

NEWS

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Illinois Department of Human Services

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USDA Awards Grant to Illinois' JTED-SNAP Employment & Training Grant *Program helps participants find jobs and promotes business growth*

CHICAGO, Illinois – Illinois has been selected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to receive a \$21.9 million grant to develop and test a robust Employment and Training Program that will assist Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants to find jobs with local businesses and work toward self-sufficiency, IDHS' Acting Secretary Gregory Bassi announced today.

The JTED-SNAP Pilot Employment and Training Program is a collaborative partnership of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) SNAP Employment and Training Program (SNAP E&T) and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) Program. This initiative addresses the needs of underemployed and unemployed SNAP participants in Illinois who require basic and technical skills and work experience to get good jobs, increase earnings, and reduce reliance on public assistance.

“The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program helps eligible low-income families put food on the table and supports critical employment skills and job training so that people can become economically self-sufficient. The SNAP Employment and Training pilot project award will help USDA and Illinois identify cost-effective strategies to connect even more SNAP participants to gainful employment,” said USDA Food and Nutrition Service Regional Administrator Tim English.

One in six Illinoisans—more than 2 million people—currently receives food assistance through SNAP (formerly the Food Stamp Program). IDHS' SNAP E&T Program helps participants to improve work skills and assists with job placement.

“This grant will help participants on their journey to independence,” said IDHS Acting Secretary Gregory Bassi. “The funds of this grant will allow participants to seek employment and training opportunities. We hope that this program can serve as a launching point for broader engagement of SNAP participants as we support them in their movement toward self-sufficiency.”

The program utilizes placement through grants to non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) in partnership with local businesses to provide training to program participants to meet the workforce skills needed in each program area.

“A better trained workforce fosters economic development,” said DCEO Acting Director Jim Schultz. “We will continue our partnership with community-based organizations and other vendors to link unemployed or underemployed individuals with the workforce needs of local industry.”

The new program begins October 1. For more information about the program, please visit <http://www2.illinoisworknet.com/JTED-SNAP>.

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