

DSS/ARRA Second Quarter Summary

Background

The Department of Social Services is the Connecticut state agency charged with implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for programs that support a broad range of services to the elderly, persons with disabilities, families, and individuals who need assistance in maintaining or achieving their full potential for self-direction, self-reliance and independent living.

ARRA funds continue to be used to provide Weatherization, additional services to the residents of CT through the Community Service Block Grant, Emergency Shelter Grants for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing, Commodity Assistance through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Child Care Assistance, and Elderly Nutrition and Community Services Employment for Older Americans (Titles III and V of the Older Americans Act).

ARRA monies entrusted to the Connecticut Department of Social Services were received from the federal agencies below:

- Department of Health and Human Services;
- Department of Agriculture;
- Department of Education;
- Department of Energy;
- Department of Housing and Urban Development;

Program and Reporting Guidelines

In addition to the provision of ARRA enhanced services, DSS must ensure that funds are used according to federal guidelines and must report on its activities and the activities of its sub-grantees. Funds must be kept separate and not commingled with other funding sources. Reporting requirements are stringent and must be transparent. Documents and communications related to activities performed by DSS and its sub-grantees are housed on the agency website.

The distribution of funds in the state was conducted with public input, according to federal guidelines, and to insure equitable access to services.

Programs and Activities

With the program structures now in place to deliver services, the second quarterly period has been dedicated to the delivery of programs. Included in the narrative are updates on the activities to date by program.

Below is summary data of the ARRA funded programs:

Fast Facts - What Has The ARRA Money Accomplished To Date

- **Weatherization (Wx)** ARRA Supplemental Funding for the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is designed to reduce energy costs for low-income families, particularly for the elderly, people with disabilities, and children, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes while ensuring their health and safety.
 - 100.35* jobs have been created.
 - 2598 units have been weatherized. This number includes 171 state financed elderly housing units weatherized through the DECD pilot project in Northwest CT during December through February.
 - DSS has allocated training responsibilities to the Office for Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), and Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs). Approximately 212 people have received training for the ARRA WAP program.
- **Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing (HPRP)** The goal of the HPR is to provide financial assistance and services to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless or to rehouse/stabilize those who have already become homeless.
 - 32.71* jobs have been created to date.
 - 2-1-1 made 3618 referrals statewide.
 - 8116 total eligibility screens have been completed; 4833 of those screens were family screens.
 - 4256 clients have been served through HPRP; 3273 of whom have been served through prevention and 983 served through rapid re-housing.
- **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)** ARRA Supplemental Funding for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Program allocates funds to a network of eligible entities to support employment related services which create and sustain economic growth.
 - Among the funded projects are employment and minority small business development training, job skills training, foreclosure prevention, housing services, financial literacy training, emergency services, youth services, community engagement, partnership development, capacity building, strategic

planning, case management, health outreach and education, transportation services, community gardening, poverty reduction project development, food pantry services, adult basic education, fatherhood services.

- There have been 152.48* jobs created to date.
- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** DSS contracts with Connecticut Food Bank, Inc. and Foodshare, Inc. to distribute United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodities to eligible food banks, food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens that serve meals and provide household distribution. These commodities include items such as canned vegetables, fruits, meat, cereals, etc. \$298,875 in ARRA funding is in place to pay for administrative costs associated with the distribution of food commodities such as trucks and a forklift.
 - The State of Connecticut Department of Social Services received funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to pay costs associated with the distribution of USDA foods donated for use in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Such costs include storage, transportation, handling, processing and distribution of food.
 - To date, the State of Connecticut has awarded contracts to Foodshare, Inc. and Connecticut Food Bank, Inc. that administer the program at a local level. Foodshare, Inc. has purchased a forklift and repaired equipment needed for the movement of food in the warehouse. CT Food Bank, Inc. has purchased 3 vehicles to expand their service area and hired one full-time driver.
- **Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF):** ARRA Supplemental Funding for Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides child care financial assistance to low-income working families and fund activities to improve the quality of child care. In addition, approval has been made to support one-time funding of programs in the child-care system:
 - The number of jobs retained by families that received child care vouchers paid for by ARRA CCDF funds equals 12,260 during the grant award period. In addition the number of jobs retained by child care providers that received subsidies from ARRA funding is estimated to equal 4,715 jobs.
 - \$200,612 in funding to train additional caregivers as currently administered by the Statewide Accreditation Facilitation Project.
 - \$150,000 for the development of direct deposit, pre-filled redetermination and electronic invoicing capabilities for the caregivers who receive funds directly from the Care 4 Kids (C4K) child care assistance program.

- \$60,000 to develop a statewide Emergency Preparedness Plan for early care providers, \$302,188 for training, scholarship assistance and accreditation support services.
- \$300,000 to enhance electronic monitoring and compliance systems to assist with regulation by the Department of Health.
- \$100,000 to develop a statewide web-based reporting system at DSS.
- \$475,000 to have all playgrounds at licensed child care centers fully inspected by certified playground inspectors and to provide grants/vouchers to procure materials and equipment necessary for playground safety enhancements.
- \$198,790 for consultation services for caregivers and to support the implementation of the Competency Guidelines for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health Training for infant-toddler providers.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Program:** Assist in operating statewide comprehensive, coordinated, effective, efficient and accountable programs of vocational rehabilitation services, which are an integral part of a statewide workforce investment system; and designed to assess, plan, develop and provide vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities, consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice, so that such individuals may prepare and engage in gainful employment.
 - 7 jobs have been created with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, 6 of which are direct service.
 - 144 BRS consumers have been reported to secure permanent jobs.
 - 136 BRS consumers have been placed in temporary jobs.
 - 72 BRS consumers have been placed in the on-the-job training programs; 50 have retained jobs as a result of these efforts through BRS.
- **Elderly Nutrition Services:** ARRA provided funding for Home-Delivered Nutrition Services. Established in 1978 under the Older Americans Act, the program provides meals to seniors who are homebound. Home-delivered meals help seniors to maintain their health and avoid hospitalization and nursing home placement.
 - 36,482 meals were served to date.
 - Weekend, holiday and emergency meals were reinstated in one region.
 - Color labeling of meals (date/contents) were implemented; cold meals were also labeled based on diet type.

- Dietitians provided counseling to home delivered meal participants.
 - ARRA funds were used to provide additional shelf stable meals for participants during winter snow storms and provide support for additional volunteers during that time.
 - 2.23* jobs created. One full-time and one part-time home delivered meal drivers and a dietitian.
- **Congregate Meals:** ARRA provided funding for Congregate Nutrition Services. Established in 1972 under the Older Americans Act, the program provides meals to older Americans in congregate facilities such as senior centers, adult day centers, and faith-based settings.
 - 37,185 congregate meals have been served to date as a result of ARRA funding.
 - In one region a site is being piloted by a local university which includes interaction with students as well as lectures by professors. In another region, a new meal site with culturally-tailored meals was opened with one expanded to serve new participants. In a third region, two restaurant sites opened and one senior center has culinary staff providing lunch.
 - 6.28* jobs were created, including one full-time and two part-time site managers, four part-time data entry staff (separate regions) and two outreach specialists.
 - 5.79* sub-recipient jobs created and retained.
- **Senior Community Service Employment Activities Program:** To provide the core services of the Senior Community Service Employment Program to 25 additional low-income seniors seeking job skills training and job development services to secure employment upon completion of the program.
 - Job skills training, job development and supportive services are being provided to a total of 41 program participants. Training has includes courses in health care and computers. To date, 3 program participants have received unsubsidized employment as a result of their participation in Connecticut's ARRA SCSEP services.
- **Federal Medical Assistance (FMAP):** Medicaid is a federal/state partnership program that provides health benefits to certain low-income Americans. FMAP provides funding by percentages based on the state's relative wealth. Prior to the Recovery Act, Connecticut received 50% reimbursement from the Federal government for Medicaid. The Recovery Act provided an increase to the Federal

match for the recovery period (from October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2010). The amount of increase is based upon the most recent unemployment rate compared to the lowest base rate for the period from January 1, 2006 through February 28, 2009. The increased Federal matching rate for the first three quarters of the recovery period ending June 30, 2009 was 60.19 percent. This rate increased on July 1, 2009 to 61.59 percent. The Federal match is deposited to General Fund revenue in Connecticut.

- \$403.3 million in ARRA funding drawn down during SFY 2009.
- An additional \$834,395 drawn down for FMAP – Money Follows the Person to expand the availability of community-based long-term care services and supports, encourage consumer choice and reduce the reliance on institutional settings.

**An FTE is a Full-Time Equivalent, calculated by adding all hours worked within a program, and then dividing by number of hours in a full-time schedule.*

3rd Quarter ARRA-Calculated FTEs

