



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 3, 2019
TO: Members of the Palm Beach Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: **Miriam Rosario**, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: November 22, 2019 Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: January 17, 2020
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Location: West Palm Beach City Hall
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 Palm Beach 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

PALM BEACH AREA COUNTY REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING**INTRODUCTION**

The meeting was held at the West Palm Beach City Hall, Miriam Rosario (MIR), Community Liaison represented the DCF, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Miriam thanked Hon. Keith James, Mayor of WB City and staff for hosting the meeting. The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves, services and the agency they represented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Scott Prescott, Operations Supervisor, Social Security Administration (SSA), provided an Overview and Resources presentation on SSA services. The presenter stated that each person must earn a certain number of credits to qualify for Social Security benefits. The number of credits each person needs depends on the age when they apply and the type of benefit application they submit. He encouraged each person to apply on-line for SSA needs. The presenter also gave an overview of the various types of benefits and a summary of the SSA application process.

Dina Martinez, Technical Specialist for the SSA/SSI Office, gave a brief overview presentation on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) requirements, benefits, and the application process. The presenter encouraged refugee task force members so ensure that refugees were well informed of SSA and SSI and the importance of submitting all the necessary documentation when applying.

NEW ISSUES/ACTION TAKEN

Miriam Rosario, Southern Community Liaison, RS DCF discussed and provided an overview and training presentation regarding the Cooperation with Child support Enforcement. The presentation focused on the importance of collaborating with Child Support Enforcement (CSE) when a refugee applies for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) or SNAP benefits. The presentation instructed providers on the proper way to complete the benefits application and described where and how to note that an absent parent was residing outside of the United States.

GENERAL UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ESS/DCF- Teresa Hernandez provided information on the SNAP application process.

CSCB-Marta Roque from CareerSource's Palm Beach office gave information on the program and described the types of services available through CareerSource.

PBSO- Marcia Bahia, Community Outreach Gang Prevention Coordinator discussed an upcoming community outreach event to assist youth in detention centers

211- Patricia Schreiber from 211-PBTC described some of the resources currently available in Palm Beach County and distributed a list of community agencies able to assist refugees and others.

Project Transition / Palm Beach County Schools, Noel Hernandez, Administrator from Project Transition (PT), explained that the School District is not renewing the Adult Education (AE) services contract with the DCF. Starting 2020, all referrals for adult education will need to go through Church World Services.

DOH, Merlene L. Ramnon, PhD, Director of Community Health reported that appointments for the health assessment are up to date. The clinic hired a new nurse which has expedited the process for clients.

CWS, Francisco Figueroa, Program Administrator, indicated that Employment Authorization Documentation (EAD) applications are being processed slowly by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). These delays are impacting clients and delaying employment.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Meeting: **Friday, January 17, 2020**
 Time: 10:00 to 12PM
 Location: West Palm Beach City Hall
 401 Clematis ST., WPB City, FL 33401

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