



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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 11, 2019
TO: Members of the Orlando Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: David Draper, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: October 9, 2019 Task Force Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: Wednesday, December 11th, 2019
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: TBA

Contact: David Draper
Office: (407) 317-7335
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E-Mail: David.Draper@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Orlando 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 at the local, state and national level, request for proposals, training, workshops, conferences, discuss refugee service needs and explore solutions to those needs. Meeting participants 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!

400 W. Robinson Street, S1111C, Orlando, Florida 32801

ORLANDO AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

This meeting was held at Goodwill Facilities in Orlando (3911 East Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL, 32803). Approximately 27 people were in attendance. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, represented the Florida Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Rosa Chaves, Community Liaison for the Central Region, was also present. Everyone introduced themselves and the agencies that they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

I. **Unites States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) – Vesna Bozic/Community Relations Officer**

- Provided an overview of USCIS.
- Focused part of the presentation on public charge rules and how enforcement could impact certain immigrants' ability to adjust status. Gave guidelines and clarification on who is and who is not impacted by public charge rules.
- Informed the task force of a USCIS training occurring on October 24
- Answered questions related to USCIS rules and regulations.

II. **Primary Care Access Network (PCAN) – Anne Packham/Marketplace Project Director**

- Provided an overview of the HealthCare.gov Marketplace and services.
- Explained that navigators are serving Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties. They have seen an 4% increase of enrollment in Florida.
- Stated that a high percentage of those enrolled do qualify for some financial assistance. However, thirty million people remain uninsured in the United States.
- Discussed program eligibility and gave general information about the program.
- Informed the task force that open enrollment will occur from November 1 through December 5, 2019.
- Answered task force questions related to Marketplace.

GENERAL UPDATES/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **David Draper from DCF Refugee Services:** David provided a recap of the Welcoming Week event that occurred in October. The task force began discussing plans to have a task force holiday 'pot luck' during the upcoming taskforce meeting. Information was shared on upcoming events sponsored by the Africans Family and Community Outreach organization (AFCO). David also mentioned that several Florida regions are transitioning into a 'Comprehensive Refugee Services model'.

- **Stephanie Walls from Florida Immigration Coalition** stated that the ceiling for refugee resettlement during federal fiscal year 2020 is 18,000.
- **Fatima Ait Rami from Islamic Center of Orlando** announced a “Week of the Family Event” event which will be organized with Orange County Florida. She also announced an Interfaith Community Barbeque occurring on Sunday, November 3, 2019.
- **Ana Rios, Bethany Christian Services** gave information on their Transitional Foster Care Program.
- **Felipe Sousa-Matos Rodriguez, City of Orlando** announced the Youth Empowerment Summit which will be taking place on October 19, 2019. The event is targeting youth between the ages of 18 and 24.
- **Debbie Vega, Catholic Charities of Central Florida** explained that they are negotiating a renewal contract with DCF Refugee Services. She stated that delays in the processing of employment authorization documentation by USCIS is impacting refugees’ ability to work.

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2019
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.
Location: TBA

Contact: David.Draper@myflfamilies.com (407) 317-7335
Rosa.Chaves@myflfamilies.com (407) 317-7336