

UPDATE #3

Miami-Dade County Haiti Quake Relief Efforts

The Village of Palmetto Bay will keep you posted with official information posted by Miami-Dade County regarding Haiti relief support. Please visit the Village website at www.palmettobay-fl.gov for updates:

**Monday, Feb. 1
4 p.m. Report**

This update is compiled by Chris Himmel, South Dade Office of Mayor Carlos Alvarez:

This update is based on information received through 4 p.m. today. This update also contains important information pertaining to United States federal government's efforts.

Per an announcement from Mayor Carlos Alvarez, and Commissioner Audrey Edmonson, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners' Haiti Earthquake Relief Effort Coordinator, since January 17th, 2010, all Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue, and Police stations, and Public Libraries have served as drop off sites for collection of needed supplies to send to the people of Haiti. They are asking that donated items be limited to nonperishable food, water, gloves of all types, surgical masks and camping tents. At this time, Miami-Dade County collections are being limited to only the specified items, not clothing or other goods.

Miami-Dade County is partnering with a number of Miami-Dade municipalities and Miami-Dade County Public Schools in this effort. The municipalities have designated their own drop off locations, which may not include municipal police and fire stations or libraries. As the list of donation sites continues to grow, an updated list will be found at the following website: <http://www.miamidade.gov/oem/haiti-municip-drop-off.asp> by calling Miami-Dade County's 311 Answer Center (also accessible by calling 305-468-5900 – for TDD service, the phone number is 305-468-5402) or calling the participating municipalities. Miami-Dade County has partnered with Food for the Poor (website: <http://www.foodforthepeople.org>), Project Medishare for Haiti, and the Miami Heat to provide transportation and distribution in Haiti of the donated goods.

In Greater South Dade, the municipal locations accepting donations are as follows: Village of Pinecrest Police Department (12645 Pinecrest Parkway, Pinecrest, Florida 33156, twenty four hours a day - seven days a week), Miami-Dade County Police Department Village of Palmetto Bay Policing Unit (8950 South West 152nd Street, Palmetto Bay, Florida 33157, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Monday to Friday), and City of Florida City Police Department (900 North West 6th Avenue, Florida City, Florida 33034, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. – seven days a week).

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa is serving as the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners' liaison coordinating earthquake relief efforts with local, state, and federal government officials, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, colleges and universities, and chambers of commerce in Miami-Dade County.

Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan is coordinating earthquake relief efforts with African-American and Haitian-American churches on behalf of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners. She will be hosting three meetings that pastors are invited to attend to coordinate donations with Miami-Dade County. In South Dade a meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 3rd at 6:30 p.m. in the South Dade Government Center Conference Room, Suite 203 (the street address is the same as for Mayor Alvarez's South Dade Office).

The White House has a website with a considerable amount of information on matters pertaining to the federal government's efforts in matters pertaining to the earthquake in Haiti (http://www.whitehouse.gov/haitiearthquake_embed). The website includes a video speech by former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush for the Bush Clinton Haiti Fund <http://ClintonBushHaitiFund.org> that President Barack Obama appointed them to head (the latter website's media center - <http://clintonbushhaitifund.org/media.php> has press releases and videos pertaining to the Fund's efforts), White House press releases, as well as links to various United States federal agencies involved in the earthquake relief efforts. Those agencies include: the U.S. Agency for International Development (U.S.A.I.D) (<http://www.usaid.gov> - on the main website there is a link to the following U.S.A.I.D website <http://www.usaid.gov/helphaiti>), the U.S. Department of State (<http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ha/earthquake/index.htm> E-mail: Haiti-Earthquake@state.gov Phone: 1-888-407-4747) -- U.S. Embassy in Haiti, its English language version <http://haiti.usembassy.gov> and its Kreyòl language version <http://haiti.usembassy.gov/creole-index.html> U.S. citizens in Haiti can contact the U.S. Embassy via email ACSPaP@state.gov to request assistance or they can call the Embassy's Consular Task Force at the following phone numbers: 509-2229-8942, 509-2229-8089, 509-2229-8322, or 509-2229-8672), the U.S. Department of Defense (http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0110_haiti/), and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (<http://www.dhs.gov/journal/theblog/2010/01/haiti-how-you-can-help.html>

Haitian citizens in the United States can contact the Haitian Embassy in Washington, DC (Phone: 202-332-4090) or the Haitian Consulate in Miami (Phone: 305-859-2003).

United States citizens with pending adoption cases in Haiti are requested to contact the U.S. Department of State at the following e-mail address: AskCI@state.gov for information about their adoption case. Inquiries are to include: full name and contact information of parents, full name(s) of child(ren), date(s) of birth of child(ren) (if known), and the name and contact information of orphanage. Additional information about adoptions in Haiti can be found at the following website: <http://adoption.state.gov/news/Haiti.html#> The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is encouraging United States citizens with pending adoption cases in Haiti to send detailed information about their cases to the following e-mail address: HaitianAdoptions@dhs.gov The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has organizations in place that are certified and ready to handle the adoption process. Florida Department of Children and Families Circuit 11 (Miami-Dade County) Administrator Gilda Ferradaz, Circuit Administrator (Phone: 305-349-1495) can be contacted for information in reference to the Unaccompanied Alien Children Program, Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, or the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

The U.S. Department of State Office of the Spokesman, Washington, DC, has posted a press release dated January 26, 2010 regarding Haitian orphans who prior to the earthquake were in the process of being adopted. The statement "Departure of Haitian Orphans Covered By Humanitarian Parole" can be found at the following website: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/01/135877.htm> Due to its importance, and to serve the residents of South Dade, the press release has also been copied and pasted in this update in its entirety:

"U.S. and Haitian government officials have met to discuss and establish a transparent and orderly procedure for securing departure approval for children already in the adoption process before the January 12 earthquake. This follows a January 22 Government of Haiti announcement of new procedures to protect children leaving the country, including those orphans eligible and already approved for humanitarian parole into the United States. Under the new requirement, the Government of Haiti must approve every child's departure from the country. The United States is seeking to expedite the departure of children approved for humanitarian parole so they may be

united with their U.S. adoptive parents. The decision to permit the departure of children before the full and final completion of adoptions is a serious matter. Both the Haitian and U.S. governments must confirm that each child is appropriately authorized for travel. In the aftermath of a crisis such as the Haiti earthquake, children are especially vulnerable; and there is increased potential for abuse of, and trafficking in, children. The United States remains committed to working with the Government of Haiti to implement safeguards to protect children and their families in Haiti. We appreciate the concerns that prospective adoptive parents have for the health and welfare of the children they are adopting, and their eagerness to receive their children in the United States as quickly as possible. We are confident that an approval procedure soon will be announced that ensures the expeditious departure of children who qualify for humanitarian parole. To date, humanitarian parole has been granted to almost 500 Haitian orphans in the process of being adopted, several hundred of whom are now in the United States.”

Individuals interested in providing assistance or expertise in Haiti can contact the Center for International Disaster Information. The Washington, DC based agency receives its funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. It has a website pertaining to Haiti earthquake relief efforts (<http://www.cidi.org/incident/haiti-10a/>). It can also be contacted at the following telephone number: (703) 276-1914.

Information about Homestead Air Reserve Base's role in the Haiti earthquake relief efforts can be found at its website: <http://www.homestead.afrc.af.mil> Homestead Air Reserve Base is home to the U.S. Air Force Reserve Command's 482nd Fighter Wing commanded by Brigadier General William Binger, U.S. Special Operations Command South commanded by U.S. Army Brigadier General Hector Pagan, and the U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team Miami commanded by Lieutenant Commander Bryan Clappitt.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has issued an alert to all individuals wanting to donate to the disaster relief effort to be cautious of solicitations for donations. It has a press release dated January 13, 2010 "Haitian Earthquake Relief Fraud Alert" available at the following website: <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel10/earthquake011310.htm>

The Miami Dade County Department of Emergency Management website <http://www.miamidade.gov/oem/haiti.asp> contains information about the situation in Haiti, including relief efforts. There is a kreyòl version of the website (http://www.miamidade.gov/oem/haiti_creole.asp) County residents can also call Miami-Dade County's 311 Answer Center. Its hours of operation are: Monday through Friday, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed on Sundays and Holidays.

Mayor Alvarez is encouraging Miami-Dade County employees to take an active part in the County's relief efforts offering suggestions such as hosting the County's Haiti Relief website (<http://www.miamidade.gov/oem/haiti.asp>) on their Facebook pages and encouraging their friends to do the same. Miami-Dade County is establishing a "Haitian Earthquake Relief Fund" for employees to donate holiday and annual time to assist their fellow employees with family members in Haiti. Per Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners resolution, the Miami-Dade County Finance Department has created an "Emergency Disaster Relief" fund in order to collect employee donations. As of January 31st, 2010, more than \$60,000 has been collected.

The Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners on January 14th passed a resolution pertaining to the Haiti earthquake relief efforts. The resolution includes: A venue for County employees to donate earned annual or holiday time to the American Red Cross, Catholic Charities or Food for the Poor. A temporary waiver or discount vessel and/or cargo charges for cargo constituting humanitarian relief and supplies bound for Haiti from the Port of Miami. On January 14th, the Board of County Commissioners also donated \$60,000 to the relief efforts – Commissioners voted for the Office of Chairman Dennis C. Moss to donate \$25,000 to Food for the Poor, \$25,000 to the American Red Cross, with Commissioner Katy Sorenson donating \$5,000 to the American Red Cross and \$5,000 to Doctors Without Borders.

Miami-Dade County's Port of Miami and its partners are cooperating in the Haiti earthquake relief efforts. It is partnering with Friend Ships Unlimited and Peace for Haiti, to provide humanitarian assistance to the earthquake victims using the Friend Ship vessel, Integrity. Individuals who are members of the International Longshoremen's Association have also agreed to donate their time in loading the humanitarian aid. The Port of Miami's largest container carrier, Seaboard Marine, Ltd., is working with established United States governmental and international relief agencies. A.P. Moller-Maersk has donated equipment to the United Nations to help return Haiti's ports to working order. A.P. Moller-Maersk Terminals Miami staff members have been made available to the United Nations World Food Programme (website pertaining to its Haiti relief efforts: <http://www.wfp.org/crisis/haiti>), which is coordinating international relief efforts for Haiti. Miami has been designated as a back-up hub for the United Nations World Food Programme Haitian relief operations. A.P. Moller-Maersk Terminals has begun to locate warehouse space in the Miami area to serve as logistics centers for the United Nations agency. Without charge, it will also provide terminal operations, including loading of relief and other related containerized equipment, will be provided to the United Nations agency. The Port of Miami's largest cruise lines Carnival Corporation, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd., and Norwegian Cruise Lines, are providing Haiti with millions of dollars of humanitarian aid and relief. From the Port of Miami they are also providing assistance in the transportation of relief supplies.

In partnership with the cities of Homestead and Florida City, Miami-Dade County has established a Haiti Information Center at the Minor League Club House, Homestead Sports Complex, 1601 South East 28th Avenue, Homestead (Phone: 305-257-6917). Its daily hours of operations are 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Center provides access to information and computers with internet access and telephone lines with toll-free long distance service to Haiti (provided by AT&T).

The Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services has a Haiti Information Center at the Edison Little River Neighborhood Center located at 150 North West 79th Street, Miami (Phone: 305-795-1552). Its weekday hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Translators, kreyòl speaking social workers, crisis/grief counselors are on site. Bulletin boards have been set up for residents providing both information and the ability to post pictures of missing relatives. The facility has telephone lines where persons can call for information about family members in Haiti. Ten telephones with free long distance service to Haiti (provided by Comcast). There are also two computers available for with internet access to social networking and news sites. By way of the Department's Elderly Bureau, donated calling cards are available, for clients that do not have the means to place calls to Haiti, in order to check on the welfare of family, and are physically unable to visit the facility.

The Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services also has a Haiti Information Center at The Haitian American Senior Center, 5080 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami (Phone: 305-758-3561). It provides Internet access to social networking and news sites, as well as telephone lines with long distance service to Haiti (provided by AT&T). Its weekday hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. By way of the Department's Elderly Bureau, donated calling cards are available, for clients that do not have the means to place calls to Haiti, in order to check on the welfare of family, and are physically unable to visit the facility.

Florida Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces 1 (Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Department) and 2 (multiple South Florida Fire Departments) returned to South Florida on January 25th, 2010. The Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Department has a website (http://www.miamidade.gov/mdfr/photogallery/haiti_rescue-1.asp) with photographs of its efforts in Haiti.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has launched a Family Links Website (<http://www.icrc.org/familylinks>) aimed at enabling persons in Haiti and abroad to register the names of relatives with whom they are striving to restore contact. It will progressively incorporate information offering responses to those queries.

Donations in the form of checks can be sent to American Red Cross, PO Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Donations can also be done by phone at 1-800-REDCROSS. They can also be done via personal cell phone text message, texting the word HAITI to the number 90999 to donate \$10 to the Red Cross relief efforts. It will show up on your phone bill. Donations can also be made online at the American Red Cross website (<http://www.redcross.org/>).

Donors should designate their gift to AP 2885 Haiti Relief and Development. The American Red Cross South Florida Region has more information at the following website: <http://www.miamiredcross.org/whats-happening/11-whats-happening/71-help-haiti-now.html>

The Switchboard of Miami, Inc. (website: <http://switchboardmiami.org/>) is available to assist persons expressing stress, frustration and/or depression due to the emergency in Haiti. Clients, volunteers and staff can call 305-358-HELP (4357) or 2-1-1; the calls are confidential.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has set up a website (<http://helphaiti.dadeschools.net/>) for information as to its relief efforts, as well as an e-mail address: (helpHaiti@dadeschools.net). It has also set up an information line (Phone: 305-995-3000) for persons with questions regarding assistance. It is operational daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Carlos Alvarez's South Dade Office continues to be firmly committed to assist Ms. Nadia Pierre, the Mayor's Haitian-American Community Liaison, in matters pertaining to the relief efforts in South Dade. It is my hope that this update is helpful to you and the residents of the Village of Palmetto Bay.

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