

About Us**Divisions & Offices****Contact Information****Services****News & Events****Language Access****Press Room**

Contacts

News Releases

Press Kit

Media Center

Back To:

Home

Search

DHR continues to provide support for Katrina relief efforts

September 16, 2005

Strike Teams deployed; DFCS offices established as points of entry

ATLANTA (GA) – With the transition from American Red Cross service centers in Metro Atlanta, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), in coordination with the Governor's office, has established the 14 metro Atlanta offices of the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) as points of entry for displaced persons and formed Strike Teams to assist those in more dire need of assistance.

In addition to routine operations, DFCS offices will provide information and referrals to other services such as job placement, obtaining food stamps and TANF, housing and medical services.

"When it comes to obtaining services and assistance, DHR has opened all its doors to serve persons displaced by hurricane Katrina," said DHR Commissioner B.J. Walker. "As people slowly make the transition into Georgia and towards getting their lives back on track, DHR is taking proactive steps to ensure that displaced persons obtain the assistance, services and resources they need. Our mission is clear and each division within DHR is working to meet this pressing need."

Walker explained that strike teams have been formed that are comprised of healthcare professionals from DHR and other state agencies including public health nurses, mental health and crisis counselors, DFCS case workers, and others. These teams will be dispatched to locations known to have a high concentration of displaced persons to provide on-site assistance ranging from immediate medical needs to assistance with job placement and permanent housing.

The strike teams will conduct interviews, health assessments, and develop mechanisms to track individuals and families as they regain their independence.

"With all the mental and physical stresses and trauma encountered by those displaced, even making the most basic decisions can be very difficult," said Stuart Brown, M.D., director of

the Division of Public Health. "In addition to assistance with obtaining food, transportation and coping with their stress, many people need assistance with plotting a path to recovery."

Brown added that as primary points of entry, the 14 DFCS offices across metro Atlanta will provide information such as maps with addresses and phone numbers showing locations of DFCS offices and other service centers as well as provide referrals to other state

agencies and resources. The strike teams will also make this information available where they are deployed.

For single point of entry for public health or mental health resources please call 1-866-752-3442 and to find the closest DFCS office location nearest you please call 404-651-6316 or 1-888-295-1769.

For more information contact:
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