



Family Separation Response Taskforce Kick Off Meeting

Feb. 11, 2025 | 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | HYBRID
1500 Jefferson St. Olympia

Meeting Minutes

Welcome & Introductions

Secretary Tana Senn
Nathan Bays, Governor Ferguson's Office
Cassie Anderson, DCYF Tribal Liaison

Lay of the Land at State Agencies

- ◆ Current Laws for Washington state - Enoka Herat
- ◆ Child Welfare Practice - Natalie Green
- ◆ K-12 Practice - Susan Lathrop
- ◆ Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance - Sarah Peterson
- ◆ Law Enforcement Practice - Washington State Patrol

Enoka Herat reviewed Current Laws for Washington State:

- ◆ Enforcing laws like Keep Washington Working
- ◆ State agencies process for collecting/disseminating information
- ◆ Data privacy
- ◆ "Courts Open to All" legislation
- ◆ Regulation in sensitive locations
- ◆ Community concerns

Natalie Green & Dorene Perez reviewed Child Welfare Practice and how they intersect:

Children and Youth can have a Variety of Paths Related to Immigration

- ◆ Undocumented Child is a child present in the U.S. who:
 - Has no lawful immigration status and may have entered the U.S. without authorization or overstayed their visa, and
 - For immigration legal matters is unmarried and under the age of 21, and
 - May have parent(s), legal guardians, or caregivers in the U.S. or
 - May be under the state's custody
- ◆ An Unaccompanied Child is a child who at the time of apprehension by immigration:
 - Has no lawful immigration status, and



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- Is under the age of 18, and
- Has no parent or legal guardian in the U.S., or
- Has no parent or legal guardian in the U.S. who is available to provide care and physical custody
- Legal definition found at 6 U.S.C. 279(g)(2)

Current Role of Child Welfare

- ◆ If a parent is picked up by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), ICE will first work with the family to determine if there is a safety plan in place for the children. This could be family or friends who are able to take the children.
- ◆ ICE only reaches out to DCYF if the parents are unable to provide someone to take the children or if there are concerns regarding the individuals identified.
- ◆ In these situations, ICE will notify local law enforcement, and the children will be picked up under protective custody.

Child Welfare Process

- ◆ DCYF does not automatically get involved in cases of deportation. DCYF becomes involved if the parents can't find an appropriate caregiver or there are clear signs of child abuse, neglect, or risk of serious harm.
- ◆ DCYF does not provide information to ICE without a court order or judicial warrant, or the parent has signed a release of information that states what information can be shared.

Placement in Foster Care

- ◆ Placement can occur under several scenarios:
 - Protective custody transfer from law enforcement (72 hours)
 - Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) signed by parents (90 days)
 - Dependency Petition (indefinite pending case resolution)
 - Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petitions (indefinite pending case resolution)
- ◆ If the caregiver is absent due to immigration status, we make every effort to locate the parent by contacting family, emergency contacts, and consulates.

Unaccompanied Children

- ◆ DCYF does not currently play a role with unaccompanied children.
- ◆ Children apprehended by US Customs/Border Protection are placed in custody w Dept. of Homeland Security
- ◆ Children are transferred into custody of Dept. of Health/Human Services (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
- ◆ The children are then released to ORR sponsor, referred to as services and legal process through immigration courts

Susan Lathrop reviewed K-12 Practice:

- ◆ Protections for Immigrant Students | guidance/road map
- ◆ Access to immigration services | laws/state law
- ◆ Engagement with immigration authorities
- ◆ Federal protection
- ◆ What schools will/won't do



- ◆ Exposure to undocumented students
- ◆ [protections-immigrant-students-washington-public-schools.pdf](#)

Pat McGregor reviewed Washington State Patrol's policies and procedures:

Office of Culture and Engagement

- ◆ Formed 2020
- ◆ Office of 12 people
- ◆ Community Engagement
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Policy

Our Goal

- ◆ Trooper number one concern is for child safety
- ◆ One of the hardest calls to respond to as law enforcement
- ◆ Goal is to create stability in a crisis situation

Abandoned/No Guardian

- ◆ It's not something Troopers encounter often
- ◆ Could be instance where parent is arrested for violating state law
- ◆ Paren/Guardian is deceased

Our Guiding Documents

- ◆ WSP Policy | 1.04.030
- ◆ WSP Policy | 1.04.090 Contract Involving Immigrations Enforcement
- ◆ Data Collection Policy
- ◆ Immigration Hold/Detainment Policy

What We Would Do

- ◆ WSP would attempt to place with relative or another qualified caregiver in discussion with parents
- ◆ If there is no caregiver available, CPS would be brought in to determine next steps for child
- ◆ Community Engagement
- ◆ EI Protector

Sarah Peterson reviewed Office of Refugee Program and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA) services:

Welcoming Refugees is a Collective Effort



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- ◆ Office invests federal and state funding into local community across Washington to provide services and resources that help refugees and humanitarian immigrants achieve economic stability and supports long-term integration.

Partner with More than 100 Organizations

- ◆ Refugee Resettlement Agencies
- ◆ Nonprofit Organizations
- ◆ Ethnic Community-Based organizations
- ◆ Public Health Departments and Health Clinics
- ◆ School Districts
- ◆ Community Colleges
- ◆ Other State Agencies

Role and Responsibility of ORIA

- ◆ Designated lead for the administration of the WA State Plan for Refugee Resettlement
- ◆ Coordinate statewide effort to support the economic and social integration and basic needs of immigrants and refugees arriving and resettling in WA.
- ◆ Administer services to immigrants who are ineligible for federal services

Washington Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

- ◆ Health & Wellness Programs
- ◆ Employment & Training Programs
- ◆ Immigration & Naturalization Assistance
- ◆ Whole Family Services

Unaccompanied Children's Services

- ◆ WA Operations Budget 2023-2025 (ESSB 5187)
 - Support services for unaccompanied children and sponsors
 - Create a workgroup to identify and analyze resources and service needs for unaccompanied children and their sponsors.
 - Submit a report to the Governor and Legislature by June 30, 2025

WA Migrant and Asylum-Seeker Support Project Overview

- ◆ Purpose: Build a statewide network of organizations to deliver a coordinated response to meet the short-term immediate needs of recently arrived migrants and asylum-seekers.

Questions/Discussion about ORIA Presentation

- ◆ Receiving daily requests from concerned parties
- ◆ KIND organization funding/grants



- ◆ Systems for drawing funding down
- ◆ Intersections with federal data/information
- ◆ Information regarding those that are granted asylum

Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives

- ◆ What are the Task Force's Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives?
 - Processes and Points of Contacts
 - Guidance & Policy
 - Communications and Resources
- ◆ Handout of draft ideas shared

Discussion

- ◆ How we coordinate and connect with agencies
 - ◆ Alignment of resources in communities so we are not duplicating
 - ◆ Channels/strategies | how do we get information from varying communities
 - ◆ What are the different channels of communication?
 - ◆ Develop a document that focuses on *values* ensuring we are centering the child/child development
 - ◆ Keeping in mind policy cutoff | Any policy changes or funding requests?
 - ◆ Ensure *existing pathways* included in the guidance
 - ◆ Need systems capacity analysis
 - ◆ Discussed how existent systems of support will manage
 - ◆ Create a list of resources incorporating existing tools to ensure everyone has consistent information
 - ◆ Reminder | financial impacts to folks can affect school attendance and work attendance
 - ◆ Lessons Learned | what can we reactivate | build off what worked
 - ◆ With wraparound services could they still be eligible without additional paperwork
 - ◆ Connecting/finding a home for someone under/over age of 18 | how are we supporting
 - ◆ Need to address juvenile rehabilitation | is there additional support needed for the families (eligibility)
 - ◆ Need to leverage/engage counties | state agency overlaps
 - ◆ Create/propose model policies we want to see happen including schools (who are looking for guidance)
 - ◆ Scope of support | narrow
 - ◆ Explore avenues of communication for example radio spots
 - ◆ Is there emergency funding?
 - ◆ Leverage existent programs and services
- Secretary Senn closed the discussion noting they will continue to explore/define this group's role.

Stakeholder Expansion

- ❖ Who else should we consult with? In what capacity?
 - Connect with the Combined Fund Drive Office (CFD)
 - Identify other immigration efforts/groups this task force can collaborate with
 - Lawmakers | Identify policy changes/operational changes/effective streamlining
 - Parent, early and higher education partners



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- Remain firmly focused on the children | put the child at the center of the question
- Explore focus groups
- What's the best way to engage higher education and include in the conversation

- Department of Commerce | finding intersection with legal aid
- ATG has guidance on their website | may have agency-specific guidance
 - They advise varying agencies | workgroups meet weekly
 - They coordinate closely with each division internally
 - When agencies receive requests for information it's important to include AG input
 - Numerous questions from clients | working on "Know Your Rights" guidance
 - They direct them to non-profit organizations
- [Washington Criminal Courts & Immigration Chapter Eight - 11/18/12](#)
- Philanthropy | What role can philanthropy play?
- Tribes | Impacting tribal nations
- WA Office of Minority and Women's Business

Next Steps

- ◆ Next meeting will be in three weeks. Task Force will meet every three weeks
- ◆ Will have an assignment during that time | seek out focus groups, etc.
- ◆ Note: First report due April 30, 2025

Meeting Concludes

Secretary Senn thanked everyone for coming together and appreciated their commitment. They will have a good value statement soon and she looks forward to working together.