

Official Who Oversaw Migrant Children Shelters Switching Jobs

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The head of the government office charged with sheltering children who were separated from their parents after being brought into the U.S. is leaving that post to work with religious groups, the Health and Human Services Department said.

Scott Lloyd, who headed the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement, moved Monday to become a senior adviser in the agency's Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives, the department said in a statement. In his role at the resettlement office, Lloyd had been the public face of the HHS part in the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" policy that led to children being separated from their parents at the southern U.S. border.

Lloyd, in a statement, said he will help "develop bold ideas on how communities and faith-based entities can play a central role in successfully achieving the Secretary's priorities."

"While I have valued my time at the Office of Refugee Resettlement, I am excited to take on this new challenge. I am grateful to Assistant Secretary Johnson and the incredible people at ORR and the Administration for Children and Families, and I am proud of what we have accomplished together," Lloyd said.

Jonathan Hayes, Lloyd's chief of staff, will become the acting director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, an HHS spokesperson said in an emailed statement to Bloomberg Government.

'Into a Backwater'

The move came as the nominee to lead U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement confirmed the Trump administration is [considering](#) a policy to ask undocumented parents crossing the U.S. border with children to choose between keeping their children with them in detention while potentially waiting years for an immigration trial or handing them over to government shelters or possible guardians in the U.S.

While the HHS declined to specify the reason for Lloyd's departure, immigration debate observers said it had been expected because of the problems he faced leading the office under the family separation policy.

"It sure seems like a way of getting him somewhere where he can't hurt anybody," Scott Shuchart, a senior immigration fellow with the Democrat-aligned Center for American Progress, said in an interview.

Lloyd will report to Shannon Royce, the director of the center, in this new position. “It’s obviously a demotion or a transfer into a backwater from a position that was pretty important,” Shuchart said.

“The damage Scott Lloyd inflicted on the people he was charged to protect, and to the agency itself, will not be easily erased,” Brigitte Amiri, deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union’s Reproductive Freedom Project, said in a statement.

Lloyd also worked to prevent several undocumented teens from getting abortions, which led to the ACLU fighting in court to stop the policy.

Lloyd “abused his position of power to try to coerce pregnant minors to carry unwanted pregnancies to term by trying to prevent those who wished to pursue their constitutional right to abortion from leaving the shelter,” Amiri added.

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