

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



July 2, 2003

REFUGEE COORDINATOR LETTER NO: 03-14

TO: COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

Pleased be advised that the next Refugee Coordinators' meeting has been scheduled as follows:

Date: Thursday, July 24, 2003
Time: 10:00 – 3:00
Place: Orange County Social Services Agency
888 North Main Street,
Santa Ana, CA 92701-3518

Please note the change of location to Orange County, which is to accommodate representatives from Southern California who have been unable to attend meetings in Sacramento due to budgetary restrictions within their counties.

Enclosed are the draft minutes from the previous Coordinators meeting, as well as directions (courtesy of @Yahoo!) to the meeting location via John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana. If you have any topics you would like placed on the meeting agenda, please contact Mr. Stephen Saucedo of my staff at (916) 654-2805.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
Thuan Nguyen
7/7/03

THUAN NGUYEN, Chief
Refugee Programs Branch

Enclosure

DRAFT MINUTES
County Coordinators Meeting
April 23, 2003

California Arts Council (Theresa Harlan): The Council has an Artists in Residence Program and has funded Southeast Asian artists. They have been proactive in reaching out to the community, but there are no new programs due to state budget cuts. Existing programs are continuing. Fifty-four counties participate in the program.

California Arts Council (Cathy Phoenix): The Council has awarded \$4 million in grants to individuals, including children. They also have an Arts Education Program and contribute to economic development in downtown areas. One of the goals of the Council is to make art more democratic and include people from all segments of society. They also support community activities. Funding for the Council comes from the State and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Refugee Works Youth Program (Rebecca Armstrong): Program development has taken place at four locations and community coalitions have been formed to address targeted issues:

- San Diego—The projects being developed include an after school program, a parenting program, and a girls support program for Somali youth.
- Glendale—The target population is high-risk Armenian youth and families. The project will focus on violence prevention and alcohol/drug abuse prevention. A collaborative has been formed with treatment centers.
- Fresno—Suicide prevention/mental health, parenting, and girls support are targeted issues being addressed. Connections with schools and a mental health workforce training have been achieved.
- San Joaquin—The project developed will be for a violence prevention program for Hmong youth that includes connections with schools and local gangs. There are an estimated 90 gangs in the county, 30 of which are Southeast Asian. Teams of “peacekeepers” will be employed. They will address youth employment issues through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) employment programs. Additionally, they will identify grant funders and assist in proposal preparation and grant development.

Sixty-Month Refugee and Employment Services (RESS) Waiver (Bonnie Brady): The current waiver expires on September 30, 2003. The Refugee Programs Branch (RPB) will issue a Refugee Coordinator Letter (RCL) soon requesting information from counties on how the waiver has benefited clients. The results will be sent to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) along with a request to continue the waiver.

Sixty-Month Targeted Assistance (TA) Waiver (Betts Smith): If there is a gap in services in a county, the county can request a waiver by showing compelling reasons for one. The RPB will need the information by May 31, 2003. Information from counties should include the number of clients who would benefit. They should also demonstrate reasons for the request.

Refugee Awareness Day (Betts Smith): The RPB has requested the Governor's Office to recognize May as Refugee Awareness Day. Dates and locations for the celebrations will be posted on the RPB website. The RPB staff may not be able to attend local celebrations due to budget cuts.

Grant Reduction Under the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Program and Effect on Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) (Janet Sandlin): In the Governor's Budget, there was a proposal to reduce the level of aid payments in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids, (CalWORKs) Program. This proposal would have reduced RCA payments as well. RPB asked for county input on whether or not to try to get a waiver to keep RCA payment levels at the current amounts. Subsequent to the meeting the May Revision to the Governor's Budget was released and did not contain the payment reduction proposal. On June 16th, All County Letter No. 03-26 increased payment levels by 3.74%, effective June 1st.

Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Time Out (Janet Sandlin): An RCL regarding this issue was sent out. The seven year time eligibility limit for non-citizens is approaching. Some refugees will no longer be eligible after August 2003. The RPB would like input from counties to ensure that refugees who may be affected are aware of this deadline.

RPB Refugee Summit (Phyllis Iwasaki): The RPB was notified that approval has been given for a Summit. The date and location have yet to be determined. Due to budget cuts, the Summit will be fewer days.

State and Federal Budgets (Thuan Nguyen): The Governor's Office has requested plans for a 10% reduction in department budgets. Travel and other activities continue to be reduced. The ORR's budget for the current year is \$443 million and next year's proposed budget is \$19 million less.

RCL 03-05 Regarding the RESS Allocation (Brad Elftmann): The RPB's RESS 2000 funding augmentation to counties using unexpended monies was not as much as was previously thought, the result of a number of factors. Therefore, adjustments have been made to rectify the shortfall with 2003 allocations. In order to align expenditures with the appropriate grant, approximately \$650,000 has been held back from 2003 allocations. Any unexpended funds from 2001 and 2002 allocations will be applied toward the alignment and could fill the gap.

Arrivals (Thuan Nguyen): There were approximately 8,900 arrivals nationwide during the period from October 2002 to March 2003. California's arrival total to date is approximately 1,650.

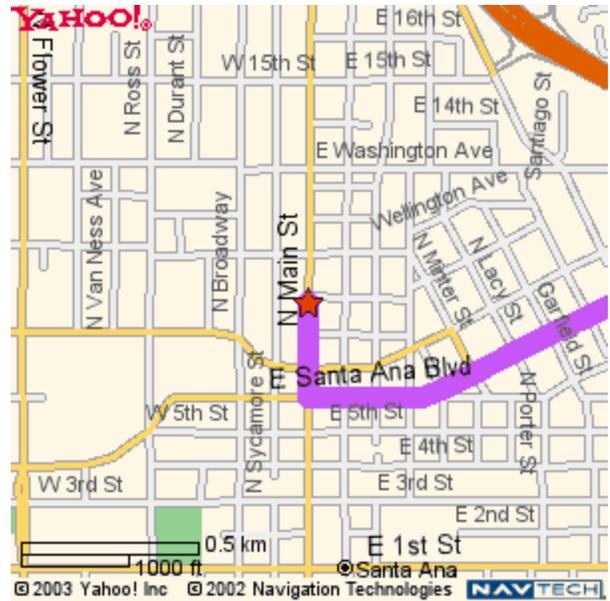
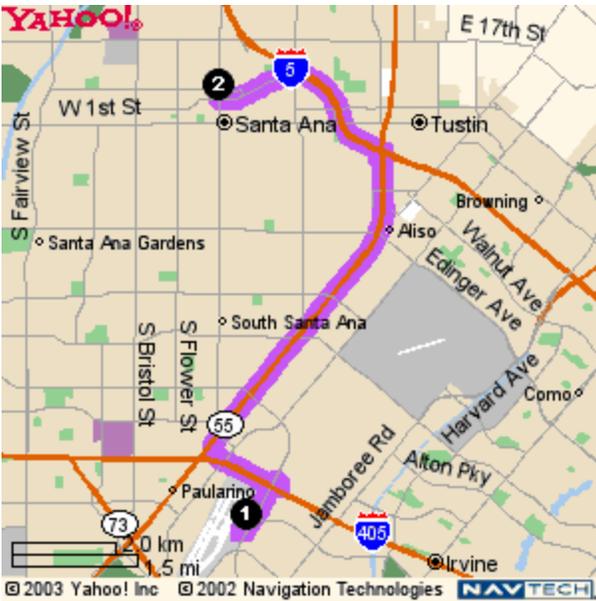
RCA Rights and Responsibilities Form (Kathy Noble): Suggested changes to the SAWS 2A form should be sent to Kathy.Noble@dss.ca.gov.

Refugee Health Program (Laura Hardcastle): The Refugee Health Program will begin using a standardized method of funding to counties. They are currently trying to maintain their infrastructure as program funding is reduced. The Preventive Health grant will be released soon at a 50% budget decrease. In the past year, over 100 interpreters were trained. A recent study shows Sudanese refugees to be resilient as they adjust to life in the United States.

County Reports:

- Santa Clara County--Refugee Awareness Day will be held on May 16. A letter describing a Bipartisan Congressional Refugee Caucus was circulated. This is a newly-formed caucus whose primary purpose is to advocate for needs of refugees and displaced persons both overseas and in the United States. The Caucus hopes to not only ensure that actual admissions to the United States are met, but to address funding for resettlement and domestic programs. There is also concern in the County that ORR grant formulas are not favorable to California.
- Yolo County--The County will hold a Refugee Awareness Day later in the year and will include refugees in a county "success" celebration.
- Alameda County--The County is planning a Refugee Awareness Day at the end of May. The main issue is the decrease in arrivals and funding and the long-term impact on the program. The county had a successful Earned Income Tax Credit program.
- San Joaquin County--County incentive funds may not be available to refugee service providers. They depend heavily on these funds and their elimination will jeopardize these providers' ability to stay in business.
- Sacramento County--The Department of Human Assistance will cut most contracts by more than 50%. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) procurement process is underway and some refugee service providers have submitted proposals. Arrivals have increased from the Middle East and Iran. The Earned Income Tax Credit program produced about \$6 million in refunds. Refugee Awareness Day will be held on May 23.

- San Francisco County--Refugee Awareness Day will be held on May 29. During the past month, the county served more asylees than refugees. There are 72 clients in its employment programs.
- Stanislaus County--There are 21 families in the refugee program.
- Fresno County--A Lao celebration was held in April. Refugee Awareness Day is being planned and they are collecting cultural items and antiques to present to the Board of Supervisors. The County Department of Employment and Temporary Assistance's Director has retired.
- San Diego County--Refugee Awareness Day will be held on May 16. The County held a successful law enforcement forum for refugees to connect the community with law enforcement. A representative from the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services also attended the forum. The County also conducted a successful Earned Income Tax Credit program.



Directions	Miles	
1. Start going towards the AIRPORT EXIT on DEPARTING FLIGHTS ACC	0.2	↑
2. Bear Left on AIRPORT DEPARTURES towards RETURN TO TERMINAL	0.1	↙
3. Continue on AIRPORT WAY	0.0	↗
4. Continue on AIRPORT EXIT/AIRPORT WAY	0.1	↑
5. Turn Left on MACARTHUR BLVD	0.5	↙
6. Bear Right to take the I-405 NORTH ramp towards LONG BEACH	0.2	↗
7. Merge on I-405 NORTH	0.5	↗
8. Take the CA-55 exit towards COSTA MESA FWY/NEWPORT BEACH/RIVERSIDE	0.1	↗
9. Continue on CA-55 NORTH RAMP towards RIVERSIDE	0.5	↗
10. Merge on CA-55 NORTH	3.3	↗
11. Take the I-5 NORTH exit towards CARPOOLS ONLY/LOS ANGELES	1.7	↙
12. Merge on I-5-HOV-LN NORTH	0.2	↑
13. Take the GRAND AVE exit towards BUSES AND CARPOOLS ONLY/SANTA ANA BL	0.3	↙
14. Continue on E SANTA ANA BLVD	1.0	↗
15. Turn Right on N MAIN ST	0.2	↘

Distance: 8.8 miles Approximate Travel Time: 13 mins