

Attendance: Rita Benn, Ketl Freedman-Doan, Harvey Somers, Jennie Leiberman, Shoshana Mandel, Rosalie Koenig, Midge Cone, Jennifer Traig, Patricia Wolff, Ruth Freedman, Deborah Greene, Renee Robbins, Lori Hale, Martha Weintraub, Linda Jo Doctor, Michael Appel, Amanda Fahim, Shrina Eadeh

To Do's:

Amanda: Discuss with the ICM program director if there are some families that would benefit from co-sponsorship

Jennie: Share location of CMH appointment info with Shoshana; Discuss option and potential timing for MC driving lesson with Francy, and if appropriate schedule time with MC; Inform Rita if she should contact Reed for potential sit-in as translator

Rosalie: Follow up with Theater Teacher and Francy, in this regard.

Shoshana: Contact Francy and Mathias to take to CMH Appt on Monday, Nov. 17 at 9:00am

Updates

Amanda reviewed information related to the Presidential Determination (PD), which has now been signed, and which we've been waiting on since Oct. 1. This document declares how many refugees will be accepted nationally, and from which countries. The PD for 2025 is 7500 refugees (individuals) nationally, a record low (last year: 125,000). This limit will dramatically slow down arrivals at JFS. The primary population is listed as white Afrikaners. Each administration sets its own vetting process (see the Obama policy [here](#)), and Afrikaners are being vetted more quickly than the 18-36 months that is typical for other refugees. Look for a report on Afrikaner refugees from Anderson Cooper this Sunday at 8:00pm, "MisinfoNation: White Genocide" for The Whole Story with Anderson Cooper". Also, NPR had a segment last week on the radio about this ([here](#)). There is also talk about the US allowing 12,000 Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) arrivals, but this has not been confirmed. SIV families are those Iraqi and Afghan nationals who aided the U.S. government in Iraq and Afghanistan and will be eligible for permanent residence in the United States. These individuals receive resettlement assistance and are eligible for benefits similar to those for refugees. This has not been confirmed. They would arrive with permanent residency, and usually come from Afghanistan or Iraq.

As a resettlement agency, JFS is obligated to receive any arrivals, whether they agree with the current administration policy or not. Every administration determines the populations they choose to admit. JFS will maintain equity as best they can. Those organizations that are opting out because they do not want to serve Afrikaners may lose their resettlement contracts. The expected family size is about 2-4. It is unclear if co-sponsorship will work for these arrivals, and if so, JCOR will need to discuss whether they would be willing to accept a family. JCOR may then need to consider what we might want to do instead. The time it will take for the refugees to arrive or for JFS to find a suitable family for JCOR could also take some time. Come January, JFS should have a better idea about the pacing of arrivals and which families might need help.

With regard to options for JCOR, JFS has seen a dramatic increase in pantry usage and has added days to the schedule. They still have hundreds of refugee clients receiving post-resettlement services. After the initial 90 days, clients typically receive services for 12-18 months (services that JCOR does for one family) and are eligible for up to 5 years.

JFS is very interested in continuing co-sponsorship with us. Rita reminded Amanda about her idea of helping with those cases that are served by Intensive Case Management (ICM). Approximately 100 individuals are in that program. Harvey suggested that while we wait for a decision to take a new refugee family, perhaps we work with an ICM case for three months or six months. Come January, can we take an ICM family while we wait to learn more about arrivals? Shrina and Amanda will discuss this idea with the ICM program director to see if there are some families that would benefit from co-sponsorship, and Amanda will report back at the next meeting.

In the meantime, we were reminded to consider contacting our congressional representatives to request that refugee resettlement be expanded, especially regarding the SIV cases. HIAS had a lawsuit regarding those refugee cases that were granted status to come to the US, but had their flights cancelled. Amanda was unclear where that stands, as she hasn't heard anything noteworthy. Learn more about those cases [here](#).

Family Updates

There's an appointment for Matias for an evaluation at Community Mental Health next Monday morning; Shoshana agreed to take them since Jennie has broken her wrist and can't drive! Jennie will contact Francy to inform her and let Shoshana know the time and location of the appointment. Francy also missed a health appointment recently due to a confusion over US date-month order. Jennie told her to call them to set another appointment, but doesn't know if she has.

Jennie asked Francy if she's okay on food; she says she is right now, but would like to go to a food bank and needs a ride. JFS has an updated food pantry list translated into Spanish, and Amanda will send it to us today. Shoshana has gone over the list of food pantries with Francy in the past that are close to her and within her available time frame to go.

There are still some tech problems with PowerSchool, but Francy went on her own to the school for updates. Rosalie spoke with the school counselor about what she can do to alleviate the issue that he is failing his theater class. The counselor was very helpful and has taken Matias out of the class for next semester (theater was a year-long course) and put him instead into a gym class (a HS graduation requirement). She also reported that he's only failing theater by 4 points and is asking the teacher to call Rosalie to see if perhaps he can get a pass for the course. Rosalie is very impressed with the counselor, and she will follow up to make sure next semester's classes are a good fit.

Francy has passed the deadline for PATH car funds. Amanda followed up on a similar program (BRES) through Michigan Works, though those funds have dried up. Francy's future car

purchase will have to be out of pocket. Amanda will discuss this with her and ask how much she can save towards a car each month. She also suggested that perhaps we can set up a JCOR match of funds as an incentive (without the year-end time limit?) It's also possible we'll get a car donated. Francy still needs to get her license. Jennie learned that MC School, for \$150, will provide a 2-hour intense session to prepare for the test. Jennie would be willing to translate in the car, and it can be arranged for any time. We could also see if Reed would be available if it's on the weekend. Jennie will ask Francy if she feels ready to do this, and then we will inquire as to the timing for this effort. We want to make sure she can be ready for her license test before having to go through the driver permit process again. (Post-script: Francy's permit expires within 6 months).

Amanda reported that she worked with Francy to set up automatic payments for repaying her travel loan. The payments are \$35.00 per month, and the first autopayment was processed for November.

Other

Folks from Blue Ocean, St Clare, and TBE met to discuss ways to support immigrants who may be detained by ICE and decided that fundraising for MIRC to procure an attorney may be the best way for us to help. Rita asked if there is interest in expanding the initiative beyond the three congregations and inviting other congregations to get involved. They welcomed that idea. There will be another meeting Nov. 17 at the Genesis building (TBE) with Reverend Anne from St. Claire's. Ruth from JCS is going to come to the next planning meeting. Deborah will take this request to Beth Israel Social Action Committee and can report back next month. If other congregations or individuals would like to get involved, contact Rita.

Next Meeting Date: Dec. 3 at noon