Asylum Seekers Working Group:

New Arrivals Assessment

Friday, April 2 2021
February 5th ASWG Meeting

**Situation**
There is a current stream of arrivals of asylum seekers to Portland and the potential for larger numbers.

**Issues**
Lessons learned from the EXPO, and how the pandemic could further complicate our capacity to respond effectively to these needs.

**Questions**
- What is being done now?
- Where are the gaps in services?
- What would it take to meet the range of needs?

**Approach**
Data collection and analysis

**Next Steps**
Recommendations and where we go from here
Data Collection

**ASWG Member Survey**
Google Form sent out to ASWG member organizations

**EXPO Reports**
MIRC’s report concerning the ECBO involvement and challenges at the EXPO

**COVID Social Support Data**
Highlighting community needs, barriers, and how services are being adapted
What We Found

Community Needs
- Housing
- Social services and wraparound support
- Access to technology

What we have:
- Robust network of organizations, volunteers
- Referral system for social support services
- Advocacy platform and strong collective voice
- Online tools and resources

Gaps:
- Funding and administrative support
- Limited services and resources outside of Greater Portland
- Limited organizational capacity (Needs > Resources)
Recommendations

Leverage tools and resources built during the pandemic
- Social services referral system
- Working groups and educational material
- New sources of funding
- Robust networks

Convene around issue areas
- Existing working groups in place
- Create new groups that are issue-focused
- ASWG to continue to provide a space to discuss legal issues

Proactive over reactive
- How can we prepare now?
What is being done:

- **Housing**
  - Quarantine Shelter Discussions - Tues. @12pm
    - [https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6351811685?pwd=dnoyUTlvYXpkdFwFZjUqWVXQ2U0T09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6351811685?pwd=dnoyUTlvYXpkdFwFZjUqWVXQ2U0T09)
    - Contact: Charles Mugabe (Catholic Charities Maine, cmugabe@ccmaine.org)

- **Immediate/Ongoing Social Support Support**
  - COVID-19 Social Support Providers Meetings
    - Wednesdays @ 10am [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4430493660](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4430493660)
    - Fridays @ 11am [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88084860893](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88084860893)
  - DHHS referral system for Social Support Services
  - Contacts: Charles Mugabe (Catholic Charities Maine, cmugabe@ccmaine.org) and Jayde Biggert (MIRC, jbiggert@maineimmigrantrights.org)

- **Education**
  - Portland Public Schools - contact Susan Wiggins (wiggis@portlandschools.org)
  - New Mainers Educational Needs Collaborative
    - Bi-weekly on Mon. @12pm, next meeting Apr 5 [https://zoom.us/j/99149400054](https://zoom.us/j/99149400054)
    - Contact: Fatima Saidi (MIRC, fsaidi@maineimmigrantrights.org) and Fatuma Hussein (Immigrant Resource Center, fhussein@uswofmaine.org)

- **Childcare**
  - Office of Family and Child Services - [Coronavirus-Related Funding Opportunities for Child Care Providers](https://www.mainecare.gov)
  - Contact: Crystal Arbour (Maine DHHS, Crystal.Arbour@maine.gov)

- **Outreach and communication**
  - Culturally-Appropriate Education/Messaging Group - Wed. @9am
    - [https://zoom.us/j/91630800010](https://zoom.us/j/91630800010)
    - Contact: Fatuma Hussein (Immigrant Resource Center, fhussein@uswofmaine.org) and Jayde Biggert (MIRC, jbiggert@maineimmigrantrights.org)

- **Legal**
  - ASWG Meetings
    - Contact: Sally Sutton (NMRC, Portland Adult Ed., suttos@portlandschools.org)
  - Workshops & legal aid clinics through ILAP and Portland OEO

- **Transportation**
  - MANA's COVID-19-related transportation system (car@mana-maine.org)

- **Food**
  - MIRC's food support system
  - Good Shepherd Food Bank grants

- **Coordination**
  - City of Portland - Resettlement Coordinator Position
Next Steps

- Continue connecting with immigrant community leaders and ECBOs
- Digging deeper into these issue areas through existing and new working groups to further refine problems and identify potential solutions
- Presenting findings to key groups
- Connect with others doing similar research in the state
Questions?
Thank you!

For more information, please contact:

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