



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

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carrol
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 11, 2019

TO: Members of the Tallahassee Refugee Task Force

FROM: Theresa Leslie, Refugee Services (RS)

SUBJECT: Task Force Meeting Minutes for June 11, 2019

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: September 10, 2019
Time: 10:00 AM to 11:30 PM
Location: Department of Children and Families
1317 Winewood Blvd Bldg 6, Rm201
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Contact: Theresa Leslie
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This task force has been active in the Tallahassee 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 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, 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.

TALLAHASSEE AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was held at the Department of Children and Families Conference Room, 201, Building 3 and Theresa Leslie, Community Liaison represented (DCF), Refugee Services (RS) Program and led the meeting. The meeting was called to order.

PRESENTATION

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) Representative was not present to provide updates. Chase Beasley, the AmeriCorps Vista staff volunteer assigned to IRC described his recruitment of volunteer tutors for a summer tutoring program being offered to both middle and high school students in Leon County. Mr. Beasley has committed to work the next year in developing educational supports and other experiences for refugee youth. As mentioned during the last task force meeting, he has already met with teachers and administrative staff working with ESOL teachers.

Mr. Beasley provided volunteer recruitment flyers for each participant to distribute to others who may be interested. Volunteer prospects are encouraged to email Ms. Beasley to ask for additional details and seek an appointment if further interested.

Nims Middle School was awarded a Century 21 Grant to conduct summer school during the break. Those graduating elementary school and ready for middle school are eligible to participate. Refugee students and many newly arrived students will be attending academic and ESOL sessions.

Mr. Beasley explained that volunteers can commit to tutoring during the day (at summer school sessions for middle schoolers) or volunteer in the evening at Walker Ford Community Center (for high school students). He explained that each volunteer will need to get a background screening per IRC policy.

Karen Strange (from the city of Tallahassee's Adult Literacy Volunteers Program) discussed their efforts to offer evening classes for ESOL and GED prep at the Perry Library. These classes have been well attended by refugees.

Mr. Beasley also announced that two of the apartment complexes where many refugees live will making community rooms available for English classes.

BRIEF PROVIDER UPDATE ON NEW ARRIVALS AND EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Leslie mentioned that IRC is on track to welcome 150 new arrivals for the coming fiscal year, October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019. The provider has requested additional Match Grant slots.

IRC continues to focus on the recruitment of employers that offer on-the-job training, career laddering, and mentorship/internship opportunities. These outreach efforts are coordinated by Molly Woodsum, the IRC Employment Case Manager. This is an ongoing effort.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING :

Rebecca Zoeller, from Legal Services of North Florida (LSNF), recently joined the LSNF team and will be working with a team of attorneys that will aid victims of human trafficking in North Florida through a fellowship with Equal Justice Works Crime Victims Justice Corps. This new fellowship at LSNF will provide direct representation, outreach and education to victims of human trafficking in order to stop human trafficking throughout LSNF's 16 county service area in North Florida.

Ms. Zoeller will act as LSNF's fellow which provides critical legal help for vulnerable populations facing injustices like human trafficking, fraud/identity theft, campus sexual assault, and hate crime, and immigrant victims of crime with meritorious claims for immigration relief.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, September 10, 2019
10:00 to 11:30 AM
Department of Children and Families
1317 Winewood Blvd,
Bldg 6, Rm 201
Tallahassee, FL 32399

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