The customer call center at 1-850-300-4323, agents available 8am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday. TTY 1-800-955-8771.

**NEXT MEETING:**

**Next Meeting:** **Thursday, May 21, 2021**  
Time: 10:00 AM to 12PM  
Location: TBA

**Contact:** [Miriam.Rosario@myflfamilies.com](mailto:Miriam.Rosario@myflfamilies.com) Phone: (561) 227-6722  
[David.Draper@myflfamilies.com](mailto:David.Draper@myflfamilies.com) Phone: (407) 317-7335