



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BUREAU OF REHABILITATION SERVICES
25 SIGOURNEY STREET • 11TH FLOOR, HARTFORD, CT 06106-5033

April 1, 2009
For Immediate Release

BRS Receives Stimulus Funding for VR & IL

The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), at the Department of Social Services (DSS), has been granted \$2.8 million in stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. These funds are allocated for vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs under Title 1, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act. This funding enables state vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs to develop innovative strategies to improve employment outcomes for Connecticut residents with disabilities.

BRS received \$1.4 million April 1 of the ARRA funds. The second half of the award will be made September 30, 2009 upon approval of accountability and reporting requirements.

BRS will collaborate with the Board of Education Services for the Blind (BESB), which received \$500,000 dollars in ARRA funds, and with the Department of Labor (DOL), which received \$4.4 million for employment services. This joint collaboration will enable BESB, BRS and DOL to expand employment services to traditionally underserved and un-served populations, students with disabilities transitioning from school to work and improve overall VR services. Although BRS & BESB are in the initial planning stage of this collaboration, one immediate goal is to educate employers who have fears or misconstrued beliefs about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.

If you are an employer interested in learning how stimulus funds may help you hire people with disabilities, please call BRS at 800-537-2549 or 860-424 5622 for more details.

BRS also received ARRA funds for Independent Living (IL) programs under Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B and Chapter 2 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. This funding will enable IL programs to maximize the integration and full inclusion of Connecticut residents with disabilities into the community.

IL ARRA funds generate from three authorities: \$18,200,000 under State IL Grants; \$34,300,000 under Independent Living Service to Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB); and \$87,500,000 under the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) Program. The total amount was awarded April 1. ARRA funding from the CIL Program will be provided directly to Connecticut's five centers for independent living.

ARRA funds are designed to help develop or support short-term projects that will result in long-term benefits, rather than be invested in projects that will require ongoing financial support. All ARRA funds must be obligated by September 30, 2011. Use of these funds will be tracked and reported to ensure adherence to the purpose and requirements for the use of these stimulus funds.

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