

SURVIVAL NEWS

Volume 23, Number 1

...the voices of low-income women

The assembly to abolish poverty



USSF, Poverty Summit, June 22, 2010. Top photos by Dottie Stevens

Which Way Welfare Rights

By Maureen Taylor, MSW

State Chairperson, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization

Many members of the National Welfare Rights Union were able to attend the recent U.S. Social Forum held in Detroit, hosted by four local organizations, including Michigan Welfare Rights. The theme of this second Social Forum was: Another World Is Possible; Another America is Necessary; Another Detroit Is Underway, and it was a great event according to the 22,000 plus who attended.

Members of Welfare Rights have to undergo an internal evaluation and arrive at an analysis...Which Way Welfare Rights. Certain objective conditions have changed the landscape of the American economy permanently, making it necessary to review what the future holds for our Organization over the next one year, the next five years, and the next ten years.

It was clearly stated at several workshops during the Social Forum that a change had come to the land that was irreversible. It was precisely because of the position Detroit holds as one of the leading manufacturing sites in the world, that the Social Forum came to this city in an effort to more closely look at Detroit and try to understand what happened here. Rising unemployment; rising homelessness; rising tax foreclosures; massive hospital closings; massive school closings; all the signs that indicate a community that is managing are under attack. We can list the names of the automobile factories that dotted the metro-Detroit terrain where cars were built for the world. Dodge Main, Huber Avenue Foundry, Lynch Road

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Resolution of the Poverty Summit, United States Social Forum June 2010

We are clear that poverty is not the result of personal failures. It is the product of an economic system that increases and deepens poverty as it concentrates the abundance of this country and the world in the hands of the few. Those who control that system, with governments acting as their agents, have shredded even the "safety net" that historically met some basic human needs. They have abandoned those they no longer need. They have created a growing class of dispossessed. We are conscious members of that class.

Through our groups and organizations, we have fought for decades for reforms. It is clear to us now that our efforts have been, and continue to be, necessary--but not sufficient. We are clear that we must unite as never before to demand that the abundance of this country be used to meet the basic human needs of its people--no exceptions.

We commit to that unity. As a first step, we hereby create an **Assembly to End Poverty** through which we can share our knowledge and skills, support each other, educate and engage our neighbors and friends, and act democratically and collectively to press our demands and secure our claims to economic justice.

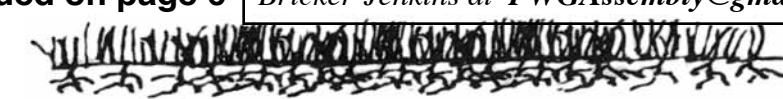
To implement this call concretely, we charge the USSF Poverty Working Group to draft a constitution for the Assembly to End Poverty to be presented to us for deliberation and ratification within three months. And we commit to act collectively in our local communities through our groups and organizations on a national day of action to be proposed with that constitution.

Finally, we commit to return to our communities with the clarity that we are dispossessed but not defeated, that we have a just claim to the abundance we have produced, and that we must--and can--take back our country and governments to live responsibly and respectfully on this planet with all the world's peoples.

Contact Co-presidents Marian Kramer & Mary Bricker-Jenkins at PWGAssembly@gmail.com

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*Since you asked: The grassroots running on the bottom of our pages were created by our editor, Claire Cummings. If you look closely you can see that the roots represent people on the move!



TANF Reauthorization Postponed; Activists Organize

By Betty Reid Mandell

The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which created TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), had an expiration date of October 1, 2002. By then—five years after states were required to have new welfare policies in place—Congress was supposed to decide whether to reauthorize the existing law or replace it. Congress had extended the law several times, but the reauthorization effort became trapped in a political tug of war between Republicans (who wanted tougher work requirements added to the law) and Democrats (who wanted increased federal money for child care). Grassroots welfare activists were in the odd position of fighting to keep the existing law, which they don't like, because they feared that a new law would be worse. TANF was extended until April 2005 without changes. It was reauthorized in that year as the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, which contained stricter work requirements. The law was due to be reauthorized again by October 2010, but Congress postponed full reauthorization until September 30, 2011.

The TANF Contingency Fund was part of the welfare law to help states respond to increased need during hard economic times, but legislation was passed in 2010 that will essentially end funding for the Contingency Fund for fiscal year 2011. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (also called the stimulus bill) allocated \$5 billion to a new Emergency Fund under the TANF block grant, which provided 80 percent reimbursement for increases in TANF-related expenditures in three specified areas, including subsidized employment. States used these funds to support a range of subsidized jobs programs, including transitional jobs, summer jobs, programs for youth in low-income families, and supported work models for individuals with disabilities in low-income families. These programs were not limited to workers in families receiving TANF. If the state didn't make the necessary spending, it didn't get the money. Some state legislatures said they didn't have the money to pay the 20 percent matching funds. This fund was not renewed in 2010.

When the TANF Emergency Fund expired on September 30, 2010, tens of thousands of people lost subsidized jobs supported by the fund.

Welfare rights activists are organizing to try to get a more humane law when it is reauthorized. The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means held a hearing on education and training in TANF on April 22, 2010. Some of the organizations that testified are: CLASP (Center for Law and Social Policy), Center for Economic and Policy Research, Institute for Women's Policy Research, and Legal Momentum (The Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund).

Everyone except Lawrence Mead argued for expanding education and training

opportunities. Gwendolyn Mink, scholar and author of *Welfare's End*, made the most far-reaching proposals for change in TANF. Her proposals are as follows:

- Get rid of time limits.
- Broaden the definition of work. Guarantee academic and vocational freedom to all recipients who engage in work-related activities. Recipients should not be tracked into certain majors/training programs or prohibited from others based on the government's view of what field of study/training is appropriate.
- Broaden the definition of work to include a) education; b) caregiving for one's own children; c) substance abuse and mental health treatment activities; d) overcoming barriers and time constraints imposed by efforts to escape domestic violence.
- End mandatory cooperation with paternity establishment and child support enforcement for all custodial mothers—take it out of TANF altogether.
- Guarantee immediate access to TANF income assistance to those who are fleeing domestic violence.
- End immigrant exclusion.
- Restore and improve the child care guarantee for recipients who are engaged in labor market work activities (including preparation for the labor market).
- Increase TANF benefit levels to 150 percent of the federal poverty line and provide a transportation subsidy to any TANF participant who must travel more than 5 miles to a job. Continue TANF as a wage supplement for those who work part-time.
- Get rid of all surveillance of recipients. Fix/end barriers to participation in TANF, including diversion programs, discretionary application denials, arbitrary case closings, all sanctions.
- End marriage/fatherhood promotion with TANF.

Organizers agree that the first step toward getting a more humane law is to change attitudes toward the poor. Peter Edelman says,

We have been reduced to the politics of the waitress mom. She says, all too legitimately, "I bust my tail. I don't have decent child care. I don't have health coverage. Why should 'these people' get what I don't have?" Advocates say to this waitress, "You are right. You deserve to have a job that pays enough to support a family, and you deserve good child care and health coverage. Join us in working for these things for everybody."

As Gwendolyn Mink says, we do indeed need to end welfare—"but as poor mothers experience it, not as middle class moralizers imagine it." The means-tested AFDC/TANF program has always been stingy and punitive. The late British social welfare scholar Richard Titmuss said that programs for the poor are poor programs. Whatever programs we work for should be universal ones, inclusive of all people; otherwise they take on the stigma that is always directed at poor people. Examples of such universal programs are:

- A family allowance granted to every family with children;
- A guaranteed annual income for all citizens;
- Refundable tax credits for children;
- Individual Development Accounts for families and children, in which individuals save money in an account which is matched and can be used to accomplish life goals such as getting an education, buying a house, or starting a business. This program exists on a limited basis in a few localities.

We need to create a real safety net, including restoring entitlement to financial assistance, establishing a minimum level of cash assistance that is high enough to meet basic needs, and providing all benefits to immigrants, including undocumented immigrants.

We also need to work on improvements for all workers—an increase in the minimum wage, paid family leave, guaranteed child care, comparable worth policies, decent unemployment compensation, universal public health care, a full employment policy, investment in education and vocational training, and aggressive enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. As Gwendolyn Mink says, "This end to welfare will take us down many paths, all leading to gender justice."

Most Americans would not feel that welfare reform has been a success if people were still in poverty after leaving the welfare rolls. The public might be ready to support stronger job supports and removal of time limits that are forcing large numbers of people into poverty if they are better informed about the effects of welfare reform.



Betty Reid-Mandell at the DTA office.

Photo by Dottie Stevens



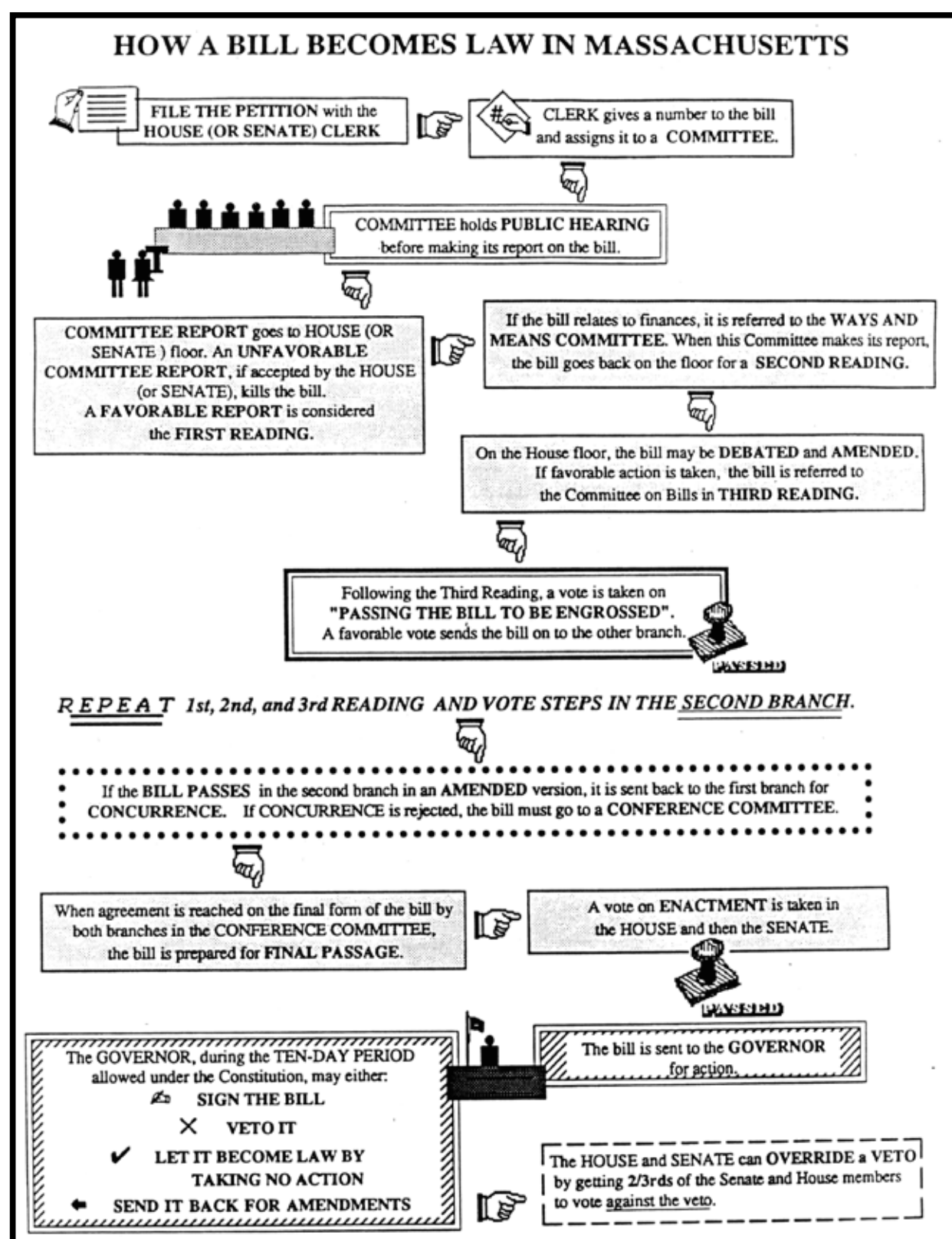
End Poverty – Not Community Action!

By Roxanne Reddington-Wilde

Community Action people were stunned when listening to President Obama deliver his annual State of the Union address to Congress on January 25th. In the name of fiscal responsibility, he said “I’ve proposed cuts to things I care deeply about, like community action programs” – the only program he mentioned. Just a few days before, the President had eulogized Sargent Shriver, the War on Poverty’s great champion and founder of the nation’s system of Community Action Agencies set up to fight for the poor. Soon, the White House confirmed the President’s intentions: halve the federal funding to community action agencies in 2012 and redirect the remaining \$350,000 away from these agencies. The White House wants to dismantle the 1100 anti-poverty agencies across the country.

What do Community Action Agencies do? All sorts of things – that’s their strength. They are local institutions which solve tough, local problems the community and their community-based board have identified. Boston’s Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), for example, operates 13 neighborhood service centers in low-income neighborhoods across the city. People in need come to get fuel assistance, apply for health insurance and food stamps, get their taxes done, receive job training, ESOL and Citizenship classes, help finding housing or fighting foreclosure, not to mention the food pantries, afterschool programs and many more services ABCD offers. This past year, ABCD served over 94,000 people. Over half live under the federal poverty line and all under 200% of it. These 13 neighborhood centers will close if the President has his way.

Across Massachusetts, Community Action Agencies do some similar work and some different. Most offer fuel assistance and help weatherize the homes people live in. Many run Head Starts and do free tax preparation. One helps teens learn how to build homes. Another helps people with AIDS find housing. Another does nursing home advocacy. Community Action works well, works locally and works for and with the poor. Using small amounts of federal, Community Action funds, they leverage



many more dollars to spend in and on their community.

Sargent Shriver once said that the War on Poverty is “noisy, visible, dirty, uncomfortable and sometimes politically unpopular.” Right now, it’s certainly unpopular in some key quarters of Washington, DC. So, we need to get noisy, be visible and make it very uncomfortable for our nation to turn its back on the poor!

What can you do: Visit www.CAPWorks.org and sign its on-line petition. Write from the website to the President as well as our elected officials and more! Tell President Obama that Community Action works!

Roxanne Reddington-Wilde, is a Community Organizer at ABCD. She started out working with Survivors' Inc. and others to oppose Welfare Reform and has continued to fight the war on poverty and end this war on the poor.

Paradise

by Mary Lou Ferro

We are like two peas
in a pod of poverty,
perplexed by the
powerful people.
Pounding
on our heads,
on our toes,
patiently,
awaiting....
paradise.

A Decade of Activism: Profile of Terri Hinton

By Laurie Taymor-Berry

In the year 2000, Terri Hinton was a single mom with two children ages eight and fourteen. Terri came to Survivors Inc. through her work as a Personal Care Attendant for Jeanne Dever. Jeanne, one of the founders of Survivors, Inc., took Terri under her wing and gave her a crash course in the struggles for human rights, especially for the poor and disabled. Through Jeanne, Terri came to know Dottie Stevens who inspired her to begin to venture out on her own as an advocate in the trenches of the welfare offices where she, too, had to deal, on many occasions, with the myriad of challenges to secure what she knew was rightfully hers.

Laurie—Tell me how you first became active with Survivors, Inc.

Terri—Dottie explained to me all about the mission of Survivors, Inc., how to advocate for low-income women and their children and all the information found in “Survival Tips” written in the pages of “Survival News”. I knew I wanted to get involved as an outreach worker at the welfare offices, so Dottie suggested that I spend some time with Ethel Nixon who could train me. Ethel gave me confidence. She was a strong, powerful black woman. I was amazed and awed by her ability to talk with women in order to empower them to advocate for their own welfare. She had wisdom, knowledge and power... she put herself on the line. This woman is dynamite, she knows her stuff. I also learned a great deal about organizing in the welfare offices from Betty Reid Mandell whose dedication to low-income women was tremendously inspiring.

Laurie—Were there other political mentors who inspired you?

Terri—Other board members, like you, Laurie, taught me how to navigate the statehouse and how to communicate with legislators and their aides so as not to be intimidated and yet not to overpower them with the indignation I was feeling. Diane Dujon pushed me to go out and do public speaking and with her encouragement, I had tremendous self-confidence. I came to know and work with many other women like Mary Moore, Grace Ross, Sharon Tetrault, Lenore Pereira. Frances Darden and Jill Stein. All these women inspired me to get more and more involved. I became the representative from Survivors, Inc. to the Low Income Welfare Organizing Collaborative (LIWOC) where I met Magalis Troncoso. She was



Terri Hinton of Survivors Inc. and Aaron Tanaka of the Boston Worker's Alliance protest bad prison policies at the Boston, Massachusetts State House. Photo by Dottie Stevens.

an organizer with La Vida Urbana/City Life, another organization that was part of LIWOC. We collaborated on organizing a number of forums, rallies and events to bring attention to the changes in federal welfare regulations which benefited low-income people who were not being informed about the changes. We also worked on eviction issues. She was a passionate speaker on behalf of the causes she championed. Over the years, I kept getting more and more involved and politically engaged through rallies, legislative advocacy, conferences and workshops. I felt myself becoming empowered organizing and marching with unions and organizations with similar missions as part of a larger grassroots movement dedicated to social and economic justice. Survivors, Inc. work laid the foundation for my work on behalf of CORI Reform. It was Dottie Stevens who steered me in the direction of Councilor Chuck Turner. Dottie had worked closely with Chuck when he was an Organizer with the Church of the United Community. I began participating in Chuck's District 7 round table discussions. I met people like Alicia X. Timothy Hicks, Tim Hall and Aaron Tanaka who was, at that time, an intern with Councilor Chuck Turner. We began to outreach to those who were unemployed and having a hard time finding a job due to having a criminal record. We organized rallies, marches and community meetings in Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan. Out of this work, the Boston Workers' Alliance evolved and took the lead in pushing for legislation to reform CORI. Because I believe that everyone deserves a second chance, I threw myself into the effort to bring about CORI Reform. A CORI can make it very hard, not only to get hired for a job, but make it difficult to get into public housing and obtain a student loan.

Laurie—I am so impressed by the leadership role you have taken on with the Boston Workers' Alliance. You have become one of the major spokespersons at all the rallies, marches and lobbying efforts on behalf of the Commonwealth CORI Coalition. Where do you find the time and energy to fight for CORI Reform, assist low-income women at the welfare office, take care of elderly, disabled family members, raise your two children and work as a personal care attendant?

Terri—By the grace of God... I believe in God so that I can continue to do this work. For me, it is spiritual work and it gives me the faith to carry it on.

Join Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless for the Coalition's Annual Legislative Action Day!

Wednesday, March 9th!

This year, your voice is critical in helping to protect housing, homelessness, and safety net programs from major budget cuts.

A morning session will be held at Suffolk University Law School, featuring an overview of the Coalition's policy priorities and a keynote address by activist and advocate Paul Boden of the Western Regional Advocacy Project (www.wraphome.org/pages/). In the afternoon, participants will be meeting with State Representatives and Senators at the State House, highlighting the need for continued support for key state-funded programs, such as Emergency Assistance for families and the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program.

For more information on how you can get involved or to register, please go to www.mahomeless.org or call Kelly at 781-595-7570 x17.



Donate to Survivors Inc. Visit www.communityroom.net and click on “Survivors, Inc”

Which way welfare rights?

continued from page 1...

Assembly, Rouge Complex, American Axle, Cadillac Assembly, Mack Stamping... these dinosaurs and many, many others that once ruled the manufacturing market are now just memories. This economy that saw the rise and set the future of production workers was central to Detroit, and created a world where families were able to thrive. Neighborhoods were built, futures were secured, children educated, and we saw beyond ourselves a world that had possibilities. The over-night change in production from automobiles to tanks and wartime implements saved America and the Allied forces in World War II. Things have now changed. Nearly the same number of cars are being manufactured, however, with less that 20% of the workers that used to be employed at these sites.

There is a direct relationship between employment, unemployment, and welfare. All three positions are part of what it is to be “working class” — sometimes we work, sometimes we are out of work, and sometimes we receive welfare benefits but we are always part of the working class. Being part of a class means a description of what roots you are tied to. There are two classes of people, and we are the dominant one yet we are often unaware of our power because we are convinced that corporate representatives are smarter and wiser than we are. Our futures are now at stake because of these basic changes that have occurred in the American economy.

Technology used to enhance labor, and make it easier and usually faster to mass produce things. Today, technology has replaced labor making the need for human hands obsolete. Markets for these manufactured goods were open so national and international shipments to foreign lands helped to keep workers working. Markets

are closing today, so the season for sending and selling goods and services abroad has ended as well. Now , what do we do?

Our lives are based on a structure of selling our ability to work. We get paid at a job; spend the salary we earn, run out of money, and return to work—a cycle that is common to working people. When the need for labor evaporates, we have to secure a different kind of future that insures the survival of ourselves, our children, our communities and our country—that is what is at stake today. Which Way Welfare Rights...

The call to the membership is simple... we have to have a conversation about what kind of an organization are we building to reach our primal goal—to eliminate poverty. In Michigan, we will be pursuing vigorous talks about who can join Welfare Rights in the present, and near future. In the past few years membership has been open to anyone who wanted to join regardless of their reasons. Membership from now on might need to be restricted to those who want to end poverty *and* want to organize toward that end. Welfare mothers and fathers who want to work to secure a better life for their children will be recruited and asked to become members so that we can quickly amass an army of organizers who can take the membership to the next level. If you don’t have a job, must one be pushed into hunger, homelessness, no healthcare, and no hope? This is the question every mother and father and child must face.

You get what you organize to take. The world has changed permanently, and it is up to us—members of that class which has NOTHING to lose—to discuss what the new world needs to look like, and how to get there!

Increase in Massachusetts Food Stamp Use

by Georgia Mattison

According to new census figures the overall poverty rate in the United States is 15.7% or 47.8 million people. Government aid programs such as Food Stamps have kept many people out of poverty. Without Food stamps the poverty rate would jump from 15.7% to 17.7%. (The Boston Globe, January 6, 2011). In 2011 the participation rate is 77.6%, the eighth in the nation. 7,970,237 people are receiving food stamps; 2,393,464 are not (United States Department of Agriculture).

But from 1997-1999 there was a 25% DECLINE in Food Stamp participation. Many welfare workers were mistakenly denying Food Stamps to people who were being quickly moved off welfare because they believed that they were no longer eligible. The Massachusetts participation rate was 48%, the 51st in the country.

In response in 1998 the Committee for Social Justice at Rosie’s Place met and considered many issues, looking for one that was not already covered by other advocacy groups thereby discovering that a separate group was needed to focus on the technical barriers to Food Stamps at the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA). Project Bread, the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, and Survivors, Inc. were all doing individual outreach to recipients who had trouble accessing Food Stamps. Eventually the Food Stamp Improvement Coalition included 160 groups from all over the commonwealth.

The Coalition surveyed all DTA offices and found that workers were not making sure that folks no longer eligible for welfare knew they were still eligible for Food Stamps. A special survey of SSI offices showed that workers were not automatically applying for Food Stamps for these disabled recipients. Most other



Artwork by Billy Brown

states with higher participation rates did not have these problems. Coalition members first met with key legislators and organizations in each legislative district; then met with the House and Senate leadership. Legislative staff could readily identify with access issues such as extended hours, especially for working families. This access message was clear and simple and focused. In three years the Coalition achieved access language in the permanent

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Debbie Ferretti, ARMS Coordinator at UMass/Boston, at Student Senate meeting advocating for Survivors Inc. Club. Photo by Dottie Stevens

Campus Corner

By Debbie Ferretti

The ARMS Center had a variety of events that were offered to both UMass Boston students and the community around us.

In September ARMS Center co sponsored by Survivors Inc. Club had a program, "Get to know your community." A representative from ABCD, Roxanne L. Reddington-Wilde, was kind enough to come and speak to individuals about the services they offer and how the students could apply for them.

A representative from Money Management, Julie Bresnick, also spoke about what students should be careful of not doing during the college years, what kind of student funding you should apply for and what ones to stay away from. Julie Bresnick also showed how to save money by bringing in coffee instead of stopping at Dunkin Donuts or bringing your lunch will help students have a few dollars in his / her pockets.

In October the ARMS held an event "Does Prison have to be a life Sentence?" The director of the Homeless Empowerment program, David Jefferson, came and spoke about how change is needed to help individuals be able to get back on his/her feet when returning from prison. There were two speakers who spoke about life experiences and how each of them was received when returning from prison in their communities. The Prison Book Program, had a speaker come, Daniel McCarey, who spoke about the importance of education in prisons if society expects an individual to change or mend his / her ways. Education is the key to a better future and how education was cheaper than keeping these individuals incarcerated. The ARMS Center had a book drive and donated 3 cases of books to the Prison Book Program book drive on November 6, 2010, which was valued at \$1,000.00.

On November, 2010 the Survivors Inc. Club had an Autumn Supper and the ARMS center donated \$75.00 for beverages. Over 200 students attended and all had a traditional holiday meal.

On December 6, 2010, the ARMS Center / Survivors Inc Club sponsored an event educating the UMass students how social justice is not equal after all of these years. Survivors, Inc. had several representatives who spoke on several issues we face in our communities today. Laurie Taymor-Berry educated us on what bills were being addressed on Beacon Hill. Lenore Pereira spoke about social issues that still have not been addressed. Diane Dujon covered Welfare Issues and how this is affecting our lives during these difficult times. Dottie Stevens spoke about the need to bring Human Rights Cities into Boston, Mass. Today Human Rights standards seem to be interpreted by each individual differently. Dottie Steven's informed us of how certain situations were handled totally different even though they were the same issue. Immokalee Farm Workers came and educated on us on how the differences are affecting the farm worker even today. You would think that the Cesar Chevaz victory

for farm worker rights would be applied today for the Immokalee Farm Worker, but this is not so. Connie Chow from the Science Club for Girls spoke about Women's Rights and even though we are celebrating the 90th Anniversary for equal rights of women there still is a battle being fought each day by women to have these rights recognized.

The students of UMass got to listen to a variety of issues he/she will be facing once they have completed their education at UMass. This semester the ARMS Center started by helping the students settle in to their new life styles, then educated them on the issues which all communities are facing today.

The ARMS Center became more aware of the growing student body that are in need of service and helped supply information of programs around their community that might make their adjustment to college easier: Free Food Programs, Two Dollar a bag, as well as food stamps and fuel assistance.

Next semester there will be two events in February. The first will be "Have a Heart", which will leave boxes around the campus so individuals can donate to the campus kitchen. The campus kitchen helps those who are unable to buy food. This event will encourage students to buy some food for someone they do not know instead of buying chocolate for Valentine's Day. The second part of Have a Heart will make students aware of the need to help homeless college students. Other colleges have started programs such as giving up a meal once a week to help a student get food. Money is donated and a student can get a card to receive a meal without everybody knowing. This allows a person to keep their dignity during their difficult time.

This is the ARMS Center checking out and if anyone would like to speak to us please contact 617-287-7169. Till later stay safe.

Making History & Opening Roads

4th Annual Latina Women's Conference — March 11, 2011

Contact: Dominican Development Center
(857) 719-9055 / magatroncoso@msn.com

A poster for the 4th Annual Latina Women's Conference. The poster features a green and white color scheme. At the top, it reads "INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY" and "DÍA INTERNACIONAL DE LA MUJER". Below this is a graphic of three women sitting under a tree, with the text "CONTINUAMOS..." and "HACIENDO HISTORIA Y ABRIENDO CAMINOS...". The main title "MAKING HISTORY AND OPENING ROADS" is prominently displayed. Below it, it says "IV ANNUAL LATINA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE" and "IV CONFERENCIA ANUAL DE MUJERES LATINAS". The dates "MARCH 11, 2011 (9AM - 2PM)" and "MARZO 11, 2011 (9AM-2PM)" are listed. The location "BOSTON STATE HOUSE - CASA ESTATAL DE BOSTON" is also mentioned. At the bottom, it says "HOSTED BY REP JEFFREY SANCHEZ". Contact information for the Dominican Development Center (DDC) is provided at the very bottom, including the phone number 857-719-9055 and the email magatroncoso@msn.com.



Donate to Survivors Inc. Visit www.communityroom.net and click on "Survivors, Inc"



You've been well cared for

By Betty Reid Mandell

I was sitting in the Homeless Unit of the Grove Hall Department of Transitional Assistance (welfare department) chatting with some women. One was living in a homeless shelter in Saugus, a town on the north shore of Massachusetts; the other was applying for shelter. They were ashamed to be here. They said that they had worked and held responsible jobs. Life had dealt them raw blows. One had to leave her job because of an injury to her spine which seemed to require endless treatment, and she didn't know when she could return to work. The other had various medical problems. She was infuriated because the DTA worker was "jerking her around." She had an appointment for 9, and it was now 11 and they still hadn't seen her.

They cared deeply about their children. The woman who lived in Saugus was driving her daughter to Boston every day so the child would not have to switch schools. I told her that a recent federal law requires the home school district to provide transportation from the shelter to the child's home school. I pointed to the sign on the wall that told about this and urged her to call the number.

The woman who was being "jerked around" said in a resigned voice, "It's all down hill when you get old. I'm 45 and I don't think things will get any better." I protested, "Come on, I'm 78 and I'm not going down hill. I'm still here fighting." The women were amazed. "You're 78?" they said. "You've been well cared for. We've been battered around all our lives."

I've been thinking about that a lot. I think the women were implying that I had been treated better in life because I am white, while prejudice and discrimination against African-Americans had given them harsher treatment than I had faced. Was that true? As a child, I didn't feel privileged. My father was one of the last homesteaders to get free land from the government, but he got the worst land — dry land in the prairies of Colorado where it seldom rained and the dust storms were so fierce that you literally couldn't see your hand in front of your face if you were outside, while the wind whipped sand through the cracks of the windows and doors. On a freezing winter day the car broke down coming home from the school, which was 7 miles away, and we froze our fingers and toes walking home for 2 miles.

My parents lived in constant dread of the bank foreclosing on the mortgage, and one day they held an auction to sell off cattle and machinery so they could pay the mortgage. We were eager to watch the auction, but my parents made us go to school so we would not witness their humiliation.

Still, we kept the farm and somehow all four of us children went to a public college where the tuition was cheap. My sister and I raised and sold prize 4-H steers and saved the money for college. I pumped gas at a filling station during World War II, helped with bookkeeping at the gas station, typed letters for a local cattle rancher, and when I went to college, had a work-study job and a scholarship. I paid for my graduate school by part-time secretarial jobs and stints as a group work leader at the YMHA and Community Church in New York City. I didn't mind working, even enjoyed much of it, but I never felt that I had a privileged life.

Yet as I thought about it, I did get better breaks in life because of my white skin. When I read the history of the Homesteading Act, I learned that African-Americans were discriminated against and didn't get even the poor land that my father got. The Mexican-

American children whose family came to town to pick sugar beets attended my school, but they had to leave because their family moved on to other migratory work when the beets were pulled. My family were permanent residents and I could stay in school.

When I went to Grange Hall dances, I noticed that the two sons of the only African-American farmer in our neighborhood stood on the sidelines and never asked any of the white girls to dance. I would have been shocked if they had asked me to dance, but I think I would have been pleased too because they were handsome and I had secretly wanted to get to know them. An unwritten community prejudice had kept us from getting to know one another. That was not privilege for me — that kept me from living as full a life as I could have.

At college I joined a sorority that I later discovered did not allow African-Americans to become members. I tried to resign, but was told that no one was allowed to resign. Their racism was mandatory!

The parents of one of my best friends in college were living in a Japanese-American concentration camp, having been put there during World War II. I gave speeches against the injustice, and I knew that my parents were never under suspicion of being spies because their skins were white.

I taught at a state college and since I retired I have lived on the state pension, as well as Social Security. Many African-Americans weren't covered by Social Security because it did not cover domestic workers or agricultural workers for many years. Even when they were covered, they often received less money because the work had paid so little.

I have had health problems too, but the state health benefit, combined with Medicare, pays for almost all of my medical care and I can choose any health care provider I wish. I can afford to pay for massages, acupuncture, and weight training classes, and to buy both prescription drugs and herbal medicine. I know that I am privileged in this compared to Medicaid recipients, who have a limited choice of doctors and cannot get all the services they need, and compared to people who work in low-wage jobs that don't provide health insurance.

So yes, I have been privileged. Those women in the DTA office asked why I came to the office and did this kind of work. I told them that I had been a social work professor at Bridgewater State College, and I believed in not only talking about my knowledge and beliefs, but acting on them. They commended me and said that it was good to stay active and involved. "It's sure better than sitting on the couch and clicking the remote."

I agreed. I am privileged to be able to use my knowledge to come to the DTA office and tell a homeless woman that she does not have to drive her child 20 miles to school and back every day, and that the school system is breaking the law if they don't pick the child up. I am privileged to know enough to go into a fair hearing with a woman and point out to the worker and the hearing officer that they are breaking the law by cutting off the woman's welfare benefits. I am privileged to help a woman apply for food stamps. And I am privileged to know the brave mothers who come to the DTA and keep their spirits up for the sake of their children.



Glad Tidings From Grandma by Karen Rock

A friend called over the holidays to wish me merry everything. He’s the kind of person you lose touch with when you’re living in poverty, raising three kids and doing welfare rights work. Thirty years ago, as his van sped out of my driveway, I was attempting to find bread bag #6 so all three children could play in the snow at the same time.



“Welfare Boots”

I thought he yelled “I’ll bring back the cocoa.” But now what I think he said was, “I’ll see you when your kids are grown.”



“I’ll bring back the cocoa”

Now thirty years later he’s pleased to find me, update me once in awhile on the latest home renovation or apartment acquisition and remind me he always thought my art work was good.

“Are you happy?” he asked me. “I asked you this last time I called and you didn’t truly answer.”

“Oh.” I said. “Let me think. I think in the course of the day I may be joyful, filled with grief, frustrated as people like to say now days when they’re angry and pounding around on something, also satisfied. Happy? I don’t think that’s what you’d call what I am. Like if you needed to call somebody who’s happy today, you probably shouldn’t have called me. I’m a bad bet as they say. In fact, I’m a bad bet on any day in terms of happy.”

He says, “Yeah, I call you there, either you’re sick or there’s something going on in your family, some kind of crisis.”

“Right, but I’m well balanced and realistic. I try to talk about paintings and writing and books I am reading or something I did that was fun, like my latest find at the survival center.” (I thought I should employ the “new spirit of cooperation”. I saw it on my daughter’s computer. Obama looking scared, tired and a decade older signing something Republicans looked delirious with joy about.)

I think he said something like, “we are now entering a new era or spirit of cooperation.” I figured I was entering it with him. I mean no matter what I thought about Bush, I entered the new era of paranoia and random bombing right alongside of him by giving up my dental care to pay for it. So, now I am going to be supporting the 7 richest families in America because they are getting tax breaks for 5 more years. And the don’t ask, don’t tell thing is repealed. I feel so cooperative I could pee myself. And bless my bisexual soul I cannot see how it has any relevance to tax breaks for the rich. But Associated Press ran it as a sub headline right underneath the breaking news of the signing of a bill that included tax breaks for the rich and employment deals that were disappointing but hard fought for etc.

Ironically Associated Press had called a few weeks before my old buddy Gypsy Dan had. They had called because the first caller had read me a questionnaire about where cuts should be made and I said they were asking the wrong questions. Like who should do without dental and health care in America. So they called back with a live caller.

“Look,” I said, “you guys create questions you want so you can get answers that prove what you want to say. Just cut the space program but before you do it, put all the corporate greedies on a spacecraft that they probably have reserved already with names on them like Exxontanic or something. All the space program is anyway is a getaway for them after they’ve greeded the earth of every natural resource. And they won’t be by to pick up people like me.”

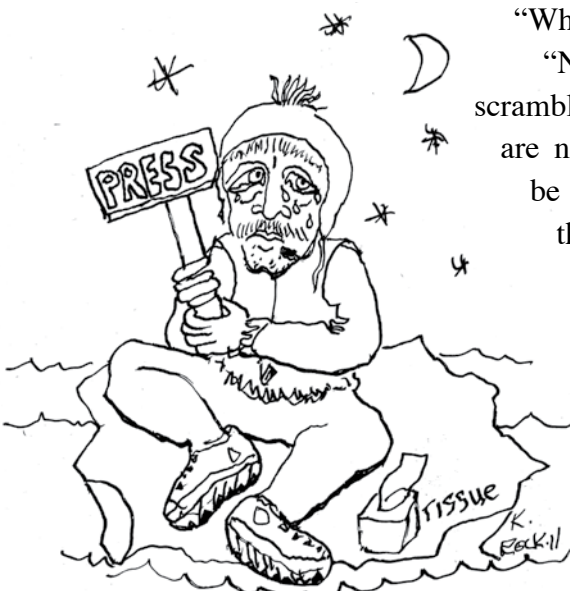
“No?” said the AP reporter.

“No, and not you neither by the way. So, don’t sit on an iceberg holding out hope or claiming you are a reporter so you should get a special break. After all you helped cause this mess.”

“How?”

“By framing the conversations. By interpreting life for all of us. By calling yourself the objective journalist. By optical illusions of headlines that make it look like people are getting something back when they lose something, and that they should like it. And now what a complete loss of resources.”

He seemed stunned.



“Marooned Journalist”

“What, of the earth and stuff?”

“No. All those welfare moms scrambling around trying to prove they are not criminals when they could be developing and contributing their talents to the world. All their children deprived of opportunity and then corrupted. The working class and disabled pitted against one another while the real criminals make off with the goods of earthly existence. What a loss of the heart of humanity. Are you crying?”

“No. I have a cold.”

“You’re lying. You’re a journalist and you lie. Just speak your truth. You can do it. You can be balanced.”

“Ok. I’m lying. I was crying.”

“See? Don’t you feel better?”

I was almost happy about that. So, I called Gypsy Dan to prove I had become even more balanced and cooperative. That’s when I realized that Gypsy Dan, before inheriting, had been a journalist too. He wants me to say what he needs me to say to make him feel HAPPY.

Don’t let them tell you who are...

Love Grandma



Human Rights Cities in Boston?

By Dottie Stevens

I first heard of the Human Rights Cities concept at the Old South Church in Boston at the, Ideas and Actions, Conference on July 31, 2008 where I was asked to facilitate a workshop. I learned it was an international campaign that was already implemented in 8 other countries. Having already been working on trying to implement and enact the Universal Declaration for Human Rights for many years here I thought this was a good step forward. So along with Survivors Inc. and the ARMS Center at UMass/Boston we organized to bring this campaign to Boston.

We held the conference on the campus of UMass/Boston and about 35 people attended. The response was so positive we decided that we should move ahead and create a steering committee of at least 12 people from connected interests to begin the process.

The goal is to have the language of the human rights declaration to be included in all government policies as well as school curriculums. The premise being that we should all be intimately familiar with the idea of human rights as our right as human beings.



Interested participants at the Human Rights Conference at UMass/Boston.
Photo by Dottie Stevens

Second Conference

There was another interesting conference held on December 6, 2010 entitled Human Rights Cities/Modern Day Slavery.

The Immokalee Worker from Florida, Cruz Salucio and Megan Cohorst from Student / Farm workers Alliance, along with The Justice Center and Survivors Inc were panelists. The workers from Fla. spoke of the injustice and violation of their rights as human beings and workers while employed by the produce companies and upcoming protests.

David Jefferson, from the Social Justice Coalition and Spare Change newspaper, spoke about unfair treatment of workers and low wages they are paid.

Dottie Stevens from Survivors Inc., Connie Chow a Human rights Activist, Diane Dujon Mass Welfare Rights Union and Lenore Pereira from the 25% Solution. spoke about the Human Rights Cities and why Boston should adopt it here. We learned that a precedent has already been set as Washington D.C. has passed a resolution to implement a Human Rights City there.

We are in the process of assembling a steering committee to bring this concept forward. If anyone is interested in being a part of this historic plan please get in touch with us.

Another Human Rights Cities forum is scheduled for April 2011.

Washington D.C. Human Rights City Resolution

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To recognize December 10, 2008, as “Washington, DC Human Rights Day” in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, December 10, 2008, marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

WHEREAS, The United Nations passed resolution A/RES/62/171 proclaiming the year commencing on December 10, 2008 the international Year of Human Rights Learning;

WHEREAS, This is an opportunity to call attention to human rights violations around the world and to continue to promote the importance of educating our citizens about human rights;

WHEREAS, The District of Columbia Public Schools has partnered with the American Friends Service Committee to create courses that teach our students about human rights issues;

WHEREAS, On this day, citizens of the nation’s capital, led by individuals and organizations, affirm their commitment to human rights by declaring Washington, DC, a Human Rights City;

WHEREAS, Washington, DC being a Human Rights City makes it a model for communities around the world to witness practical ways the human rights framework can make every citizen a partner of sustainable change;

WHEREAS, A Human Rights City is one whose residents and local authorities, through on-going discussions and creative exchanges of ideas, come to understand that human rights, when widely known as a way of life, assist in identifying the issues and informs the actions in our DC communities, for meaningful, positive economic and social change;

WHEREAS, Developing Human Rights Cities is an attempt to build infrastructure for conflict prevention, human security, sustainable development, and create a place for active civic engagement at the local, national, and global level;

WHEREAS, Washington, DC will be declared the first Human Rights City in the United States;

WHEREAS, As a Human Rights City, Washington, DC will be joining other human rights cities around the world in working to provide leadership and advocacy to secure, protect, and promote human rights for all people;

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this resolution may be cited as the “Washington, DC Human Rights Day Recognition Resolution of 2008.”

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes December 10, 2008 as “Washington, DC Human Rights Day.”

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of the publication in the District of Columbia Register.

Excerpted from Washington Human Rights City Resolution: American Friends Service Committee:

<http://afsc.org/resource/washington-dc-human-rights-city-resolution>



Crossword Solutions Puzzle on Page 14

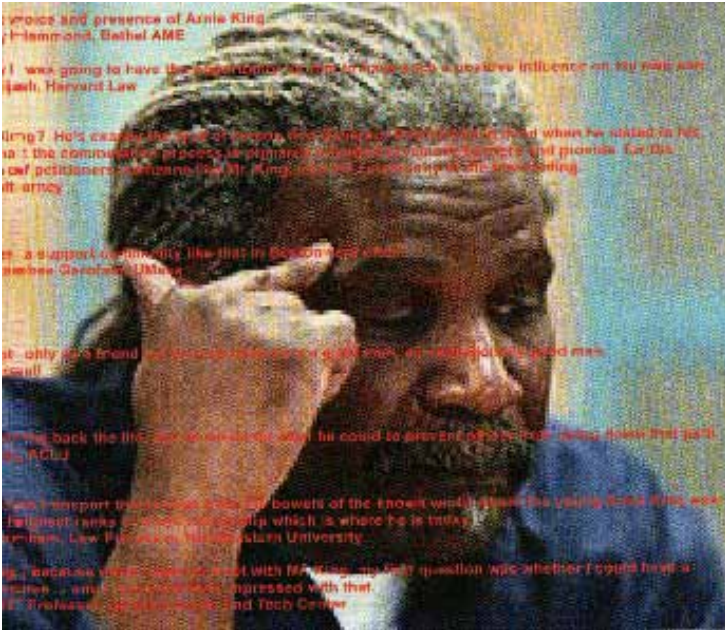
ACROSS 2. homeless 4. help 5. poverty 7. food 10. kids
DOWN 1. money 3. survival 13. respect 14. change 15. education 16. heat
9. coalitions 11. struggle

Commutation Hearing for Arnie King

By Dianne Zimbabwe
Through Barbed Wire Volunteer

Many people traveled to Natick in early October, 2010 for a public hearing with the Massachusetts Parole Board. Approximately 100 people arrived from neighboring states of Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire as well as near Interstate 95 North from Maryland and Delaware. The majority of attendees were Massachusetts residents with a large percentage residing in the Boston/Cambridge neighborhoods. The commutation hearing of Arnold King, before a 7 member panel, was approximately five hours. He was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole for the 1971 murder of John Labanara. To become eligible for parole, King must convince the sitting governor to approve the petition request. The parole board, acting in an advisory capacity, provides an initial screening of the petition for the governor and offers a recommendation after the public hearing.

In the past 20 years Arnie King has appeared at five public hearings. He received no favorable votes in 1992; in 2002 the board voted 3-3; in 2004 the result was 4-3; in 2007 it was a unanimous 6-0 vote. Governors Swift (2002), Romney (2004), and Patrick (2007) rejected the favorable opinion. Though the hearing was well attended by elected officials, ministers, educators, directors of community projects and many family members and friends, it has been very difficult to win the approval of the governor. Some of the notables include State Representative Gloria Fox, Harvard Professor Charles Ogletree, Reverend Dr. Ray Hammond, Reverend William



Dickerson, Reverend Jason Lydon, former State Rep. Mel King, former Boston City Councilor Felix Arroyo, Simmons College Professor Becky Thompson, and an array of directors of community organizations and projects.

Due to the recent shakeup of the Parole Board it is uncertain when the recommendation will be forwarded to Governor Patrick. Therefore we're asking people to contact his office: [email: throughbarbedwire@yahoo.com], and send postcards to express

community support for the approval of this effort. Arnie King should be granted commutation of sentence and become eligible for parole now. For further information visit: www.arnoldking.org, and for postcards, t-shirts, hugs and food for thought contact throughbarbedwire@yahoo.com.

Arnie King is known by his work with Through Barbed Wire, which he created in 1996. This project sponsors community events and forums in the Boston Metropolitan area. For example, the 4th Fridays are monthly readings of prisoner writings which are shared by family members and friends with the community. For many years a specific location was the Community Church of Boston until 2009 when the building was damaged by water. The poetry readings have been at Dimock Detox Center for the past year on the 4th Friday of each month from 6:30 – 8:30pm. The Detox residents share in the readings and everyone present enjoys these moments. If you're interested, contact throughbarbedwire@yahoo.com. A luta continua.

Thank you Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI)

By Diana Moon
MLRI is a state wide legal advocacy center whose stated mission is to “promote economic, racial and social justice for low-income people through legal action, education, and advocacy.” I attended a MLRI benefits training on January 11th, 2011. The audience of advocates was guided through Massachusetts laws which govern cash assistance (TAFDC) and emergency assistance (EAEDC). We covered a lot of material from eligibility, time limits, work requirements, sanctions, teen parents, keeping up with changing policies and how to prepare for administrative hearings – and more! I'm appreciative of the presenters and the guidance materials I received. I'm so thankful to be guided through regulations that I find confusing. I now have a Guide book and a training CD to assist with my understanding and advocacy!

Thank you MLRI for your excellent trainings which support low-income people and advocates. I highly recommend MLRI's training's; Visit their web-site www.mlri.org to find the dates of future trainings. I think you'll be glad you did. I'm planning to go back for more.

In Memoriam: Njeri Alghanee



June 24,1952-June 24,2010. Mother of six, Grandmother of three, Freedom Fighter, Welfare Warrior. Was killed in a car accident after leaving the US Social Forum. RIP Sister.



Dispatches from the Front: DTA Logs By Diana Moon

I started working for Survivor's Inc. early last 2010. I met many wonderful families and individuals; Thanks to all for sharing their experience with me. Here are a few highlights that I recall from my visits to Dudley and the Revere DTA.

I offered "Survival News" to a woman explaining a little about Survivor's Inc and also introducing myself. She then told me her story. She worked for many years and had good jobs and was self sufficient. Last year she became ill with heart disease and was hospitalized. Unable to work she lost her apartment and moved to her daughter's apartment. She is on a wait list for housing. She is in today because her disability benefits were terminated because she has a burial insurance policy (which is counted as an asset.) At first she thought surely this must be a mistake; I agreed with her that a burial policy which can only be used at the time of her death should not be counted as an asset (WT**.) Wow... how perplexing! Then she became emotional because after all the years she has worked and all she's been through it's really painful to be spoken to by a DTA worker as if she has done something wrong; as if needing financial help or any other assistance or getting sick means a failure on her part. I felt upset too for this very dignified woman to have someone speak so carelessly to her. We must keep trying to be respectful to each other. We reviewed the Survivor Tip section and I encouraged her to contact Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS). She knew of GBLS and said she would contact them although she informed me she learned there is a Regulation that burial policies count as assets. I hope this regulation will be changed! She thanked me for the paper and after we talked she said she felt a little better and less alone.

I talked with another woman about the Survival Tips section and we had a discussion of private rights and personal space and then what can happen to privacy when you live in public housing. For example, there is talk of making smoking illegal in public housing (more issues to debate). She told me she came in to apply for food stamps. She was laid off her job and then took a position for less income at a CVS. The food stamps are a big help she said. I've heard similar stories from other women who either work full time for minimum wage or have a part-time position and come to apply for or renew their food stamps. Food stamps are a great benefit and I feel thankful this is available for families! I think, too, about how many live vulnerably just one paycheck away from the threat of losing the security of their home. Another woman told me, "If I lose my job then I'll be looking for shelter. I worry each month I won't be able to make full rent and then I'll be evicted." I think about how we hear talk about strengthening families, about empowering families, well then affordable, safe housing is a good place to start!

Last March 2010 I talked with a woman who is in nursing school. She said the work requirement was making trouble for her. I said her time in school counts toward the work requirement – but the problem is not the weekly time required it's the annual time limit. Education and Training count toward the work requirement for at least 12 months. She's been in school for 12 months, but needs another year to finish. She said she's being pressured to get a job. I suggested she call the DTA information line to clarify the regulatory issue - then call Greater Boston Legal Services. A DTA worker called her in to her appointment – I wished her good luck! I sure wish I knew how she made out...

I met a young woman in the housing office. She has a

toddler daughter. Her mother and two younger brothers live with her. She supports the whole family working as a cashier. She told me she is exhausted. She's falling behind in her rent. Her mother is unemployed and brothers are in school. There are many needs and many problems. She is overwhelmed and can't go forward. I listened to her and tried to offer suggestions and hope where I could. I understood she feels she can no longer take care of the whole family. There are not sufficient resources on her wages and she is worn out! Every direction we talked about seemed to meet a roadblock. It's like chasing your tail keeps you from going forward... I met her again a week later and she told me she was in a shelter. She looked more at ease and relieved of the weight she carried.

I'm walking to my car to get more Survival News papers and a young woman calls to me. I recognize her from the housing office earlier in the day where I offered her the paper and we reviewed Survivor Tips together. She said that she had gone in to her meeting with a worker; then, at some point in the interview, the worker dismissed her and reportedly told this young woman to go back where she came from. Wow, I was stunned to hear this. What?! This young woman went back to the waiting room and went through the paper and found the main number to the DTA office. She called it and told the woman who answered what had just occurred. They actually put her on hold telling her to stay there and wait, then the main office called the Dudley DTA housing office and then another worker came out to inform her that she would see her and help her! Yeah! what a good outcome. Here's to victories no matter the size!

I'm talking to Islande, the other outreach worker. She is leaving from her morning at the DTA office and I'm arriving for the afternoon. As we greet each other a woman passes and smiling she calls out in Creole to Islande. Islande laughs too and then tells me what the woman said: "Remember the time you came with me to a meeting and helped me with my problem? Well, because you helped me today I'm going to help this (other) woman!"

Bravo!

I visit the Revere DTA office for the first time and find it located in a modern fairly new building on the 3rd. floor. I exit the elevator and find I'm in a wide hallway. Right in front of me and lining the length of the hall are information posters about the following topics: Domestic Violence contact information; If You Need Help with Documentation contacts; Housing, Job/Career training, Food Stamps, Childcare, etc. I'm thinking the Dudley office could use such informational posters too. Next I see the waiting areas are much smaller than Dudley. It's quieter yet there is a steady flow of people arriving to wait! Waiting is the same. One woman I talk with tells me she's been there two hours waiting for her appointment to recertify. It's hard to wait with one baby and one active toddler needing attention. Fortunately they are allowed to feed their children in the waiting areas.

I talked with a young woman in the housing office waiting room. She is pregnant with her first child and staying temporarily with a friend. She tells me her worker is very helpful and knows that some workers are not. "It's too bad," she says, "one difficult worker makes all the others look bad."

I'm sitting in the housing office after handing out the paper.

...continued on page 13



Dispatches from the front

continued from page 12...

The waiting room is full on this day. A friendly woman asks me about the “white haired lady. She gave me the paper last year and she was so helpful and so is Survival News. I told her Betty takes time off in the summer and should return sometime in the Fall.

I go in to meet a worker with a client seeking shelter since her rent assistance is now being terminated. The client works part time and can’t make the rent on her own. There is some confusion about what the options are. The worker offers to seek an extension of the diversion program the client received up until recently. There may be some funds available. The client decides to think it over and return the next day I see the worker is very helpful and professional speaking directly to the client and being very thorough.

How many ways can I cut you off welfare? Let me count the ways.

By Betty Reid Mandell

If you have ever applied for welfare, you know how many hurdles you have to jump over to get it, and you know that after jumping over all those hurdles, you might not get it.

When you go to the welfare office (called the DTA, Department of Transitional Assistance, in Massachusetts), you will probably have to wait a long time before a worker sees you. If you are lucky, you get a worker who treats you with respect, but you are just as likely to get a mean worker. Whether the worker is nice or mean, she (or he) will spend more time in the interview looking at the computer than looking at you.

The worker will tell you to get a zillion documents — birth certificates, rent and utility receipts, bank statements, wage receipts, Social Security card, vaccination records, etc., etc.

When you get home and want to call the worker to ask a question, you are likely to get a message saying the worker’s mailbox is full.

If the worker says that you are eligible to receive assistance (called TAFDC, Transitional Assistance to Families with Dependent Children, in Massachusetts), you are still not home free. If your youngest child is older than two years, the worker will nag you to get a job. You aren’t likely to find a job in this time of high unemployment, but if you do, it is likely to be temporary or part-time with no benefits and wages too low to support a family.

Peter Edelman was assistant for planning and evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services in the Clinton administration, and resigned in protest when Clinton signed the welfare “reform” law (PRWORA, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996). He said that the main goal of welfare “reform” is to kick people off the rolls.

Here is what he said about the way welfare “reform” actually works:

These are the techniques of radical reduction: shut the front door almost completely, staff the back door with the equivalent of a tough nightclub bouncer; and, in between, hassle applicants to the point where they just give up and go away.

At the front door many states just say no, evoking memories of the pre-1960s period, when unbridled discretion rules. Some cloak the turndown with the euphemism of “diversion,” which means, “You look able-bodied. Go out and look for a job.”

At the back door there is sanctioning — kicking people off the rolls because they were late to a work assignment (no excuses for sick children, late buses, or car breakdowns) or didn’t show up for an appointment at the welfare office (no excuses for failure to receive notice of an appointment or inability to understand English). In some states multiple infractions of this sort can result, legally, in lifetime disqualification.

In between there are requirements to bring an entire dossier of documents in order to navigate the application maze, intrusive questions about the applicant’s private life, assignments to demeaning work programs that sometimes ask people to work without necessary protective equipment, regular and irregular summonses to come in for redetermination of eligibility, and much more. Many needy people refuse to undergo the indignities associated with asking for help.

“What are we gonna eat tonight,
Mommy, will there be meat
and will there be bread?
Where will we sleep tonight,
Mommy, will there be a place to lay my head
Will we find heat tonight,
Mommy, or should we lie by
Uncle Pete’s old stove, instead?
Where are you going to be tonight,
Mommy, will you slip out in the darkness,
When I go to bed?”

The questions never end,
Your ethics may start to bend,
No matter how you pretend,
if this game IS LIFE,
Then where is the end?
I always thought I’d leave my mark,
But its engraved down at the park.
“What is the point of life?”, it asks
Is it for your kids, or some Godly tasks,
are there more weights for my sins,
Can I ever just start over again?
“Where we gonna sleep,
Mommy, the snow here’s getting’ so deep...”

Do we keep on walking,
til we’re blue,
or do we come back home,
To you?
A beating’s worth a thousand words,
...but the kids are cold...
And the only marks made,
I bear on my soul.
Kids asleep, I hear the door,
And then my face shoved
To the floor, and my pride and dreams
Get crushed some more.
...at least they’re not so cold, no more...

—Christina Schnetzer



Letters

Terrific issue of Survival News!

I finally have cleared up enough after being away for a month to read the latest issue of Survival News—it’s so extensive and excellent. A friend emailed to comment on the picture from the NJFAC conference—I’m only sorry you’re not in it (I guess you were taking the picture).

I’d like to be able to send some copies—if you haven’t already—to Logan and to NJFAC folks. If I can get it online, please let me know. *[Issues of Survival News can be downloaded from our website: www.survivorsinc.org—Ed.]* If not, let me know where I can get a couple of extra copies to send.

Great work!!!! Even if a lot of the news is disturbing (CPCS closing, for instance).

Margy Rosenthal

Hi, Dottie!

Buried in my mail, I found Survival News! I had already seen it online, but I’m still devoted to paper. (don’t tell my little green friends, OK?) Just read it cover-to-cover and enjoyed it, of course. Monday we have a meeting of our local PPEHRC group, and I’ll be passing it along. Thanks for thinking of me.

Mary Bricker-Jenkins
Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign

Have your voice heard

Send letters, articles, subscriptions, donations, and all correspondence to:
Dottie Stevens, 95 Standard Street, Mattapan, MA 02126.
Phone: (617) 298-7311; e-mail: masswelf@aol.com

Hello Dotty,

I have shared the information I received from Survival News with my friends and it’s unbelievable the guidance is not available any place else.

Thank you again,

Martha Manning
Boston, MA

P.S. Someday I will have more to contribute.



Representing Survivors Inc. and Jobs For All Coalition, Terri Hinton, Lenore Pereira, Meiko Rollins, Laurie Taymor-Berry at the Jobs With Justice Conference in Worcester, Ma.

Crossword

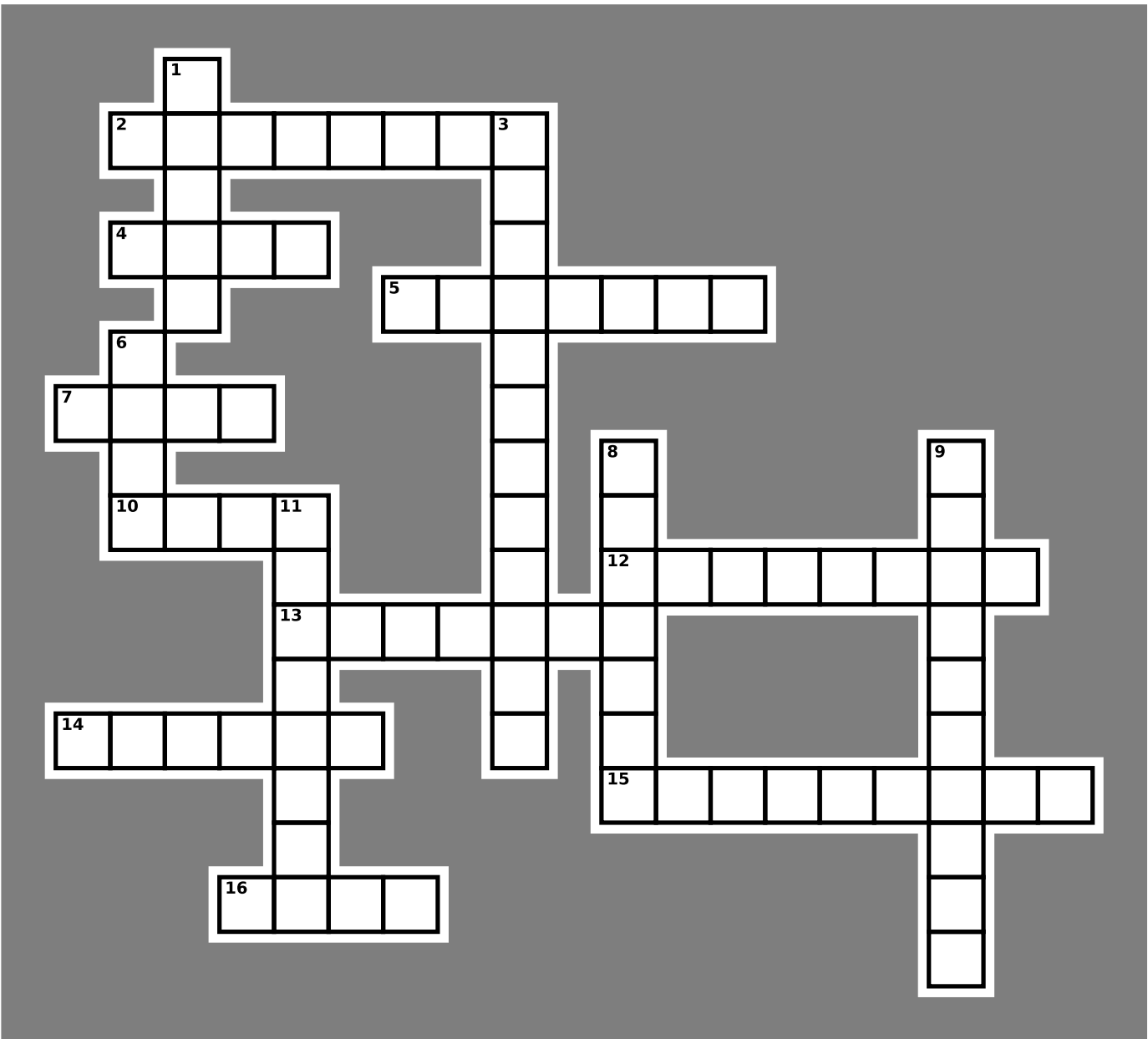
By Julie Joy

Across

- 2. without shelter
- 4. support
- 5. scarcity of money and resources
- 7. groceries
- 10. children
- 12. endurance. continued existence
- 13. to value
- 14. revolution
- 15. schooling
- 16. warmth

Down

- 1. cash
- 3. The official newspaper of the National Welfare Rights Union
- 6. labor
- 8. fairness
- 9. groups working together for a common goal
- 11. to resist



(solutions on Page 10)



Campaign for Fair Food

by Meghan Cohorst

Florida farmworkers have long faced brutal conditions in the fields, including sub-poverty wages, widespread labor rights violations, and even modern-day slavery.

Today, however, there is hope in the fields. Through their Campaign for Fair Food, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) – a Florida farmworker organization – has reached agreements with nine of the world's leading food retailers, including McDonald's, Subway and Whole Foods. In these Fair Food agreements, corporations are paying one more penny per pound for the tomatoes they buy directly to the workers who picked them, and have established a stringent, worker-designed code of conduct in their tomato supply chains. In addition, recent historic agreements between the CIW and Florida tomato growers promise to apply the CIW's Fair Food standards to virtually the entire Florida tomato industry.

Thus far, however, Ahold USA (parent company of Stop & Shop and Giant) – a major player in the supermarket industry – has refused to participate. And if Ahold has its way, the unprecedented transformation of farm labor conditions promised by these landmark agreements will be significantly diminished.

In response, the CIW and their allies are gearing up for one of the most important actions in the history of the Campaign for Fair Food. Join them this February 27th in Boston, and lend your voice to the call for Ahold to do its part!

For more information on what you can do, contact Meghan Cohorst (meghan@sfalliance.org or 239-503-1533) or visit <http://www.ciw-online.org/dotheightthing/>



MA Food Stamp Use

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instructions in the budget. This access language is now forever in the budget mandating these procedures.

Then Department of Transitional Assistance Commissioner John Wagner held a press conference on November 19, 2002 at the Boston Food Bank to announce his department's new access initiatives for food stamps including expanded office hours, trimming the 16 page application to 4, and accepting faxed verification documents to cut down on the number of trips to the Food Stamp office for initial and re-authorization visits.

Improving access to food stamps continues to be the main mission of the Coalition now called the Food SNAP Improvement Coalition after the renaming of the Food Stamp Program to the Food Supplemental and Nutrition Assistance Program. The Coalition is ably led by Pat Baker from the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute.

Food SNAP access problems currently include not being able to meet with caseworkers for days because of high caseloads and mismanagement at local offices. Offices often don't have information readily available directing them how to apply online (right at a waiting room computer) or fill out an application and give it to a clerk as an alternative to waiting to see a caseworker. The wait is partly because caseworkers have huge caseloads of 600-900 instead of a manageable 300-400. The Secretary of Human Services, Julia Kehoe, announced at the November Food SNAP Improvement Coalition meeting that, because of the cuts in state revenue, the caseloads would climb to 1200 plus. In addition, two more Department of Transitional/Food SNAP offices have closed.

Food SNAP is for many people the only poverty program they are receiving after their unemployment benefits have ended and the welfare time limit has expired. A representative from Survivors Inc. would be a welcome addition at Coalition meetings.

“Laboring to Learn”, Women’s Literacy and Poverty in the Post-Welfare Era, by Lorna Rivera

An Overview by Laurie Taymor-Berry

“Laboring to Learn” is the story of the women who participated in the Adult Learners Program at Project Hope. Project Hope is a homeless shelter in Roxbury that is so much more than a homeless shelter. It was founded by Sister Margaret Leonard in the early 1980's. According to its mission statement, Project Hope is “Dedicated to building community that promotes dignity, self-reliance and interdependence. We strive to be compassionate in creating new structures, which support families, and to be unyielding in challenging systems that threaten basic human rights. We know this stance to be one of struggle and joy.” (Project Hope, 1984).

The women students who participated in the Project Hope Adult Learners Program were predominantly between the ages of

eighteen and thirty, and, on average, they had two children aged six and under. Most of the women had dropped out of school before their sixteenth birthday. The purpose of the Adult Learners Program was to prepare the women to take the GED. The author, Lorna Rivera, describes how Project Hope, its social services, and the Adult Learners Program developed in response to the Dudley community's changing needs and the expressed desires of low-income women. She does this by drawing upon interviews with staff, adult learners, and program directors. The voices of the Project Hope women and staff reflect on the history of Project Hope, the social services it offers, and the various advocacy initiatives that emerged as a result of the punitive Massachusetts's welfare reform in the mid 1990's.



Mary Moore, representing Survivors, Inc. protesting the inhumane conditions at Norfolk Prison.
Photo by Susan Mortimer



The Final Chapter: A CPCS No One Can Object To

By Ann Withorn

As of now, many of the specifics for the implementation of the new CPCS are still to be determined – a lack of closure that bothers many. Nevertheless, we now have permission to admit new students in the Fall to an upper division college, available only after students have accumulated 60 credits (from UMB or another college). It will feature traditional weighted grades for work submitted as part of traditional credited courses, offered through four majors in human service and community studies fields. We will “survive” as a program without our most exciting majors – community media and technology, community planning, law work are gone. The Provost explicitly rejected a Writing Center and again insists that writing instruction be centralized within the University and offered minimally at the College, limited primarily to preparation for exit writing portfolios. And there is no commitment of new resources for rebuilding even this tamed program (except for a .5 non-tenure track line for Labor Studies).

Admissions will be explicitly controlled centrally. Those areas of CPCS’ practice that had most challenged the traditional educational/academic hegemony have been eliminated. We won’t say we are oriented toward adult students. Experiential learning becomes “engaged practice” under faculty supervision, while prior experiential learning has been relegated to the narrowest one-on-one correspondence to career courses -- and graded. Independent experiential learning becomes little more than traditional or student designed internships with time and grade requirements. Inclusion of distance learning in Community Studies is key, but must still offer traditional grades and crediting methods. And as of now all new courses must be approved by the Provost’s Office in addition to “normal” departmental and college level review. And we don’t know when this receivership will end.

The senior faculty who created the new curriculum and new structure within the non- negotiable protocol laid out in August had little recourse other than “proposing” what was essentially an imposed new order, with a few added twists on the margins. They intentionally created a large enough lifeboat to provide jobs for remaining faculty and staff and to offer a place for students to earn a set of non-discipline based public service majors. Some faculty retain real hope for future revitalization built upon expanded graduate programs and the attraction of the new Community Studies major to non-traditional students, immigrants and activists. Others are more skeptical but see no alternative beyond individuals finding new homes elsewhere in the University, potentially another demeaning new process

The few remaining permanent faculty offered this unappealing normalization plan because we recognized the bind we were in. There have been no new students since Fall of 2008, except for those in the on-line and non-degree programs. The reduced workload naturally resulting from this dramatic reduction in students could not continue. Faculty knew that we must admit students to some kind of college in order to defend ourselves. And the Provost knew that he could now control our curriculum and our pedagogy by insisting that his/our model was the only one that would be approved as a “viable base” for re-opening admissions.

Many faculty wanted, at least, to change the college’s once-

proud name to reflect the drastically changed reality. But this will not happen because ever-political administrators don’t want to admit that they have actually “killed CPCS.”

The Provost even had the audacity to suggest verbally on April 27th that it is he who has backed down university-level opposition to reviving the College and he who will be blamed if his arbitrary conditions for survival fail to attract students. He knows there will be “dissenters” within the new college but he expects them now to “accept the new situation and contribute to the transition process.” He even wants faculty and staff to regain the “passion we are known for.”

But we are not passionate. Nor are we comforted to know that, as one colleague said, “This is what it is everywhere in higher education. We just have to accept it.”

So now, instead of being proud of the “place like no other” that we offered urban adults for more than 35 years, all we can guarantee is a shrunken afterlife as small, traditional. “applied degree” undergraduate college. The best, and perhaps actually possible, hope some of us have is for the College, over time, to grow as a base for new graduate programs in public and community service, while serving as a collegiate home for certain institutes, majors and initiatives that have not yet been fully subsumed under the values underlying the University’s new Strategic Plan – a textbook example of neoliberal higher education goals and objectives in itself.

Currently, many faculty and staff still try to find hope for moving on. Others, and our few remaining students, are shell shocked, wondering what will happen next. Can this limited undergraduate collection of four majors with a distressed faculty and a contested reputation become something of value, with real re-investment in appropriate faculty and staff? Will CPCS last long enough for people to retire with only memories of the time when we were nationally and internationally recognized for our willingness to be different? Or will, for lack of resources and enrollment numbers, CPCS die as it lived, as “the best kept academic secret in Boston?”

All we know for sure is that, after four semesters of no new admissions and years of overt, backhanded and destabilizing attacks, CPCS has not survived with even the hope of being the academic “haven in the heartless world” that successfully served thousands of students since 1973. We are no longer able to be a full, integrated college for differentially-prepared, culturally-diverse, low-income mothers, working-class adults, and anyone else intentionally seeking a college degree that offers creative opportunities for deepening their skills and radically expanding their vision. We have, indeed, lost the deep passion that came along with the on-going struggle to achieve alternative goals through a flexible structure, a competency based, non-graded curriculum and an activist pedagogical practice that was both respectful of and challenging to such students.

It is so sad. And so unnecessary. And so wrong.

Ann Withorn, Ph.D. has been a professor of social policy at CPCS since 1977. She is currently on sabbatical writing an historical narrative and analysis of this story and its place within the larger changes happening in higher education, entitled Who did We Think We Were? Radical Higher Education and Neoliberal Imperatives in Massachusetts and the United States 1972 – 2009.

The analysis presented here is hers alone, although deeply grounded in long, hard, bittersweet (and often hilarious) conversations with so many student, faculty and staff comrades. If you want more information about the College and its struggles, she is best reached electronically at ann.withorn@umb.edu June 24, 2010



To whom it may concern,

On June 8, 2010 while at my residence in Dorchester, MA, a Boston police cruiser came at a high rate of speed into my driveway and the officer was screaming at myself and Kurt L., a family friend, “Where did he go, where did he go?!”. Unaware of anyone being on the property that should not have been I told the officer I did not know of anyone running into the backyard. The officer got back into the cruiser and pulled out of the driveway.

Five minutes after the officer left the YVSF (SWAT) unit entered our driveway. At this time I went into my apartment. [My neighbor] (and also the person filing this false report of a man knocking on her door) was knocking on my rear door while a SWAT member was knocking at my front door. [My neighbor] forced her way into my home and searched room to room for a supposed fugitive. I opened the front door and [my neighbor] forced me out of the way and started making false accusations to the officer that I left the front door to the building open which is false as [my neighbor] has many individuals who are unlawfully staying in her home as it is a scattered site shelter and this is their means of access to her home.

The SWAT officer informed us that we needed to go outside as they were bringing a K-9 in to search the home, we stepped out on to the back porch and three officers had high caliber weapons aimed at myself, Kurt L. and my daughter who is a minor. The officer told the other officer to not shoot me and the other officer told me do you know how lucky you are that I did not shoot you. I felt in severe fear of my life and also my daughters life. No one was in my home that was a fugitive. The officers entered my home where they made a mess looking for the fugitive that [my neighbor] claimed ran into my home. [My neighbor] knows who Mr. L. is and that he frequently visits my home. The SWAT team officer pulled my fourteen year old daughter into my home and not only intimidated her, but threatened to take her to court if she lied to him. My daughter is raised with values and manners and had no reason to lie to the officer. My daughter is in extreme fear of any police officers after this incident occurred and has no trust in any police officers. I have attached a separate statement from my daughter in her own words of what took place as I was not allowed into my home with my under age child while a police officer was interrogating and threatening her. While the officers were inside another officer asked me if I was sure no one was in my home and I told him I am telling him the truth that no one else is in my home. Only the police searching inside the apartment, with the K-9, found no one and nothing in my home. My daughter was released outside five minutes later. My daughter is under a lot of stress because of these false accusations and poorly-administered search of my residence which was not performed with my landlord’s consent or a search warrant. We then had to go in and clean the home as the officers left it a mess.

The SWAT team left and I took my daughter to a friends house to tell her what took place and upon returning to my home I was informed by the property manager that was in the basement making repairs that the SWAT team had returned again entered my home, took my pit bull puppy outside, put him on his leash, and again entered my home without a warrant or me being at home. They left and left my dog outside. Which is not only illegal but animal cruelty as my dog was left outside in the sun.

Kurt L. was arrested at 2:45 and released at 3:15. Released with no findings. The following day Kurt and I went to the Dudley

precinct where we asked the officer at the front desk for the police report. He happened to be one of the officers who was at my home the day before. He told me I was not allowed access to the report and he then went to talk to a higher ranking officer with whom I then spoke to and he released the report to me which is poorly filled-in and does not tell the truth of what took place. Kurt L. was re-arrested after an officer told him, “I have good news and bad news: the good news is you have no warrant and the bad news is we made a warrant.”

I am still having problems with [my neighbor] as she throws liquids on us through the second floor porch and also is making false accusations. I have filed a report with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and also have obtained an attorney in regards to this incident. I am only glad I was not shot because of somebody’s false accusations in a situation where I still do not understand why it occurred or why it was so difficult to obtain a copy of the incident report.

My family has been under severe emotional stress because of this situation and we feel violated that police can hold us at gun point, risk my living situation (as I lived at a scattered site shelter), and also be so unprofessional as police officers. I felt like criminals were holding me hostage and had no rights to do anything to protect myself, my child and my home. I hope your office will review this poorly planned out home search and how they handle situations like this in the future before somebody does get hurt or worse case killed.

Thank you,
Sandra V.

The Campaign for Rebranding Nigeria — The concern for women

By Hannah Edimikpong

An excerpt from Ms. Edimikpong's lecture "The Campaign for Rebranding Nigeria — The concern for women" presented to Multi — Religious and Ethnic Women which was held in Eket, Nigeria on the 8th of March 2010 to mark the International Women's Day

1. INTRODUCTION — Recently the Honourable Minister of Information, Professor Mrs. Dora Akinyuli launched a campaign in the national capital Abuja tagged campaign for re-branding Nigeria and urged the governors of the 36 States of Nigeria and the heads of the 774 Local Governments in Nigeria to launch this campaign in their territories.

2. WHAT THE CAMPAIGN IS ABOUT & WHAT IT IS TO ACHIEVE
The campaign to re-brand Nigeria is meant to unveil only the good side of Nigeria to the outside world; to speak or write well about the country and make no mention of the country’s degrading acts and practices so that foreigners may admire the country and thereby the image of the country will be enhanced and foreigners will be encouraged to come and invest in Nigeria. [...]

3. RE-BRANDING & WOMEN CONSCIENCE — It is difficult for us to imbibe this new orientation of re-branding Nigeria and shield in secrecy the multifarious abuses of women’s fundamental human rights, deprivations, cultural practices and other ills which oppress women and children from the eyes of the outside

In John 8 verse 32 Jesus told His disciples:
“And you will know the truth and the truth will make you free”.

For good conscience to prevail in women the biblical tenet of speaking the truth must be maintained and encouraged in women so that they can impart the same to their off-spring.



SURVIVAL TIPS

Greater Boston Legal Services can help you get benefits

If you are having trouble getting the benefits to which you are entitled, contact Greater Boston Legal Services at (617) 371-1234. They can give you advice or representation to deal with the Department of Transitional Assistance (welfare) or a Housing Authority. GBLS provides either a bilingual advocate or uses interpreters to communicate with non-English-speaking clients. If you don't live in the Boston area, they can refer you to legal services in your area.

You can also get legal advice on line at MassLegalHelp, www.masslegalhelp.org.

Food Programs

Project Bread can give you information about food stamps, and can tell you what food pantries and food kitchens are near you, and tell you food stamp outreach locations. They have translators in several languages. Call their FoodSource Hotline, 1-800-645-8333; TTY: 1-800-377-1292.

Everyone has the right to apply for Food Stamps (now called SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) at their local DTA office, on the Internet, by mailing in an application, or at other food stamp outreach locations. Call the DTA at 1-800-249-2007 to find your local DTA office. You can also call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333 for other food stamp locations in your area. **You have the right to sign a paper application the same day you go into a DTA local office.**

You can also apply online by going to www.state.ma.us/dta and clicking on "Apply for Food Stamps" for the on-line application, or you can print out a paper application off the DTA website. If you do not want to apply on line or do not have access to the Internet or a printer, you can ask DTA Central to mail out a copy and you can mail it back after you fill it out.

You can get expedited (fast) food stamps if you have little or no income and assets, or if your shelter costs are higher than your income and money in the bank. This means that you can get food stamps within 7 days of when DTA receives a signed application. It is sometimes best to go in person if you need food stamps fast. DTA will ask for proof of who you are (your identity) and will ask you about your income and expenses to see if you qualify. You do not need a photo ID. If you do not have any proof of identity but you know your SSN, DTA can check your identity through your SSN and date of birth.

If you are not eligible for expedited food stamps, you can still get food stamps within 30 days of when you apply, if you meet the eligibility rules. You will need to be interviewed—either over the phone or in person—and provide proofs of your income, shelter costs and other expenses. You should receive a letter in the mail after you apply that tells you when your interview is scheduled and the proofs you will need. Unless you need expedited food stamps, DTA does not count assets in deciding if you are eligible for benefits.

Be sure to tell DTA if you pay for childcare or before/after school fees, or if you pay for the care of a disabled adult so that you can work. You can also claim the costs of travel (public transportation

or a car) to and from childcare, after school programs, etc., at the federal mileage rate of 55 cents per mile. You can self-declare your child care costs. Claiming child care expenses can increase your food stamps.

If anyone in your household is severely disabled or age 60 or older, they can also claim the cost of any out-of-pocket medical expenses to increase food stamps. Medical expenses that can be claimed include transportation to doctor appointments and pharmacies to pick up medication (at 48 cents per mile). It also includes vitamins, aspirin, hearing aid batteries, eye glasses, over the counter creams used to treat skin conditions, any other medical supplies recommended by a provider, as well as alternative therapy costs not covered by MassHealth or Medicare (chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy, herbal remedies). You can also claim and prove the cost for service animals. You will need to provide proofs of your medical expenses, and a list of medical facilities you visit to claim transportation, including veterinary bills and food supplies. If an elder (60+) or disabled household member has more than \$35/month in medical related expenses, DTA will allow a standard \$90 deduction. If you pay even higher out-of-pocket costs each month, the deduction can be higher. **Claiming medical expenses can increase your food stamp benefits.**

College students can get food stamps if they meet any of the following a) the student gets any amount of federal or state work study, b) works 20 hours a week, c) has children under age 12, d) is disabled, e) is over age 49 or under 18, f) is enrolled in school through an Employment and Training Program or the Division of Unemployment. In addition to these options, any students enrolled in community college programs may also qualify for food stamps if they are enrolled in a career or technical education major or certificate program, or if the college thinks their course of study will lead to employment. DTA has a form for community colleges to sign to verify the course of study of these students.

If you are denied food stamps or disagree with the amount of your benefits, you have the right to question and challenge any decisions made by DTA that you disagree with. There is information on line about how to appeal a denial of benefits: www.masslegalhelp.org. You can also contact the Legal Services office in your area for advice and legal representation.

Angel Food Ministries

Angel Food Ministries is a nondenominational program, distributed by churches, that provides good food at a much lower price than grocery stores. There are no qualifications, income restrictions, minimums, or applications. Everyone is encouraged to participate. A menu of food is available in a quantity that can fit into a medium-sized box at \$30 per unit. Generally, one unit of food assists in feeding a family of four for about one week or a single senior citizen for almost a month. The food is all the same high quality one could purchase at a grocery store. Each month's menu is different than the previous month and consists of both fresh and frozen items with an average retail value of approximately \$60. They accept food stamps. They have a 24-hour hot line at 1-877-366-3646. Their web site is

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SURVIVAL TIPS

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www.angelfoodministries.com. You can find a distribution center in your area by putting in your zip code.

Fair Food

Fair Foods transports daily truckloads of grocery-quality fresh surplus food from industry to low-income communities in eastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Bring your own bags for the food, which includes fruits and vegetables, to their Two-Dollar-A-Bag site. Their headquarters in Boston are in Dorchester, telephone 617-288-6185. Their web site is www.fairfoods.org, which lists sites in the Boston area.

Fuel Assistance for the winter months

Low-Income people can get help in paying for fuel. In Boston, Brookline and Newton, **ABCD** administers the federal fuel assistance program. Phone 617-357-6012, ext. 11. Assistance is for any form of heat — oil, gas, electric, wood, or kerosene. Help is given to those whose heat is included in the rent in non-subsidized housing. People with housing subsidies can get help if they pay for heat. Sign-up period is November 1 to April 30. Eligibility level is 60 percent of the medium income in Massachusetts—\$29,126 for a family of 1; \$38,087 for 2; \$47,049 for 3; \$56,011 for 4. For more details, see <http://bostonabcd.org/programs/crisis/fuel-assistance/FuelEligibility.html>

Other benefits for people eligible for fuel assistance are weatherization (insulating your house against the cold), electrical audits, heating system repair/replacement.

If you live outside of Boston, Brookline, and Newton, call the Department of Housing and Community Development Heat Line at 1-800-632-8175 and enter your zip code to find out the agency near you.

The Good Neighbor Energy Fund is a cooperative effort between the participating energy companies in Massachusetts, The Salvation Army, which administers the Fund, and residents of the Commonwealth. The Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is not eligible to receive federal or state energy assistance. This year's Fund disbursement is \$300 per eligible household per year. To qualify for assistance from the Fund, an applicant's gross household income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state's median income levels. For example, a household size of 2 would need to have a total gross yearly income of between \$40,213 and \$53,617 to qualify. A household of 4 would need to have a yearly income of between \$59,137 and \$78,849 to qualify, etc. To apply, please visit one of the 36 local Salvation Army offices throughout the state. For more information, call: 1-800-334-3047 if in the Eastern part of Massachusetts (serving area codes 508, 617, 781 and 978) or 1-800-262-1320 if in the Western part of the state (serving area code 413); or visit www.magoodneighbor.org.

Mass Energy Consumers Alliance saves money on oil

You can save \$100 to \$250 on your heating oil by joining the Mass Energy Consumers Alliance for **\$20, \$10** for people on a fixed income, senior citizens, or retirees, and free if you receive fuel assistance. You need to provide a letter of approval from the fuel assistance agency and send it with your application. Members save from 10 to 30 cents a gallon off of the Massachusetts state average. Reliable full-service dealers will deliver your oil and service your system. Call them at 617-524-3950 or 1-800-287-3950 for more information, in English or Spanish. Their Web site is www.massenergy.org. They are at P.O. Box 301089, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

Help with electric and gas bills

Discounted Gas and Electric Rates and Budget Plans

Massachusetts gas and electric utilities (except those operated by a city or town) must offer a Low Income Discount Rate. Most families receiving Fuel Assistance should be enrolled automatically. Others who qualify should obtain an application from the utility and send it back promptly or simply call the company—the utility should enroll the household right away, and not wait to verify income. For winter 2010/2011, the income limit for eligibility for 1 person is \$30,751; for 2, \$40,213; for 3, \$49,675; for 4, \$59,137; for 5, \$69,598.

Anyone can lower high winter utility bills with budget plans

Utilities offer level monthly payment plans. They estimate annual usage and divide that amount into 12 equal payments.



Lenora Brown, from, Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, working with Survivors, Inc. and Survivors, Inc. is glad to have her working with them. Photo by Dottie Stevens

Any household can get a free “energy audit,” conducted by their utility company, listing ways to save on energy bills.

Shut-off rights for Any Income Household

No Shut-Off if Everyone in the Household is Over 65, unless the state DPU gives permission. Companies rarely request this permission, and most elder families are not shut off.

Avoiding Shut-Offs by Setting Up a Payment Plan

Utilities cannot shut off a customer willing to catch up on overdue payments over four months (1/4 of the amount due each month), while also paying current monthly bills. Utilities can offer longer plans, and some go for over a year. Never agree to a repayment faster than you can afford—this can get you into more trouble. Instead, push the utility for a more reasonable plan, and get help from the DPU Consumer Division, 1-877-886-5066.

Utilities must offer all customers a “reasonable” repayment plan that turns service back on. Again, push for an affordable plan and contact the Consumer Division if the utility doesn't cooperate.

ABCD provides referral services and advocacy for eligible

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Donate to Survivors Inc. Visit www.communityroom.net and click on “Survivors, Inc.”



SURVIVAL TIPS

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clients interested in reducing their utility bill arrearage/debt. The major utilities serving ABCD’s geographical area of Boston, Brookline and Newton (National Grid and NStar) now offer arrearage management payment plans. Eligible clients may have their utility debt forgiven between \$1,500 - \$2,000 per year while adhering to a structured payment plan.

National Grid gas clients —call 1-800-233-5325
NStar clients—call 1-866-315-2496.

When a Landlord Doesn’t Pay the Utility

All tenants (regardless of income) have shut-off protections where their landlord is the one paying the utility company. If the landlord stops paying the utility, tenants get 30 days notice of the right to pay a “projected bill” (an estimate of that tenant’s share of the monthly bill). Even if all tenants do not pay this projected bill, the state DPU, not the utility, decides whether service should be shut off to the building. The DPU considers how much the tenants have paid, weather conditions, whether any tenants are seriously ill, and tenants’ ages. Involve the DPU with the building as soon as possible. If the building is in foreclosure, the person or institution that now owns the building must keep the utilities on.

Four Ways Income-Eligible* Families Can Stop a Gas or Electric Shut Off (or Turn the Gas or Power Back On)

Elderly

No gas or electric shut-off if all adults are age 65 or over. Submit an elderly protection form, which the utility can provide.

Serious Illness

No gas or electric shut-off if anyone in the household (adult or child) has a serious illness. Any previous shut-off must also be restored. The serious illness can be:

- Physical (such as asthma, or pneumonia)
- Mental (such as depression or bipolar disorder)
- Short-term (such as the flu)
- Long-term (such as cancer).

Send the company a serious illness letter from a doctor, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or the local Board of Health, and also submit a financial hardship form. A phone call from the doctor’s office should work temporarily, but a letter must be sent later.

Child under the age of 12 months

No gas or electric shut-off if anyone in the household is under 12 months old, and any previous shut-off must also be restored. Show the child’s age with a birth or baptismal certificate, or any other reasonable proof. Also submit a financial hardship form.

Winter moratorium

Gas and electric companies cannot terminate heat-related utility

service from November 15 through March 15 (often extended through April). The customer must send a financial hardship form to the company.

*Income eligibility

For 1 person, \$30,751; for 2, \$40,213; for 3, \$49,675; for 4, \$59,137; for 5, \$69, 598.

What to Do If You Are NOT Satisfied with the Utility’s Response

The Consumer Division of the State’s Department of Public Utilities (DPY) helps consumers resolve disputes with their utility companies. Call the Consumer Division at **1-877-886-5066** if the utility company makes it difficult to work out a repayment plan or threatens to shut off service where the household is protected from termination. If you need legal help, contact Charles Harak, Staff Attorney at the National Consumer Law Center, 617-542-8010 x342 (voice); 617-542-8028 (fax); charak@nclc.org.



Dorchester’s People for Peace, advocating to cut Military Spending by 25%. Photo by Lenore Pereira

Help with the telephone bill

You can save on your telephone bill for local service with the telephone company’s **Lifeline and Linkup** programs. Anyone on MassHealth, SSI, food stamps, TAFDC, fuel assistance, or EAEDC is eligible. Lifeline reduces monthly telephone bills by \$18, and Link-Up provides discounts on installation or activation charges. Contact your local telephone company. You may apply for Link-Up assistance when placing an order for telephone

service. You may also get a form from the worker at your program. The DTA or the Office of Fuel Assistance needs to verify that you are on one of those programs.

Free cell phone

SafeLink Wireless is a government-supported program that provides a free cell phone and 250 free minutes per month of service for income-eligible customers. The process to qualify for Lifeline Service depends on the State you live in. In Massachusetts, you may qualify if...

1. You already participate in State or Federal assistance program such as SSI, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Food Stamps, MassHealth, EAEDC, TAFDC, fuel assistance
- AND
2. No one in your household currently receives Lifeline Service through another phone carrier.
3. You have a valid United States Postal Address. A P.O. Box is not acceptable.

In addition to meeting the guidelines above you will also be required to provide proof of your participation in an assistance program, or proof of your income level. To apply, call 1-800-977-3768, go online at www.safelink.com, or apply at your public library.

If your house is being foreclosed

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SURVIVAL TIPS

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On May 22, 2009 President Obama signed a law that provides 90-day tenant protections for tenants living in foreclosed properties nationally. **All tenants must get a 90-day notice before eviction process can be started as a result of foreclosure.** In addition, most tenants who have leases can continue to live in their homes until the end of the term of their lease.

The rights of Section 8 tenants are also protected because the new owner at foreclosure must accept both the tenant’s lease and the housing assistance Payment (HAP) contract.

City Life/Vida Urbana is helping people to resist foreclosures. They tell people about their rights, give legal help, hold rallies against bank foreclosures, and block evictions. If you need their help, call them at 617-524-3541. They are located at 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. Their web site is www.clvu.org/about_us.html. Fax 617-524-3555. Their web site features a video of the Bill Moyers Journal, which shows their work and an interview with Steve Meacham, community organizer.

City Life/Vida Urbana organizes community residents to get more affordable housing, to prevent evictions, and to tell people about their rights to housing.

Work requirement for TAFDC recipients

Sometimes DTA puts pressure on workers to get more parents who receive welfare assistance to work in the paid labor market or else meet work requirement activities of 20 to 30 hours per week. If you are being pressured by your welfare worker to do something you are unable to do, such as get a job or get a job or do a job search or other program, ask your legal services office for help. Below is some information that can help you with the work requirement.

Education and Training counts toward the TAFDC work requirement for at least twelve months. Most kinds of adult education and job training programs count. College programs, including 4-year college, can also count (you need to major in something that will lead to a job). Time spent in education and training when you are exempt from the work requirement does not count against your 12 months. If you need more than 12 months, check with Legal Services. The fact that a program will last more than 12 months is not legal grounds for DTA to refuse to count it for at least 12 months.

Housing Search for people in emergency shelter also counts toward the work requirement. DTA must treat families in shelter as being in full compliance with the work requirement as long as they meet Emergency Assistance (EA) or shelter housing search requirements, regardless of how many hours of housing search they are doing. **DTA is not supposed to lower or stop your benefits** for not meeting the work requirement (or the terms of your Employment

- Development Plan) if you have “good cause” such as you:
- lack appropriate and available child care;
 - lack affordable and reliable transportation;
 - need to do housing search;
 - lack an available and appropriate community service site identified by DTA;
 - have a family member who has an illness or disability;
 - need to care for a family member who has an illness or disability;
 - have a family crisis, an emergency or other compelling circumstance beyond your control that you must attend to during hours you would otherwise be doing required activities;
 - have a job or were offered a job that: violated minimum wage laws; discriminated on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, or physical or mental disability; violated health and safety standards; or was available due to a strike or lockout.

DTA is not supposed to lower or stop your benefits without first reviewing all the above good-cause reasons with the family to see if any apply. If you think DTA made a mistake in reducing or taking away your benefits, quickly file an appeal and contact your local Legal Services Office for help.

Do you want to help make things better?

If you would like to join other people in making improvements in policy for TAFDC, food stamps, emergency assistance (including family shelters), or housing, there are groups working on these issues who would love to have you join them. They are:



Remieke Forbes, designed the new Survival News Logo (seen on Page 2). Photo by Dottie Stevens

Family Economic Initiative works on issues related to TAFDC (welfare for families with children). They meet once a month at Greater Boston Legal Services, 197 Friend St., Boston. Contact Elizabeth Toulan, 617-603-1626, for more information.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless works on issues related to housing and homelessness. They also do advocacy for individuals and families who are at risk for or are experiencing homelessness. The Coalition holds

monthly membership meetings in Boston, generally on the final Friday of the month. Contact Kelly Turley 781-595-7570, ext. 17 for more information.

The Food Stamp Coalition works on food stamp (now called SNAP) access barriers and a range of state and federal anti-hunger policy issues. They meet once a month in Boston. Contact Pat Baker at Mass Law Reform Institute, pbaker@mlri.org or at 617-357-0700, ext. 328 for more information.

Get money back from Earned Income Tax Credit

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You may be eligible to receive up to \$5,036 from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the tax refund for working people. You earned this money, so don't let your refund go unclaimed.

Who can get the EITC and how much is it worth?

Single or married people who worked full-time or part-time at some point in 2010 can qualify for the EIC, depending on their income. College students who have a work-study job can get EIC.

- Workers who were raising one child in their home and had income of less than \$35,535 (or \$40,545 for married workers) in 2010 can get an EIC of up to \$3,050.
- Workers who were raising two children in their home and had income of less than \$40,363 (or \$45,373 for married workers) in 2010 can get an EIC of up to \$5,036.
- Workers who were raising three or more children in their home and had income of less than \$43,352 (or \$48,362 for married workers) in 2010 can get an EIC of up to \$5,666.
- Workers who were not raising children in their home, were between ages 25 and 64 on December 31, 2010, and had income below \$13,460 (or \$18,470 for married workers) can get an EIC up to \$457. (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2010a)

If you would like to get an estimate of how much you might be entitled to get back, go to the EITC web site at <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2008>.

You can get EITC Advance Payments in your paychecks. To get EITC Advance payments, give a W-5 form to your employer. You can get the W-5 from your employer, or by calling the IRS at 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). If you have a checking account, you can have your EITC refund deposited directly.

Some people pay money to a private tax company like H&R Block to get help in filing their tax form or to get the money right away. Rather than do that, try to get free advice. Keep the money in your pocket, or save it and use it to build a better future for you and your family. **ABCD runs 13 tax preparation sites in Boston**. Their web site is: <http://www.bostonabcd.org/programs/eitc.html>. To find the tax preparation site nearest you, go to <http://masscashback.ehs.state.ma.us>.

A family's earned income tax credit payments do not count as income in determining eligibility or benefit levels for TAFDC, Medicaid, food stamps, SSI, work experience activities (such as community service), or public housing. Work-study students can file for EITC.

To figure your EITC, use a special worksheet included as part of the EITC instructions in form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ.

Massachusetts workers get an extra state credit worth 15% of their federal credit. You can order a tax form and get more information by calling 617-887-6367 or 1-800-392-6089.

The Child Tax Credit: An extra tax break for working families!

The Child Tax Credit (CTC) is a federal tax credit worth up to \$1,000 for each qualifying child under age 17 claimed on the worker's tax return. To be eligible for the CTC refund, a single or married worker must:

- have a qualifying child under age 17;
- have taxable earned income above \$3,000 and
- have either a Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number. Immigrant workers with either type of number may be able to claim the CTC refund.

To get the Child Tax Credit refund, file a federal tax return—Form 1040 or 1040A, but not 1040EZ.

Some families can get the credit even if they owe no income tax. This is called the Additional CTC refund. To find out if you are eligible for this, file form 8812. This form must be attached to the tax return for a family to receive the CTC refund.

Working families can get both the Child Tax Credit refund and the Earned Income Credit.

WHO GIVES HELP?

Where can you go for help with rent, food, money, utilities or fuel assistance when your welfare or SSI money runs out, or when you have been kicked off of welfare because of time limits?

The United Way First Call for Help is a good place to begin looking. They can give you information and a referral. Call them at 211. They are open day and night, seven days a week. They have interpreter services for most languages. The United Way also has a **Substance Abuse Help Line**, 1-800-327-5050. They can also give information on **H1N1 or seasonal flu**. They are open 24 hours a day.

Catholic Charities gives emergency assistance, when funds are available, to income-eligible households in the Boston area for back rent if you have an eviction notice, and to pay utility bills if you have a notice that the utility will be shut off. They also have a food pantry in Dorchester, and at El Centro del Cardenal, for which you need a referral from the Hunger Hot Line, 1-800-645-8333.

The main office of Catholic Charities is at 51 Sleeper Street, Boston 02210. Call Joseph Burnieika, 617-451-7964 (office) or 617-308-5477 (cell). They are open 9-4:45. Local Catholic Charities are as follows: **Dorchester**, 617-506-6600; **El Centro del Cardenal**, 617-542-9292; **Haitian Center**, 617-506-6600; **Laboure Center** (South Boston), 617-268-9670; **Somerville**, 617-625-1920; **Catholic Charities North**, 781-593-2312; **Merrimack Valley** (Lowell), 978-452-1421; **Brockton**, 508-587-0815; **Milford**, 508-478-9632.

ABCD in Boston gives housing counseling for people going through eviction, or housing court. If Boston residents have a letter of eviction from the landlord or a summons for housing court, the counselor will assess if there are any funding opportunities. They also do mortgage and foreclosure counseling. Their number is 617-348-6347.

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Travelers Aid Family Services, 617-542-7286, has a program to provide short-term emergency shelter to Boston families in crisis working in collaboration with the Mayor's Hotline. The agency also provides transportation and relocation services for individuals or families to travel to a safe place they can call home outside of Boston or the state. Transportation services include partial assistance for the fares and is primarily for those who are stranded or who are victims of domestic violence. The caseworker will have to verify that you have a place to stay when you are relocating.

Local towns. There is also a homeless prevention program for Boston families to help pay back rent, if funds are available, and the agency provides shelter and stabilization services for homeless families referred from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.

Call for eligibility requirements. Workers are available for walk-in service for transportation. Other services are by appointment and phone, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM–4:30 PM. Staff bilingual in Spanish translation are available. Local towns: Some organizations operate on a town-by-town basis. Their numbers can be found in the phone book, or by dialing 411. These include local churches and civic clubs, including: Kiwanis, Elks, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Rotary, Quota, Jaycees, and The Masons.

Help for Veterans

Veterans can get some help at their local Veteran's Services. The federal Department of Veterans Affairs has published a book that lists benefits, Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents. It is available online at www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

Housing and homelessness

If you are in danger of becoming homeless . . .

The Department of Housing and Community Development in Massachusetts offers services and money to people who are in danger of becoming homeless at their Division of Housing Stabilization offices, located at DTA offices. They assess your situation and try to help you work out a plan to avoid homelessness. If you are homeless and need shelter, a worker will help you.

The **Flexible Funds Program** (formerly called Tool Box) can help people who are moving out of shelter. They provide families with

up to \$12,000 for a one-year housing subsidy, as well as some funds for beds and other expenses.

The Housing and Consumer Education Center of Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership is at 617-425-6700. If you are a homeowner and would like to talk with their foreclosure counselor, contact Stephen Freeman at 617-425-6761. There are nine Housing

Consumer Education Centers in Massachusetts. You can locate them at www.masshousinginfo.org.

They also help renters. If funds are available, they can assist in rent and utility payments, and with shut off of utility payments. They can help with job and apartment search, fair housing issues, and personal finances. More information is on their web site, www.mbhp.org.

Mass. Coalition for the Homeless, 781-595-7570, gives information and advocacy, and lobbies for better policies for people who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness. They have published several booklets, which give advice on dealing with eviction, getting a Section 8 voucher, finding affordable housing, access to shelter, and knowing your housing rights. These are free. The Mass. Coalition for the Homeless is located at 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901. Their website is: www.mahomeless.org. They have a lot of information and materials there.

Boston residents who are homeless

after 5:00 and on weekends, can call the Boston Mayor's Hotline at 617-635-4500, for information and referral. During week day hours, call the Emergency Shelter Commission at 617-635-4507 for information and referral. Families with children and pregnant women can apply for shelter benefits through the Department of Housing and Community Development's Division of Housing Stabilization. In Boston, DHCD has staff in the same building as the DTA office at 2201 Washington Street, Dudley Square, Roxbury, phone 617-989-6000.

Free furniture/household goods

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless runs a furniture bank for families and individuals from across the state who are moving to permanent housing. People are eligible if they have been homeless within the past 90 days. The furniture bank also provides blankets and other household goods, when available. To apply, you need to be referred by an agency. Call the Donations Assistance Program at 781-595-7570, ext. 11. A staff person loads the furniture on to a truck, but the organization does not provide a truck.

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Michael Stevens, serious about ending poverty.

Photo by Dottie Stevens



Donate to Survivors Inc. Visit www.communityroom.net and click on "Survivors, Inc"



SURVIVAL TIPS

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Craigslist online has free furniture and other items. It lists by region. Click on “free stuff.”

Health care

MassHealth

MassHealth is the Massachusetts version of Medicaid. It is a public health insurance program for eligible low and medium-income residents of Massachusetts. People who receive TAFDC, SSI, or EAEDC are automatically eligible for MassHealth, and disabled people are eligible. To find out if you are eligible, call 1-888-665-9993 (TTY: 1-888-665-9997) and request an application, or download the application on their website, MassResources.org. To find a doctor or a dentist, or other health care provider in your area, call MassHealth Customer Service at 1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800-497-4648).

Commonwealth Care

People have different Commonwealth Care plan options depending on how much money they make compared to the poverty level. The Commonwealth Care premiums depend on how much money people make compared to the poverty level.

The application form is called a Medical Benefit Request, or MBR. When you send the application to MassHealth, they will enroll you in the best program you can get, which may be Commonwealth Care. Then, MassHealth will send a notice telling you what program you get. You can get an application at your health center or hospital. Also, you can call the Health Care For All Helpline at 1-800-272-4232 to get help filling out an application over the phone. If you qualify for Commonwealth Care, you can call 1-877-MA-ENROLL to pick a health plan, or go online to www.mahealthconnector.org.

The Health Safety Net (formerly called the Uncompensated Care Pool or Free Care Pool) is not an insurance program. It is basically a waiver of some bills at certain locations, such as community health centers and public hospitals. It can act as a supplement to your primary insurance and assists with care that is not covered, or for deductibles. Or it could be the only program you have to cover your medical expenses.

MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach is a free, confidential service available to all Massachusetts residents who are seeking information regarding their medications. Whether you are having difficulties affording your medications or want to know what the side effects are to your prescriptions, MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach can help. By calling a toll-free help line at 866-633-1617, visiting our walk-in center at 25 Foster Street, Worcester, MA, or accessing our web site (www.massmedline.com), patients will receive information about their medications, prescription drug coverage, including the Medicare Drug benefit, and assistance with accessing affordable prescription drug programs.

Questions about health care?

Call Health Care For All’s helpline at 1-800-272-4232 or the Connector at 1-877-623-6767 (TTY: 1-877-623-7773 for people with partial or total hearing loss.) Health Care for All is a non-

profit Massachusetts advocacy agency that promotes affordable and comprehensive health coverage for all groups. They are a phone line only and do not take walk-ins. Their website is: www.hcfama.org
Health care for the homeless

Boston Health Care for the Homeless program provides health care for the homeless at clinics, Boston shelters, Boston Medical Center, and Mass General Hospital. They have a Respite Program for homeless individuals who are not sick enough to be in the hospital, but too sick to be on the street or in a shelter. Call 857-654-1000. Be sure to say you are calling about the respite program if you want to be admitted.

Medical equipment for children

Pass it On gives pediatric medical equipment for disabled children up to age 22, including wheel chairs, bathroom equipment, and related items. They deliver to Eastern Massachusetts as far as Worcester County. While the equipment is free, they ask for help in paying for transporting the equipment. Call 508-477-6966 or 1-800-267-6768. Their web site is passitonforkids.org.

Help with children’s clothing

The Children’s Clothing Exchange, a program of Solutions at Work, is at the Roosevelt Towers Housing Complex, 391 Evereteze Way, Cambridge, MA 02141. Phone (617) 576-0039. Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month from 11-3.

You can obtain clothing for newborns through age 14. They have professional clothing for women and men who are entering a job, by appointment and referral. They also have shoes for older children up to age 14. You can exchange clean, ready-to-wear clothing that your children have outgrown. No money is needed. Families in crisis don’t need to exchange on their first visit. Free children’s books and toys and baby strollers and car seats are available.

Free and low-cost legal help

Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, 617-495-4408, provides legal services to low-income people on housing issues, domestic violence, appeals of denials of unemployment benefits, wage and hour (minimum wage) discrimination, and benefits. Their services are free to recipients of TAFDC, EAEDC, and SSI, and other low-income people. They serve most areas of Middlesex or Suffolk counties. They are located at 23 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138. They are open from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. Call for an appointment.

The National Lawyer’s Guild provides legal assistance to low- or moderate-income people through their referral service. They handle disability (including SSI and SSDI), criminal, discrimination, employment, family law, landlord/tenant, immigration, civil rights, civil litigation, personal injury, bankruptcy, real estate, and other areas of law. Fees are generally negotiated on a sliding scale basis. Spanish and other languages are spoken. Their hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 – 4:00. Call 617-227-7008. They are at 14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108.

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Help available for immigrants

Greater Boston Legal Services at 617-371-1234 represents immigrants.

The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) provides trainings, advocacy, and information to individuals and groups. Call 617-350-5480.

The Irish Immigration Center has an Immigration/Citizenship Assistance Program that offers a range of services to all immigrants (not just Irish people) including information and referral, immigration services, employment assistance, a cross-cultural program, and advocacy for immigrant rights. They are accredited by the Department of Justice and can represent people in interviews with the Department. They are located at 100 Franklin St., Lower level, Boston, MA 02111, phone 617-542-7654.

Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Office, 617-464-8100, helps refugees, asylees, and Cuban and Haitian parolees (people who have been detained by the U.S. Department of Justice and are now on parole). Their services include: cash assistance, employment assistance, case management, English classes, and social service referrals. They also have ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

Asylees can receive services within the first month after getting asylum status and during that month are eligible for more services such as cash assistance and employment services. They are located at 275 W. Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127.

The Pair Project, 617-742-9296, provides free legal assistance to low- and no-income asylum seekers. They also provide assistance to immigration detainees. Call for an appointment.

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center, 617-661-1010, 1 West St., Cambridge, provides legal services and counseling on family, disability, immigration, and housing issues. Legal services are free, and counseling services are on a sliding scale. Call the office for information on specific services.

Help for parents under stress

The Parental Stress Line is a toll-free hotline to give support to parents who are under stress. It is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They have parent support groups, which are anonymous and confidential. Call 1-800-632-8188.

Higher Education

TERI College Planning Center can help you find scholarships if you are income eligible, choose a college, complete admission and financial aid applications, get your college admission fee waived, and get advice on paying for college. You can talk with an advisor, use their computers to find scholarships, and look through their resource books — all free of charge.

There are 6 Educational Opportunity Centers throughout Massachusetts. Boston and The Boston phone number is 617-536-0200 (in the Concourse level of the Boston Public Library). They are usually open 9-9 Monday-Thursday and 9-5 Friday and Saturday. For other areas, call the main number at 617-536-0200.

Scholarship help for low-income women



Charlie Parks and Richard Myree, with the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, interning at Survivors, Inc., honing their skills in property maintenance

The Patsy Takemoto Mink Fellowship each year gives scholarships of \$2,000 to assist low-income women to achieve an educational objective. The fellowship is named for the woman who represented her native Hawaii in the U.S. Congress. She fought against welfare reform in Congress. Her daughter Gwendolyn Mink, author of Welfare's End, established the fellowship, along with Patsy Mink's husband, to honor her deceased mother.

Education and Training

ABCD is offering training for Early Childhood Education, Community Health, Weatherization, and Green Jobs. Call 617-357-6000, Ext. 7453. The programs offer:

- Careers based internships;
- College level courses;
- Employment counseling and job placement support.

Eligibility requirements include: Boston residency; high school diploma or G.E.D.; ability to write an essay in English; minimum age 18 years old; background check, including CORI; low-income, unemployed, or receiving public benefits.

The weatherization program, called WAGE (Weatherization and Green Energy), trains people in weatherization and helps them get jobs. The Green Jobs program teaches recycling and other skills. Both WAGE and Green Jobs start late February or early March. The director is Brad Howard, ext. 7450.

St. Mary's Women and Children's Center, 617-436-8600, 90 Cushing Avenue, Dorchester, MA, provides job training, computer skills, adult basic education, and GED preparation. Their Women's Learning Center instructs up to 20 students at a time in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and preparation for the General Educational Development (GED) testing series. The program is highly flexible — offering open enrollment, and lessons are tailored to meet students' individual needs.

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Project Hope — Free Health Care training programs

Project Hope offers three health care training programs for entry-level positions with Partners HealthCare, Spaulding Rehabilitation, Brigham and Women's, and Mass General Hospital. They also offer a free job readiness training (called Project 90) through their collaboration with Project Place. For more information on this, visit their web site at <http://www.prohope.org/openhouse.htm#P90#P90>

Workforce Development & Employer Partnerships — Open Houses. If you're interested in careers in health care or customer service, we encourage you to get to know us through a personal visit!

Program Description:

Partners in Career and Workforce Development (PCWD) is a free 6-week employment and training program designed for individuals interested in entry-level employment within one of the Partners hospitals. This is an unpaid training program on Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm which includes 3.5 weeks of classroom instruction located on the Massachusetts General Campus and a 2.5 week internship in a basic clerical or support staff position. Graduates receive job search support in Career Club until employment goals are reached. PCWD is a DTA and section 30 approved program. For more information, you can visit the Partners HealthCare website <http://www.partners.org/jobtraining>.

Community Partners in Health Professions (CPHP) is a free 10-week job readiness health care training program with a strong emphasis on academics, communication, computers, and employment skills. Classes meet at Project Hope Monday -Thursday from 9a.m. to 3p.m. and Fridays are dedicated to case management. CPHP was designed to support community residents in gaining the skills necessary to be viable candidates for employment in general and administrative health care positions. Graduates receive job search support and referrals to partnering hospitals. CPHP is a DTA approved program.

Professional Readiness Employment Program (PREP) is a workshop series designed to improve the work readiness skills of community members seeking employment. PREP meets monthly from 1:30pm-4:30 pm on Tuesday and Thursday. Participants who successfully complete all of PREP workshops series will be eligible to receive referral services to the BWH Community Partnership Program, CPHP, or external training programs.

Brigham and Women's Community Partnership (BWH)

Project Hope in collaboration and partnership with Brigham and Women's offers additional job readiness support to those individuals who are actively participating in an Employer Partnerships program, live within specific neighborhoods, and are interested in becoming BWH applicants. This program is designed to support community residents in becoming viable candidates for entry-level general service and supportive staff positions within Brigham and Women's Hospital.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Attend an Open House:
http://www.prohope.org/openhouse_faq.htm
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent
- Speak, write, and understand English
- Pass assessments in Reading, Language, and Computer
- Have CORI clearance
- Have at least 1 full year of work experience with one employer
- Be able to attend and complete training

Project 90 (P90)

Project Hope in collaboration with Project Place welcomes Project 90, a free 12-week job readiness-training program focusing on interviewing skills, resume writing, computer skills, employment skills, professionalism, customer service certification and internship placement. Participants receive job placement support and/or enrollment in higher skills training programs.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Currently be experiencing homelessness (living in shelter, transitional housing, halfway homes)
- Express motivation to work
- Have a professional attitude
- Have been sober for at least the past 90 days
- Be interested in entry-level employment or higher skills training in a variety of settings upon completion of program
- Be eligible to work in the United States.
- Speak, write, and understand English
- Be able to attend and complete training

Interested Candidates: Go to <http://www.prohope.org/> and follow the links to read Open House Information http://www.prohope.org/openhouse_faq.htm and complete the Registration Form http://www.prohope.org/openhouse_form.htm. If you have questions, please call 617-442-1880 ext. 218 to leave a message. A staff member will return your call.

Emergency birth control

In the United States, women and men age 17 and older can purchase emergency contraception over the counter. People under age 17 need a prescription. If you have had unprotected sex or think your birth control method has failed, you can use the "morning-after-pill" to prevent pregnancy. Just ask your pharmacist for Plan B One-Step or Next Choice. Emergency contraception works best if taken as soon as possible and within 5 days after sex. If you are sexually active, it is good to have it on hand just in case. If your doctor or hospital refuses to give you a prescription, call the Emergency Contraceptive Hotline, 888-not-2-lat (888-668-2528), or go to the Emergency Contraception Website, ec.princeton.edu. The Website gives the name of a pharmacy near you where you can get the pill. It also contains advice for people younger than 17.

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More useful information

The **DTA Recipient Services Office** is very helpful in giving information about policy and what you are entitled to. Call 617-348-5502 or 1-800-445-6604.

DTA regulations are available on the Web: www.state.ma.us/dta.

Benefits for Massachusetts residents

MassResources.org describes state and federal benefits available to Massachusetts residents.

Childcare benefits regulations and other information are available on the Web at www.QualityChildCare.org, which is the website for the state Office of Child Care Services.

Coming Home: Directory: A Resource Directory for Ex-Offenders Returning to Greater Boston Communities is a comprehensive resource book published by the Crime and Justice Institute. It is available online at www.cominghomedirectory.org. The directory is published by the Crime and Justice Institute, 617-482-2520, ext. 130.

Elder Resource Guide is published by the Brookline Council on Aging and the Brookline Senior Center. It contains a wealth of information for elders. It is available online at www.brooklinema.gov. Click on “Departments,” “Council on Aging,” and “Elder Resource Guide.”

Do you have a Criminal Record? Do you have trouble finding jobs or housing because of your CORI? If you have a CORI and need information about jobs, housing, sealing your record, mistakes on your CORI or other problems, call the Legal Advocacy and Resource Center at 617-603-2700. For more information about CORI law, visit www.masslegalhelp.org/cori.

The Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy Benefits Access Line, for teen parents and people who work with them. They answer questions about welfare, food stamps, housing, childcare or other services in your area that teens and their children might be eligible for. Call 1-800-645-3750 ext. 115.

Jane Doe, Inc. A hot line, sponsored by the Mass. Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, helps people who are sexually assaulted or fleeing from domestic violence. Call (617) 248-0922.

Keeping the Heat and Lights On for Massachusetts Residents is a brochure put out by the National Consumer Law Center about how to avoid shut-off of utilities and get them put back on, and how to get help with energy bills, fuel assistance, and telephone bills. To get copies, contact consumerlaw@nclc.org.

Thanks: to Melanie Malherbe of Greater Boston Legal Services, Kelly Hurley of Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Pat Baker of the Food Stamp Coalition, Roxanne Reddington-Wilde of ABCD, Charles Harak of the National Consumer Law Center, The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and Health Care for All, for their help.

Note: We have checked this information carefully and believe that it is correct at the time of writing, January 2011. However, things sometimes change. Agencies sometimes use up their money or change their policies. We will check the information again before we print another issue, so subscribe to Survival News for the latest survival tips! These Survival Tips were compiled by Betty Reid Mandell. If you have questions about this information, or if you have a useful survival tip, she can be contacted by phone at 617-327-4219, or by email at mmandell@curry.edu.

Scuffled sandy hair

By Mary Lou Ferro

Your sneakers are too small
and your pants are too big
and they've dehumanized you
with their diplomas from the curly wig

Your hair is all scuffled
falling from one side too short
while on a cold sunny morning
you're lucky if you're wearing
two or the same or socks

Your aggression is interrupted
as all part of your disabled entity
and they've dehumanized you
by claims of your brain's waves
being tapped, untapped or
strange
much different
than his or hers or mine

You're angry and I would be
if I lived in such dire
p o v e r t y,
but they've got your ticket
in their fat back pocket
and so you see
many dollars green
and gained
from keeping little keen minds trained
to believe you're so different than him or her
or me...

(So today my work is handed, to follow you around,
without the threat of "hovering" lest your true ability be found
that you can soar above it all if given proper care,
but--then again--their book taught, diploma sought,
ways of thinking,
are speaking LOUDER than your shrinking
small shoes,
over sized pants,
and scuffled sandy hair.)



Mẹo Cho Sự Sống Sót

Văn Phòng Luật Greater Boston Legal Services sẽ giúp được bạn lấy tiền trợ cấp

Nếu bạn có khó khăn lấy tiền trợ cấp mà bạn nên được có, xin liên lạc Văn Phòng Luật Greater Boston Legal Services tại (617) 371-1234. Họ có thể cho bạn những lời khuyên hoặc sẽ gửi người để giúp bạn làm việc với Cơ Quan Trợ Cấp (Department of Transitional Assistance) và Văn Phòng Housing (Housing Authority). Sẽ có người biết tiếng Việt làm việc với bạn hay là GBLS sẽ sử dụng người thông dịch. Nếu bạn không ở trong vùng lân cận của Boston, GBLS sẽ chỉ dẫn bạn đến văn phòng luật khác gần vùng bạn ở hơn.

Bạn cũng có thể lấy được những chỉ dẫn về luật pháp tại MassLegalHelp, www.masslegalhelp.org.

Nhận trợ cấp cho tiền sưởi trong những tháng mùa Đông

Những người có thu nhập thấp có thể được nhận trợ cấp cho tiền gas và dầu. Trong Boston, Brookline, và Newton, ABCD sẽ quản lý chương trình trợ cấp của liên ban này. Số điện thoại liên lạc là 617-357-6012, ext. 11. Trợ cấp này là cho các hình thức sưởi ấm - như là dầu, gas, điện, gỗ, hoặc là kerosene. Bạn cũng nhận được trợ cấp cho tiền sưởi đã tính trong tiền thuê nhà. Những người ở trong housing được nhận trợ cấp nếu bạn chịu trách nhiệm trả tiền sưởi. Thời kỳ nộp đơn là từ Ngày 1, Tháng 11 đến Ngày 30, Tháng 4. Để tham gia vào chương trình này, bạn phải có thu nhập dưới 60% thu nhập trung bình của tiểu bang Massachusetts. Gia đình một người được thu nhập đến \$27,876, gia đình hai người được đến \$35,454, gia đình ba người được đến \$45,031, và gia đình bốn người được đến \$53,608. Nếu muốn thêm chi tiết, xin vào trang <http://bostonabcd.org/prgrams/crisis/fuel-assistance/FuelEligibility.html>.

Những người được nhận trợ cấp tiền sưởi có thể sẽ được nhận giá giảm cho những bills trong nhà và những trợ cấp khác của ABCD, như là sửa chữa máy sưởi, thay máy sưởi mới, kiểm tra giàn điện, và insulation nhà.

Nếu bạn ở ngoài vùng Boston, Brookline, và Newton, xin gọi Department of Housing and Community Development tại 617-573-1100 để tìm cơ quan gần bạn hơn.

Mass Energy Consumers Alliance tiết kiệm tiền dầu cho bạn

Bạn có thể tiết kiệm từ \$100 đến \$250 tiền dầu nếu bạn gia nhập Mass Energy Consumers Alliance với lệ phí là \$20, miễn phí nếu bạn nhận trợ cấp tiền sưởi. Bạn phải cung cấp một lá thư phê chuẩn từ Văn Phòng Trợ Cấp với đơn hội nhập của bạn. Lệ phí chỉ là \$10 cho những người có thu nhập cố định, như là người lão niên và người đã về hưu. Những hội viên sẽ tiết kiệm được từ 10 cho đến 30 cents mỗi gallon dầu trên giá thị trường. Những người rất tin cậy và chuyên môn sẽ giao dầu cho bạn và phục vụ tận tình. Nếu muốn thêm chi tiết, xin liên lạc Mass Energy Consumers Alliance tại 617-524-3950 or 1-800-287-3950. Website của họ là www.massenergy.org và địa chỉ là P.O. Box 301089, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

Những điều kiện cần thiết về việc làm cho người đang ăn trợ cấp TAFDC

Chính phủ liên bang đang gay áp lực Văn Phòng Trợ Cấp (DTA) phải buộc những người đang ăn trợ cấp một là đi làm hoặc là phải tham gia trong công việc liên quan đến việc làm từ 20 đến 30 tiếng mỗi tuần. Nếu bạn đang bị ép làm việc gì mà bạn không có phương tiện để làm, như là đi làm, kiếm việc làm, hoặc là tham gia trong những trường trình khác, xin bạn liên lạc văn phòng luật lân cận để được giúp đỡ. Dưới đây là những thông tin có thể giúp bạn đáp ứng điều kiện DTA đã đưa ra.

Những công việc liên quan đến việc làm có bao gồm đa số thời giờ đi lớp học và thời giờ đi lớp luyện tập, cho ít nhất là mười hai tháng. Những trường trình đại học, kể cả trường trình 4 năm, cũng được tính (nhưng bạn phải học bộ môn nào mà sẽ giúp bạn để tìm việc làm.) Thời giờ mà bạn phải tốn để đi lớp học hoặc lớp tập luyện sẽ không làm ảnh hưởng đến giới hạn 12 tháng của bạn. Nếu bạn cần hơn 12 tháng, xin liên lạc với văn phòng luật pháp lân cận. Cho dù bạn tham gia trong trường trình nào kéo dài hơn 12 tháng, DTA cũng không được quyền phủ nhận trường trình đó cho ít nhất 12 tháng.

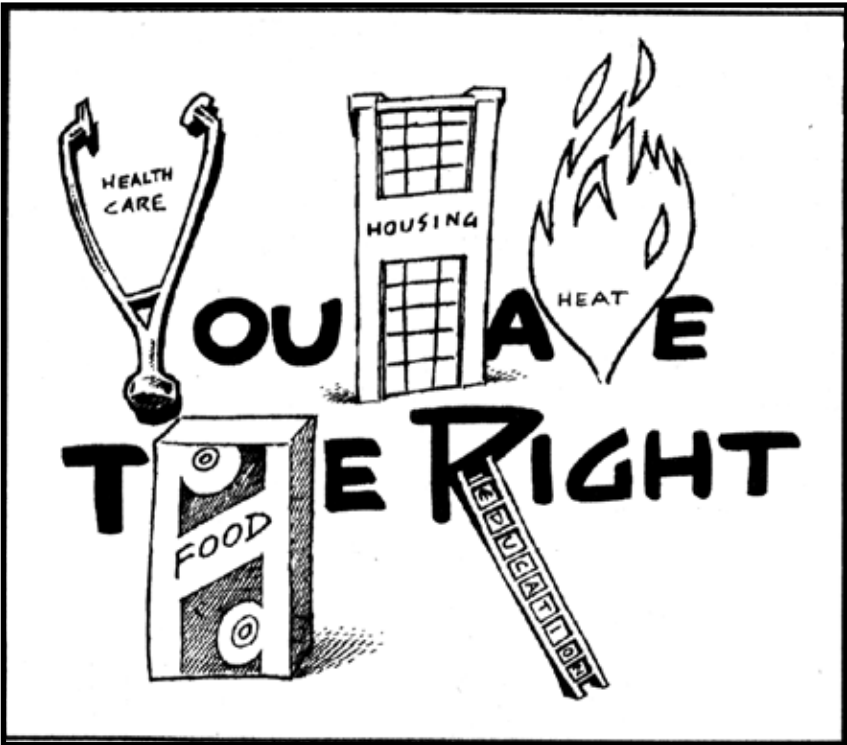
Những điều kiện mà DTA đưa ra cũng bao gồm thời giờ đi tìm nhà cửa cho những người đang cư ngụ tại những nhà shelter. DTA phải đưa tiền trợ cấp cho những gia đình đang ở trong shelter nếu những gia đình này làm đủ theo điều kiện của Văn Phòng Trợ Cấp Khẩn Cấp (Emergency Assistance), bất kể bao nhiêu thời giờ những gia đình này dành để đi tìm nhà.

DTA không được giảm hoặc ngưng tiền trợ cấp của bạn vì lý do là bạn không đáp ứng được điều kiện cần thiết mà DTA đã nêu ra, nếu bạn có động cơ chính đáng như là sau đây:

- bạn không tìm được người thích hợp để giữ con của bạn
- bạn không có phương tiện giao thông
- bạn bị bệnh đi tìm chỗ ở
- không có nơi làm công việc xã hội đã được DTA chấp thuận gần nhà của bạn
- bạn có thành viên trong gia đình đang bị bệnh
- bạn phải lo cho người bị bệnh trong nhà
- bạn gặp trường hợp khẩn cấp, ngoài ý muốn và không thể tham gia vào trường trình theo điều kiện của DTA
- bạn có việc làm hoặc nhận được việc làm vi phạm luật lương tối thiểu; đối xử phân biệt theo tuổi tác, giới tính, chủng tộc, tôn giáo, nguồn gốc dân tộc, sự tàn tật vật lý

và tâm lý; vi phạm tiêu chuẩn sức khỏe và an toàn; hoặc là những công việc đó được trồng bởi sự bất công hay đình công.

DTA không thể giảm hoặc cắt tiền trợ cấp của bạn trước khi họ xét lại những động cơ chính đáng ở trên. Nếu bạn nghĩ là DTA đã lầm lẫn giảm hoặc cắt tiền trợ cấp của bạn, bạn nên nộp đơn chống án và liên lạc văn phòng luật pháp ở lân cận nếu bạn cần sự giúp đỡ.



PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

Greater Boston Legal Services puede ayudarle a obtener beneficios

Si usted tiene dificultad para obtener los beneficios a los cuales tiene derecho, contacte a Greater Boston Legal Services (Servicios Legales del Gran Boston) al teléfono 617-371-1234. GBLS puede darle asesoría o representarle para negociar con el Departamento de Asistencia Transitoria (Department of Transitional Assistance, asistencia social) o la Agencia de Viviendas (Housing Authority). Para comunicarse con clientes que no son de habla inglesa, se les proporciona defensores bilingües o intérpretes. Si usted no vive en el área de Boston, GBLS puede remitirle a Legal Services en su área.

Asimismo, puede obtener asesoría legal en línea en MassLegalHelp, www.masslegalhelp.org.

Programas de alimentos

Project Bread (Proyecto Pan) puede darle información sobre cupones de alimentos, decirle cuáles despensas de alimentos o comedores comunitarios son cercanos a su casa y mencionarle los puestos de extensión de cupones de alimentos. El Proyecto tiene a su disposición intérpretes en varios idiomas. Llame a la Línea de Emergencia de FoodSource, al teléfono 1-800-645-8333 o al TTY 1-800-377-1292.

Todos tienen derecho de solicitar los cupones de alimentos (actualmente llamados SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Programa Suplementario de Asistencia Nutricional) en la oficina local del DTA, por Internet o en otros puestos de extensión de cupones de alimentos. Llame al DTA, al teléfono 1-800-249-2007, para averiguar dónde está la oficina local del DTA. Puede también llamar a la Línea de Emergencia de FoodSource del Project Bread al teléfono 1-800-645-8333 para saber de otros puestos de cupones de alimentos en su área. **Usted tiene el derecho de firmar la solicitud en papel el mismo día que visita la oficina local del DTA.**

Puede también aplicarse en el internet a www.state.ma.us/dta y haciendo clic en “Solicitar Cupones de Alimentos (Apply for Food Stamps)” para una solicitud en línea o puede imprimir la solicitud en el sitio web del DTA. También puede pedir a la oficina central del DTA que le envíe una copia en papel por correo y, una vez llenada, re-enviársela al DTA.

Si usted tiene poco o nada de ingreso o activo, o si el costo del refugio es mayor a su ingreso y el dinero en el banco, usted puede obtener cupones agilizados (rápidos) de alimentos. Esto significa que puede conseguir los cupones dentro de 7 días, después que el DTA recibe la solicitud firmada. A veces lo mejor es ir personalmente si necesita los cupones enseguida. El DTA le pedirá que verifique quién es usted (su identidad) y le preguntará sobre sus ingresos y gastos para ver si usted califica. No necesita una identificación con foto. Si no tiene ninguna evidencia de identidad pero sabe su SSN (número de seguro social), el DTA puede comprobar su identidad a través de su SSN y la fecha de nacimiento.

Aunque no califique para los cupones agilizados de alimentos, puede aún obtener los cupones en 30 días posteriores a su solicitud, si usted satisface las reglas de elegibilidad. Necesitará entrevistarse y proporcionar pruebas de su ingreso, costo del

refugio y otros gastos. Usted recibirá una carta por correo después de la aplicación informándole para cuándo la entrevista será programada y cuáles son las evidencias que usted necesita. A menos que usted necesite cupones agilizados de alimentos, el DTA no toma en cuenta sus activos al determinar si usted califica para los beneficios.

No olvide de informar al DTA si usted paga por el cuidado de sus hijos, cuotas para programas antes/después de la escuela o por el cuidado de un adulto con discapacidad, para que usted pueda trabajar. Puede también reclamar el costo de transporte (público o con su vehículo) al y desde el lugar del cuidado de sus hijos, programas montados en las escuelas, etc. a la tasa federal de millaje de 55 centavos por milla. Usted puede declarar el costo de manutención de sus hijos. **El reclamar los gastos de manutención de sus hijos puede aumentar sus cupones de alimentos.**

Si alguien de su hogar es discapacitado o tiene 60 años o más de edad, ellos también pueden reclamar el costo de cualquier gasto médico para aumentar los cupones de alimentos. Los gastos médicos que se pueden reclamar incluyen el transporte a la cita con médicos y a farmacias para recoger medicamentos (a 48 centavos por milla). También se incluyen vitaminas, aspirinas, baterías para audífono, anteojos, cremas sin receta usadas para tratar las condiciones de piel y cualquier otro producto médico recomendado por el proveedor, así como los costos de terapias alternativas que no son cubiertas por MassHealth o Medicare (quiropática, acupuntura, terapias de masaje y remedios de hierba). Puede también reclamar y comprobar el costo para los animales de servicio. Usted necesitará proporcionar evidencias de sus gastos médicos y una lista de instalaciones médicas que visita para reclamar el transporte, incluyendo facturas de veterinarios y provisiones alimenticias. Si un familiar de mayor edad (60+) o discapacitado gasta más de \$35/mes en gastos relacionados a tratamientos médicos, el DTA permitirá una deducción estándar de \$90. La deducción puede ser aún mayor si los gastos varios son mayores. **El reclamar los gastos médicos puede aumentar sus beneficios de cupones de alimentos.**

Los estudiantes universitarios pueden obtener cupones de alimentos si consiguen algunos de las siguientes cosas a) el estudiante recibe Federal Work Study (FWS) para pagar su matrícula, b) trabaja 20 horas por la semana, c) tiene hijos menor de 12 años, d) está discapacitado, e) tiene 49+ años o tiene menos de 18 años, f) asiste a la universidad con un Programa de Empleo y Formación o la División de Desempleo. Además, algunos estudiantes que asisten a colegios universitarios pueden calificar para cupones de alimentos si estudian en un programa de empleo y formación, o si el colegio universitario cree que el estudiante puede obtener un empleo después de sus estudios. DTA tiene un formulario para colegios universitarios para verificar los programas de los estudiantes.

Si se le niegan los cupones de alimentos o no está de acuerdo con el monto de sus beneficios, usted tiene derecho a cuestionar y desafiar cualquier decisión tomada por el DTA, a la cual usted no está de acuerdo. Existe información en línea sobre cómo apelar la denegación de beneficios: www.masslegalhelp.org. Puede también contactar a la oficina de Legal Services de su área para asesoría y representación.

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Angel Food Ministries

Vea el sitio web www.angelfoodministries.com. Es un programa de asistencia social y cualquier persona puede calificar. Usted encontrará un centro de distribución de su área insertando su código postal. Los alimentos no son gratis pero se aceptan cupones de alimentos. Básicamente, puede comprar alimentos valorados en \$60.00 por \$30.00, aproximadamente alimentos por un familia de 4 personas por una semana, o suficiente por una persona por un mes. Se pueden telefonar la organización en cualquier tiempo a 1-877-366-3646. Visite a www.angelfoodministries.com para aprender donde está la locacion más cercana a su hogar.

Fair Foods

Fair Food distribuya alimentos a comunidades enpobrecimientos en Massachusetts y New Hampshire. Puede comprar alimentos de bien calidad, incluyendo frutas y vegetales frescos, por \$2 por una bolsa – traiga su propia bolsa. Llame al teléfono 617-288-6185 y visitar al sitio web www.fairfoods.org. Tienen locaciones en Boston y Dorchester.

Asistencia para combustible durante los meses de invierno

Las personas de bajos ingresos pueden obtener ayuda para pagar el combustible. ABCD administra el programa federal de asistencia para combustibles en Boston, Brookline y Newton. El número de teléfono es 617-357-6012, ext. 11. La asistencia es dirigida para cualquier forma de calefacción — petróleo, gas, electricidad, leña o queroseno. La ayuda se le otorga a aquellas personas que tiene la calefacción incluida en el alquiler de viviendas no subsidiadas. Las personas con subsidios para viviendas pueden obtener ayuda si pagan la calefacción. El período de inscripción es del 1 noviembre al 30 abril. El nivel de elegibilidad es el 60% del ingreso medio de Massachusetts. Una familia de 1 miembro puede ganar hasta \$29,126, de 2 miembros hasta \$38,087, de 3 miembros hasta \$47,049 y de 4 miembros hasta \$56,011. Para más detalles, visita <http://bostonabcd.org/prgrams/crisis/fuel-assistance/FuelEligibility.html>.

Todas las personas que califican para la asistencia de combustibles pueden serlo tambien para obtener una tarifa reducida para las facturas de los servicios públicos y otros beneficios de ABCD, incluyendo la climatización (insulación de su casa contra el frío), revisión eléctrica y reparación o reemplazo del sistema de calefacción. Si vive fuera de Boston, Brookline y Newton, llame al Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunal (Department of Housing and Community Development), al teléfono 1-800-632-8175, para averiguar sobre la agencia cercana a usted.

The Good Neighbor Energy Fund — Esta unidad, entre empresas de energía y The Salvation Army, proporciona dinero a familias que viven en Massachusetts que tienen dificultad para pagar para la calefacción durante el invierno. En 2011, cada familia que califica

podría recibir \$300 del Fund. Para calificarse por el Fund, cada familia necesita ganar su sueldo menos de 60 a 80 pro ciento del nivel del ingreso medio. Por ejemplo, una familia de 2 personas necesita ganar su ingreso total entre \$40,213 a \$53,617 para calificar; una familia de 4 personas necesita ganar su ingreso total entre \$59,137 a \$78,849. Para aplicar por el Fund, visite a un de los 36 sitios del Salvation Army en Massachusetts, y llame 1-800-334-3047 (en MA del este, codas telefónicas 617, 508, 978, 781) o 1-800-262-1320 (para las familias que viven in MA del oeste). También visite el sitio web <http://magoodneighbor.org/assistance.html>

Mass Energy Consumers Alliance (Alianza para Consumidores de Energía de Massachusetts) le ahorra dinero a usted por el consumo de combustible

Puede ahorrar de \$100 a \$250 por el combustible para la calefacción afiliándose a la Alianza por \$20, \$10 o, gratis si recibe ayuda para combustibles. Tiene que proporcionar una carta de aprobación de la agencia que le brinda ayuda para combustibles y enviarla junto con su solicitud.



Ayudará con las ejecuciones hipotecarias. Photo by Lenore Pereira

Los miembros ahorran de 10 a 30 centavos por galón comparado al precio regular al por menor. Proveedores confiables de servicio completo entregan el combustible a domicilio y abastecen su sistema. Llame al teléfono 617-524-3950 o al 1-800-287-3950 para más información, en inglés o en español. El sitio web es www.massenergy.org. Su dirección postal es: Apartado Postal 301089, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

Ayuda para las facturas de electricidad y gas

Descuentos para el gas y la electricidad, y planes de presupuesto

Los servicios públicos de gas y electricidad en Massachussets (servicios públicos de la ciudad o el pueblo están exentos) necesitan dar unas tasas de descuento para familias o personas con ingresos bajos. La mayoría que las familias que reciben ayuda para las fracturas de electricidad y gas (Fuel Assistance) será inscrito automáticamente. Si puede calificar, obtenga un formulario de la compañía del servicio (por ejemplo NSTAR o Nacional Grid), rellene el formulario y envíalo a la compañía. También puede llamar a la compañía – deben inscribirse lo antes posibles, y no necesitan esperar a verificar los ingresos. Para el invierno 2010-2011 los ingresos para calificar son: para 1 persona –\$30,751 o menos; para 2 -- \$40,213 o menos; para 3 -- \$49,675 o menos; para 4 -- \$59,137 o menos; para 5 -- \$69,598 o menos.

Todos pueden ahorrar dinero con planes de presupuesto

Las utlidades ofrecen planes a nivel de pagos mensuales. Se estima el consumo anual y dividir esa cantidad en 12 pagos iguales.

Todos pueden obtener un “auditoría del uso de energía” gratis

Puede aprender a ahorrar energía y dinero.

Puede ser que tenga derecho a un descuento de 25% de la carga básica de electricidad con NSTAR si usted recibe Medicaid, cupones

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de alimentos, SSI, TAFDC, ayuda para combustibles, programa nacional de desayuno/almuerzo escolar o beneficios del Servicio a Veteranos de Massachusetts (Massachusetts Veterans Service). Llame al teléfono 1-800-566-2080 para solicitar el formulario. Si usted no había obtenido este descuento pero tenía derecho al mismo, puede ser que obtenga pagos retroactivos con la ayuda de un defensor. Obtenga asesoría del National Consumer Law Center (Centro Nacional de Leyes de Consumidores), al teléfono 617-542-8010, para que le ayude con esto.

Mientras que la ley demanda sólo a las empresas de electiridad que hagan descuentos, la mayoría de las empresas de gas ofrecen también descuentos, incluyendo a K-Span y NSTAR Gas.

Sus Derechos Contra la Desconexión de los Servicios Públicos

Todas las personas en el hogar tienen 65 años o más

A menos que el DPU (departamento de servicios públicos) permite, la mayoría de familias de las personas mayores no tienen utilidades desconectado.

Plan de pago

Todos los clientes tienen derecho a un plan de pago. Esto permite que el cliente que está atrasado en el pago de sus facturas espacie los pagos a lo largo de varios meses. Si no se le ha suspendido todavía el servicio al cliente, la empresa debe ofrecer un plan de pago de al menos 4 meses. Usted se puede obtener una prórroga mediante la negociación entre la empresa y el cliente. Si necesita ayuda, llame al DPU Consumer Division (la divisón de consumo) al teléfono 1-877-886-5066. Las empresas deben ofrecer un plan de pago que conecta las utilidades que han suspendidos.

ABCD proporciona servicios de referencia y de promoción para los clientes eligibles que quieren un plan de pago. En Boston, Brookline y Newton, National Grid y NSTAR ofrecen planes de pago. Los clientes pueden tener sus deudas perdonadas entre \$1500-\$2000 por años con un plan de pago.

Llame al teléfono 1-800-233-5325 para hablar con National Grid y al teléfono 1-866-315-2496 para hablar con NSTAR.

Si el Propietario No Paga la Fractura

Todos los inquilinos (ingresos no son importantes) están protegidos cuando el propietario paga la fractura para los servicios públicos. Si el propietario no paga la fractura, los inquilinos tienen 30 días para pagar sus partes de la fractura. Si todos los inquilinos no la pagan, sólo el DPU del estado decide si es necesario a desconectar los servicios públicos. Contacte al DPU rapidamente si los servicios públicos están desconectados en su hogar. Si el edificio está en ejucución de una hipoteca, el propietario debe mantener los servicios públicos.

4 Maneras para Familias de Bajos Ingresos Eligibles pueden Mantener Conectados los Servicios Públicos

Personas Mayores

Las empresas utilidades no deben desconectar el gas o la electricidad si sus clientes tienen 65 años o más. Las empresas utilidades pueden

enviarle una forma para protección para personas mayores.

Enfermedades graves

Si alguien en el hogar padece una enfermedad grave, las empresas de servicios públicos no pueden desconectar (y deben reconectar) los servicios. La enfermedad puede ser:

- física (pneumonía, etc)
- mental (depresión, bipolar o trastorno hiperactivo de déficit de atención),
- así como de corto plazo (p. ej. gripe)
- de largo plazo (cáncer).

Las empresas de servicios públicos no llegan a decidir cuáles son las enfermedades graves. Lo único que usted necesita es una carta del doctor. Una llamada telefónica del doctor a la empresa es aceptable al inicio, si luego se envía una carta. El servicio debe ser restablecido el mismo día (en el peor de los casos, al día siguiente) después de recibir la documentación.

Niños menores de 12 meses

La empresa de servicios públicos no puede suspender el servicio si hay un niño menor de 12 meses en el hogar y debe restablecer el servicio que ha sido suspendido si el niño estaba en el hogar en el momento o antes de la suspensión.

Moratoria para invierno

Las empresas de servicios públicos no pueden suspender el servicio relacionado a la calefacción (es decir, servicio de gas natural, si se lo usa para calentar la casa, o electricidad, si el arrendatario la paga para la calefacción porque la electricidad es necesaria para controlar la caldera) entre el 15 de noviembre y el 15 de marzo si el hogar tiene dificultades financieras. Estas fechas son extendidas a menudo hasta el 15 o 30 de abril.

Egilibilidad de Ingresos

- 1 persona: \$30,751
- 2 personas: \$40,213
- 3 personas: \$49,675
- 4 personas: \$59,137
- 5 personas: \$69,598

Contacto

Si usted tiene problema en obligar a la empresa de servicios públicos que cumpla con cualquiera de las medidas de protección o los programas descritos anteriormente, llame a la División del Consumidor del Departamento de Servicios Públicos (Consumer Division of the Department of Utility) al teléfono **1-877-886-5066**. El representante telefónico de atención al cliente debe intervenir en nombre suyo. Si no lo hace, pídale que le deje hablar con su supervisor. En caso de que tenga que llevar su queja hasta tan alto nivel, contacte a Charles Harak del National Consumer Law Center al teléfono 617-542-8010 (correo de voz), fax 617-542-8028 o correo electrónico charak@nclc.org.

Ayuda con la factura del teléfono

Puede ahorrarse en su factura de teléfono para servicios locales a través de los programas **Lifeline** y **Linkup** que ofrece la empresa telefónica. Cualquier persona que recibe Mass Health, SSI, cupones

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PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

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de alimentos, TAFDC, asistencia para combustibles o EAEDC califica. Puede ahorrar \$18 de su factura de servicio telefónica y Linkup proporciona descuentos para la activación y la instalación. Contacte a su compañía telefónica local y solicite el servicio Linkup.

Usted puede también obtener el formulario del trabajador social de su programa. El DTA o la Oficina de Asistencia para Combustibles necesita verificar que usted está inscrito en uno de los programas.

Teléfono Celular Gratis

SafeLink Wireless es un programa apoyado por el Gobeirno que provee un aparato celular gratis y tiempo celular cada mes para los clientes con ingresos elegibles. El proceso de calificación para el Servicio Lifeline depende del estado donde usted vive. De forma general, usted califica si...

1. Usted recibe beneficios de algún programa de asistencia, estatal o federal, por ejemplo: asistencia federal de viviendas públicas, cupones de alimentos (SNAP), MassHealth, EAEDC, TAFDC,
- Y...
2. Ninguna persona en su hogar recibe actualmente el Servicio Lifeline a través de otro proveedor de servicio telefónico.
3. Usted tiene una dirección postal válida dentro de los Estados Unidos. Un apartado postal no es aceptable.

Además de cumplir con los requisitos anteriormente mencionados, usted deberá presentar la documentación que pruebe su participación en un programa de asistencia o el nivel de su ingreso.

Llame al teléfono 1-800-977-3768 o visite www.safelink.com. También puede obtener el formulario para SafeLink en su biblioteca municipal.

Si su casa está bajo ejecución hipotecaria

El 22 de mayo 2009 el Presidente Obama firmó una ley, la cual proporciona una protección de 90 días a los inquilinos que viven en propiedades bajo ejecución hipotecaria en todo el país. **Todos los inquilinos deben obtener una notificación de 90 días antes que se inicie el proceso de desalojo como resultado de la ejecución hipotecaria.** Además, la mayoría de los inquilinos que tienen contratos de arrendamiento pueden seguir viviendo en sus casas hasta el final del plazo de los mismos.

Los derechos de los inquilinos establecidos en la Sección 8 son también protegidos porque el nuevo propietario bajo la ejecución hipotecaria debe aceptar tanto el contrato de arrendamiento del inquilino como el contrato de pago de asistencia de viviendas (HAP).

City Life/Vida Urbana ayuda a la gente a confrontar la ejecución hipotecaria. La organización les enseña sobre sus derechos, proporciona ayuda legal, organiza manifestaciones contra la ejecución bancaria de hipotecas e impide desalojos. Si usted necesita ayuda, llame al teléfono 617-524-3541. Su oficina está en el 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. Su sitio web es www.clvu.org y su fax 617-524-3555. En su sitio web se presenta un video de Bill Moyers Journal, en el cual se muestra el trabajo que realiza la organización y una entrevista de Steve Meacham, un organizador

comunitario.

City Life/Vida Urbana organiza a residentes de la comunidad para que obtengan una vivienda más asequible, prevenir desalojos e informar a la gente sobre sus derechos a las viviendas.

Requisito de trabajo para destinatarios de la TAFDC

El gobierno federal está presionando al DTA a forzar a más padres de familias que reciben asistencia social a trabajar en el mercado laboral pagado o bien cumplir con las actividades de requisito de trabajo de 20 a 30 horas por semana. Si el trabajador social le presiona a usted a hacer algo que no puede hacer, como por ejemplo obtener un trabajo o buscar un trabajo u otro programa, solicite ayuda a la oficina de Legal Services. Encontrará alguna información que le puede ayudar en cuanto al requisito de trabajo.

La educación y la capacitación cuentan como requisito de trabajo de la TAFDC por lo menos durante 12 meses. La mayoría de los programas de educación de adultos y de capacitación laboral son tomados en cuenta. Programas universitarios, incluyendo 4 años de licenciatura, pueden ser también tomados en cuenta (tiene que especializarse en algo que lo lleve a un empleo). El tiempo dedicado a la educación y capacitación cuando usted estaba exento del requisito de trabajo no cuenta contra sus 12 meses. Si necesita más de 12 meses, consulte llamando a Legal Services. El hecho de que un programa dure más de 12 meses no constituye un fundamento legal para que el DTA rechace el tomarlo en cuenta al menos por 12 meses.

La búsqueda de vivienda para personas que permanecen en refugios de emergencia es también tomada en cuenta para el requisito de trabajo. El DTA debe tratar a las familias en los refugios como si estuviesen cumpliendo totalmente con el requisito de trabajo, mientras que las familias satisfagan los requisitos de Asistencia de Emergencia (Emergency Assistance, EA) o búsqueda de vivienda para refugiados, independientemente del número de horas que la familia dedique para la búsqueda de vivienda.

El DTA no debería reducir o suspender sus beneficios por no satisfacer el requisito de trabajo (o los términos de su Plan de Desarrollo de Empleo) si usted tiene una “causa buena” como:

- carece del cuidado adecuado para sus hijos o no hay disponibilidad del mismo;
- carece de transporte asequible y confiable;
- tiene que buscar vivienda;
- no existe disponibilidad de un lugar adecuado de servicio comunitario identificado por el DTA;
- tiene un familiar con enfermedad o discapacidad;
- tiene que cuidar del familiar con enfermedad o discapacidad;
- está en crisis familiar, emergencia u otras situaciones convincentes fuera de su control al cual tiene que atender durante las horas que de otra manera estaría haciendo las actividades requeridas;
- tiene un trabajo o le han ofrecido un trabajo que: viola las leyes del salario mínimo; ha sido discriminatorio en base a la edad, género, raza, religión, origen étnico o discapacidad física o mental; viola los estándares de salud y seguridad; o estuvo disponible debido a una huelga o cierre patronal.

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El DTA no debería reducir o suspender sus beneficios sin antes revisar todas las razones de causas buenas arriba mencionadas junto con la familia para ver si algunas se aplican. Si usted piensa que el DTA cometió un error en reducir o eliminar sus beneficios, inmediatamente interponga una petición y contacte a la oficina de Legal Services de su área para solicitar ayuda.

¿Quiere ayudar a mejorar las cosas?

Si quiere unirse a otras personas para mejorar las políticas de la TAFDC, cupones de alimentos, asistencia de emergencia (incluyendo refugios para familias) o viviendas, existen grupos que trabajan en dichos temas, los cuales estarían encantados si usted se afilia. Estos grupos son:

Family Economic Initiative (Iniciativa Económica de la Familia) trabaja en temas relacionados a la TAFDC (asistencia social para familias con hijos). El grupo se reúne una vez al mes en Greater Boston Legal Services en el 197 Friend St., Boston. Contactar a Elizabeth Toulan, al teléfono 617-603-1626, para más información.

Mass Coalition for the Homeless (Coalición de Massachusetts para Personas Desamparadas) trabaja en temas relacionados a la vivienda e indigencia. También aboga por individuos desamparados. El grupo se reúne una vez al mes en Boston y, una vez al mes en el área oeste de Massachusetts, alternando entre Springfield y Northampton. Contactar a Kelly Turley, 781-595-7570, ext. 17, para más información.

Food Stamp Coalition (Coalición de Cupones de Alimentos) trabaja en el tema de cupones de alimentos, actualmente llamados SNAP. El grupo se reúne una vez al mes. Contactar a Pat Baker en Mass Law Reform Institute (Instituto de Reformas de Leyes de Massachusetts), al teléfono 617-357-0700, ext. 328, para más información escribe a pbaker@mlri.org

Recupere su dinero a través del Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo

Usted puede calificar para recibir hasta \$5,036 a través del Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo (Earned Income Tax Credit, EITC), un reembolso de impuesto para personas que trabajan. Usted ganó este dinero, de manera que no deje que su reembolso quede sin ser reclamado.

¿Quién puede obtener el EIC y cuál es su valor?

Personas solteras o casadas quienes trabajaron a tiempo completo o parcial por algún período en el 2010 pueden calificarse para el EITC, dependiendo de su ingreso. Estudiantes que ganan Federal Work

Study (un estipendio para trabajar durante los estudios universitarios) también pueden calificar por el EITC.

- Familias con ingreso \$35,535 con 1 hijo calificados (\$40,545 si está casado y rinde la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$3,050.
- \$40,363 con 2 hijos calificados (\$45,373 si está casado y rinde la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$5,036.
- \$45,352 con 3 hijos o más calificados (\$48,362 si está casado y rinde la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$5,666.
- Con ingresos bajo \$13,460 sin hijos y entre las edades 25 y 64 años en 31 diciembre 2010 (\$18,470 si están casados y rinden la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$457.

Si quiere obtener un estimado del reembolso al cual usted tiene derecho, visite el sitio web del EITC en <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2008>

Puede obtener Pagos Adelantados de EITC en su cheque de salario. Para obtener los Pagos Adelantados de EITC, entregue el formulario W-5 a su empleador. Puede obtener el formulario W-5 de su empleador o bien llamando al IRS al teléfono 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3637). Si usted tiene una cuenta corriente, puede obtener su reembolso de EITC directamente depositado a su cuenta.

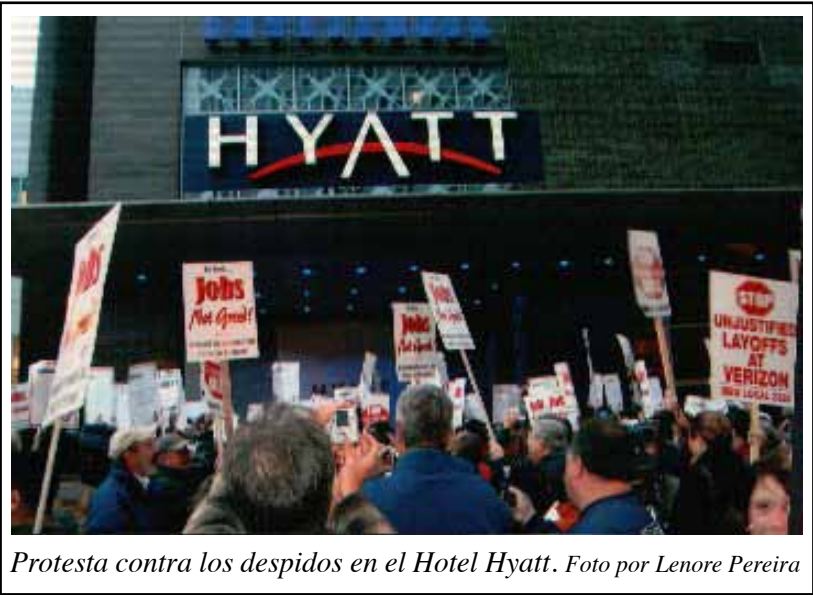
Hay personas que pagan dinero a empresas tributarias privadas como H&R Block para obtener asistencia al preparar sus formularios de impuestos o para obtener el dinero inmediatamente. En vez de hacer eso, trate de obtener asesoría gratuita. Guarde su dinero o ahórralo y ocúpelo para construir un mejor futuro para usted mismo y su familia. ABCD maneja 13 sitios de preparación de impuestos en Boston. Su sitio web es [EITC.25.08.pdf](http://masscashback.ehs.state.ma.us). Visite al sitio web <http://masscashback.ehs.state.ma.us>

Los pagos que su familia recibe como Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo no son considerados como ingresos al determinar la elegibilidad o los niveles del beneficio de la TAFDC, Medicaid, cupones de alimentos, SSI, actividades de experiencia laboral (tales como servicios comunitarios) o viviendas públicas. Los estudiantes que están en el programa de trabajo para estudio pueden reclamar el EITC.

Para calcular su EITC, use la hoja de cálculo especial incluida como parte de las instrucciones para el EITC en los formularios 1040, 1040A o 1040EZ.

Los trabajadores de Massachusetts obtienen crédito estatal extra por un valor correspondiente al 15 % de su crédito federal. Puede solicitar el formulario de impuesto y obtener más información llamando al teléfono 617-887-6367 o al 1-800-392-6089.

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Protesta contra los despidos en el Hotel Hyatt. Foto por Lenore Pereira



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Crédito Tributario por Hijos: ¡Una deducción tributaria extra para familias trabajadoras!

El Crédito Tributario por Hijos (Child Tax Credit, CTC) es un crédito tributario federal por un valor de hasta \$1,000 para cada uno de los hijos calificados menores de 17 años de edad reclamado como dependiente en la declaración de impuestos del trabajador. Para optar al reembolso de CTC, un trabajador soltero o casado debe:

- tener un hijo calificado menor de 17 años de edad;
- tener un ingreso gravable superior a \$3,000; y
- tener el número de Seguro Social o el número de Identificación Individual de Contribuyente.

Los trabajadores inmigrantes que tienen cualquiera de estos números pueden posiblemente reclamar el reembolso de CTC.

Para obtener el reembolso del Crédito Tributario por Hijos, rinda una declaración federal de impuestos—formularios 1040 o 1040A, pero no puede ser el 1040EZ.

Algunas familias pueden obtener el crédito aunque no deban impuestos sobre la renta. A esto se le conoce como el reembolso de CTC Adicional. Para averiguar si usted es elegible para este crédito, presente el formulario 8812. Este formulario debe ser adjuntado a la declaración de impuestos para que la familia reciba el reembolso de CTC.

Familias trabajadoras pueden obtener tanto el reembolso del Crédito Tributario por Hijos como el Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo.

¿Quién le brinda ayuda?

¿Dónde podrá acudir usted por ayuda para el alquiler, alimentos, dinero, servicios públicos o ayuda para combustibles cuando se agota su dinero de asistencia social o SSI, o cuando usted sea eliminado del programa de asistencia social debido al límite de tiempo?

United Way First Call for Help (Primera Llamada para Ayuda de United Way) es un buen lugar para iniciar su búsqueda. La organización puede proporcionarle información y referencias. Llámelos al 211. La organización atiende día y noche, 7 días a la semana. Hay disponibilidad de servicios de intérprete hasta para 140 idiomas diferentes. Las horas de atención es de 8:00 am a 8:00 pm los días de semana. United Way tiene también Línea de Ayuda de Abuso Sustancial, al teléfono 1-800-327-5050. Asimismo le puede dar información sobre H1N1 o gripe estacional. Atiende las 24 horas del día.

Catholic Charities (Filantropía Católica) brinda asistencia de emergencia a hogares que califican en términos de ingresos en el área de Boston cuando hay fondos disponibles, para pagar alquiler

retrasado si usted ha recibido una notificación de desalojo y para pagar las facturas de servicios públicos si tiene una notificación de corte. También tiene una despesa de alimentos en Dorchester y en El Centro del Cardenal, para la cual se necesita referencia de la Línea de Emergencia de Hambre, teléfono 1-800-645-8333.

La oficina está en 51 Sleeper St, Boston 02210 y su número de teléfono de la oficina central de Catholic Charities es 617-451-7964 (oficina) y 617-308-5477 (teléfono móvil). Llame a Joseph Burnieika. La oficina está abierta de 9:00 am a 4:45 pm. Los números telefónicos de las oficinas locales son: **Dorchester**, 617-506-6600; **El Centro del Cardenal**, 617-542-9292; **Haitian Center**, 617-506-6600; **Laboure Center (South Boston)**, 617-268-9670; **Somerville**, 617-625-1920; **Catholic Charities North**, 781-593-2312; **Merrimack Valley (Lowell)**, 978-452-1421; **Brockton**, 508-587-0815; **Natick**, 508-647-5638; y **Milford**, 508-478-9632.

ABCD en Boston tal vez le proporciona dinero inicial para el depósito de seguridad en el pago de alquiler del primer mes o fondo para el alquiler retrasado, a individuos desamparados y familias en riesgo que viven en refugios, cuando hay disponibilidad de fondos. ABCD ayuda a la gente a buscar viviendas y obtenerlas subvencionadas. Además, ayuda a prevenir la indigencia proporcionando servicios para la prevención de desalojo, tales como mediación y negociación entre el arrendador y arrendatario, información legal y referencia, y recolección de fondos. El número telefónico es 617-348-6347.

Traveler's Aid Family Services (Servicios Familiares de Traveler's Aid), teléfono 617-542-7286, cuenta con un programa limitado para ofrecer refugios de emergencia de corto plazo a familias de Boston que están en crisis. La organización ayuda en transporte

a víctimas de violencia intrafamiliar. También proporciona asistencia en transporte a personas referidas por el DTA. Asimismo, les paga asistencia parcial en transporte a personas que se encuentran varadas en Boston y que están por trasladarse a un lugar en New England. Para las personas que se trasladan a afueras de New England, les pagan pasajes parciales. El trabajador social tendrá que verificar que usted tiene un lugar donde quedarse cuando está trasladándose.



Protesta en el capitolio de Massachusetts para los trabajos en salarios justos y los derechos humanos. Foto por Lenore Pereira

Municipios. También hay un programa de prevención de indigencia para ayudar a pagar alquileres retrasados, si hay fondos disponibles.

Llame para averiguar los requisitos de elegibilidad. Los trabajadores están disponibles para el servicio de transporte sin cita. Otros servicios se proporcionan con cita y mediante llamadas telefónicas, de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 am a 4:30 pm. Hay disponibilidad de traducción en español. Municipios: Algunas organizaciones operan a nivel municipal. Puede encontrar sus números en la guía telefónica o marcando el 411. Entre estas organizaciones están las iglesias locales y clubes cívicos, incluyendo Kiwanis, Elks, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Rotary, Quota, Jaycees y los Masons.

Ayuda para los veteranos

Los veteranos pueden obtener alguna ayuda en Servicios a Veteranos

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de su área. El Departamento de Asuntos de los Veteranos (Department of Veterans Affairs) del Gobierno Federal ha publicado un libro que enumera los beneficios: Beneficios Federales para Veteranos y Dependientes (Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents). Para obtener una copia, escriba al U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC 20420.

Viviendas e indigencia

Si está en riesgo de ser indigente. . .

Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunal en Massachusetts ofrece servicios y dinero a personas quienes están en riesgo de ser indigentes a través de las oficinas de la División de Estabilización de Viviendas (Division of Housing Stabilization) ubicadas en las oficinas del DTA. El Departamento evalúa su situación y trata de ayudarlo a desarrollar un plan para evitar la indigencia. Si usted está sin hogar y necesita refugio, el trabajador le proporcionará ayuda.

Flexible Funds Program (Programa de Fondos Flexibles), anteriormente llamado Tool Box, puede ayudar a las personas en refugios quienes han encontrado un apartamento. El monto máximo disponible a través de este programa es de \$12,000/familia por un año.

El número telefónico del **Housing Consumer Education Center (Centro de Educación para los Consumidores de Viviendas)** de la Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (Asociación de Viviendas del Área Metropolitana de Boston) es 617-425-6700. Si usted es propietario de una vivienda y quiere hablar con el consejero de ejecución hipotecaria, contacte a Stephen Freeman, al teléfono 617-425-6761. Existen 9 centros en Massachusetts. Puede localizarlos en la web, www.masshousinginfo.org.

También ayudan en alquiler y fracturas de los servicios públicos, para encontrar un apartamento, para obtener una vivienda justa y ayuden con las finanzas personales.

Mass Coalition for the Homeless, teléfono 781-595-7570, brinda información y defensa, además de cabildear mejores políticas para las personas que están en riesgo o experimentando la indigencia. Ha publicado varios folletos en los cuales ofrecen asesoría para hacer frente a los desalojos, obtener un vale de Sección 8, encontrar una vivienda assequible y acceso a refugios y conocer sus derechos a la vivienda. Estos son gratuitos. La Coalición está ubicada en el 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901. Su sitio web es: www.masshomeless.org. Allí encontrarán mucha información y materiales.

Residentes de Boston que no tienen donde permanecer después de las 5:00 y durante los fines de semana pueden llamar a la Línea de Emergencia del Alcalde de Boston, al teléfono 617-635-4500, para información y referencia. Durante los días de la semana, llame a la Comisión de Refugio de Emergencia (Emergency Shelter Commission), al teléfono 617-635-4507, para información y referencia. Familias con hijos y mujeres embarazadas pueden solicitar los beneficios de refugio a través de la oficina del DTA ubicada en el 2201 Dudley Square, Roxbury, teléfono 617-989-6000.

Muebles/artículos de hogar gratuitos

Mass Coalition for the Homeless maneja un banco de muebles para familias e individuos que se están moviendo a una vivienda permanente. Califican aquellas personas que han estado desamparadas durante los 90 días anteriores. El banco de muebles también proporciona frazadas cuando hay disponibilidad. Para solicitar ayuda, se necesita la referencia de una agencia. En Boston, llame al Programa de Asistencia de Donaciones (Donations Assistance Program), al teléfono 781-595-7570, ext. 11. El personal de la Coalición monta el mueble al camión pero la organización no proporciona camiones.

Craigslist tiene muebles y otros artículos gratuitos en línea. La lista es por región. Haga clic en “cosas gratuitas (free stuff).”

Atención a la Salud

MassHealth

MassHealth es como Medicaid en Massachusetts. MassHealth es un programa público de seguro de salud para personas con bajos o medianos ingresos que viven en Massachusutts. Si recibe TAFDC, SSI o EAEDC está automáticamente elegible por MassHealth, y personas discapacitados están elegibles. Llame al teléfono 1-888-665-9993 (TTY: 1-888-665-9997) y pedir por un formulario para calificar por MassHealth. Visite al sitio web www.massresources.org. Para encontrar un médico, dentista o al otro proveedor de medicina, llame al teléfono 1-800-841-2900 (TTY 1-800-497-4648) por MassHealth Customer Service.

Commonwealth Care

Hay opciones diferentes para planes de Commonwealth Care, y estas opciones dependen a su nivel de ingreso en comparación con el nivel de la pobreza. El pago de la prima depende de su ingreso en comparación con el nivel de la pobreza

La solicitud se llama Medical Benefit Request (Solicitud de Beneficio Médico) o MBR. Cuando usted manda la solicitud a MassHealth, se le inscribe al mejor programa a su alcance, el cual es posiblemente Commonwealth Care. Luego, MassHealth le manda una notificación, mencionándole el programa que usted obtiene. Puede obtener la solicitud en su centro de salud u hospital o pídala a MassHealth llamando al teléfono 1-888-665-9993. También, puede llamar a la Línea de Ayuda de Health Care For All (Atención a la Salud para Todos), al teléfono 1-800-272-4232 para obtener ayuda en el llenado de la solicitud por teléfono. Si usted tiene derecho a Commonwealth Care, puede llamar al teléfono 1-877-MA-ENROLL para escoger el plan de salud o visite la web, www.macommonwealthcare.org.

Health Safety Net (Red de Seguridad de Salud) (anteriormente llamado Uncompensated Care Pool/Fondo Común No Compensado para Servicios Médicos o Free Care Pool/Fondo Común para Servicios Médicos Gratuitos) es un programa que ofrece atención gratuita o a bajo costo en hospitales y centros comunales de salud a residentes elegibles de Massachusetts, dependiendo del ingreso bruto (ingreso antes de la deducción de impuestos), el tamaño de la familia y el tipo de seguro de salud que ya tienen. Llame a su centro comunal de salud u hospital para más información o para una

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solicitud. El monto de cobertura depende del tipo de seguro de salud que usted tiene.

MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach ofrece información de prescripción y referencias a residentes de Massachusetts sin costo. Llame al teléfono 1-866-633-1617, de lunes a viernes, para obtener información sobre programas que proporcionan medicamentos con prescripción gratuita, o a costos reducidos, programas federales o estatales y ayuda para conseguir dichos medicamentos. El personal clínico, incluyendo docentes y estudiantes de la Universidad de Farmacia y Ciencias de la Salud de Massachusetts (Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences), revisa el perfil de medicación de la persona que llama para evaluar la posible interacción de medicamentos y darle información sobre alternativas terapéuticas y equivalentes genéricos. Este es un servicio gratuito ubicado en el campus en Worcester de la Universidad de Farmacia y Ciencias de la Salud de Massachusetts. Se atiende sin cita en el centro ubicado en el 25 Foster St., Worcester, MA. La información está disponible en muchos idiomas, incluyendo inglés, español, portugués, chino y vietnamita. Llame para obtener información o programar una cita durante el horario normal de trabajo. <http://www.massmedline.com>

¿Preguntas sobre atención a la salud?

Llame a la **Línea de Ayuda de Health Care For All** al teléfono 1-800-272-4232 o a Connector al teléfono 1-877-623-6767 (TTY: 1-877-623-7773 para personas con sordera parcial o total). Visite el sitio web Health Care for All: www.hcfama.org.

Atención a la salud para los indigentes

Programa de Boston Health Care for the Homeless (Atención a la Salud de Boston para las Personas Desamparadas) proporciona atención a la salud a personas desamparadas en clínicas, refugios en Boston, Centro Médico de Boston (Boston Medical Center) y el Hospital General de Massachusetts (Mass General Hospital). Tiene el Programa de Descanso (Respite Program) para individuos desamparados quienes no están tan enfermos como para ser hospitalizados pero demasiado enfermos para estar en la calle o en un refugio. Llame al teléfono 857-654-1000. Díglele sin falta que usted está llamando acerca del Programa de Descanso si usted desea ser ingresado.

Equipos médicos para niños

Pass it On (Pásalo) proporciona equipos médicos pediátricos para niños discapacitados de hasta 22 años de edad, incluyendo sillas de ruedas, equipos para baño y artículos relacionados. En el área este de Massachusetts, se realiza la entrega a domicilio hasta el Condado de Worcester. Aunque el equipo es gratuito, solicitan ayuda para pagar el transporte del equipo. Llame al teléfono 508-477-6966 o 1-800-267-6768. Su sitio web es www.passitonforkids.org

Ayuda de ropa para niños

Children’s Clothing Exchange (Intercambio de Ropa de Niños), un programa de Solutions at Work (Soluciones en Función) está

en el Roosevelt Towers Housing Complex, 391 Everteze Way, Cambridge, MA 02141. El número telefónico es 617-576-0039. Abierto los martes, miércoles y jueves, de 10:00 am a 4:00 pm y los segundos y cuartos sábados del mes, de 11:00 am a 3:00 pm.

Puede obtener ropa para niños, desde recién nacidos hasta 14 años. Tiene ropa de oficina para mujeres y hombres quienes están por entrar al trabajo, sólo con citas previas. También tiene zapatos y alguna ropa para niños mayores. Puede intercambiar ropa limpia y lista para ponerse que le ha quedado pequeña a sus hijos o puede donar su tiempo para trabajar en Exchange. No se necesita dinero. Las familias que están en crisis no tienen que hacer el intercambio en su primera visita. Hay disponibilidad de libros para niños, juguetes, carritos de bebés y sillas para vehículos gratuitos.

Ayuda legal gratuita o a bajo costo

Harvard Legal Aid Bureau (Oficina de Asistencia Legal de Harvard), teléfono 617-495-4408, proporciona servicios legales a personas de ingresos bajos sobre problemas de vivienda, violencia intrafamiliar, discriminación en salario y horas (salario mínimo) y beneficios. Sus servicios son gratuitos para los beneficiarios de TAFDC, EAEDC y SSI, así como para otras personas de ingresos bajos. Atiende a la mayoría de las áreas de los condados de Middlesex o Suffolk. Está ubicada en el 23 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138. Está abierta de 9:00 am a 5:00 pm, de lunes a viernes. Llame para una cita.

National Lawyer’s Guild (Asociación Nacional de Abogados) proporciona asistencia legal a personas de ingresos bajos y moderados, a través de su servicio de referencia. Maneja discapacidad (incluyendo SSI y SSDI), crimen, discriminación, empleo, derecho de familia, dueño/inquilino, inmigración, derechos civiles, litigio civil, lesión personal, quiebra, bienes inmuebles y otras áreas legales. El honorario es generalmente negociado en base a una escala ajustable. Se habla español y otros idiomas. Su horario de atención es de lunes a viernes, de 9:00 am a ~4:00 pm. Llame al teléfono 617-227-7008. Está ubicada en el 14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108.

Ayuda disponible para inmigrantes

Greater Boston Legal Services, teléfono 617-371-1234, representa a los inmigrantes.

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (Coalición de Apoyo a Inmigrantes y Refugiados de Massachusetts, MIRA) proporciona entrenamiento, abogacía e información a individuos y grupos. Llame al teléfono 617-350-5480.

Irish Immigration Center (Centro Irlandés de Inmigración) cuenta con el Programa de Asistencia para Inmigración/ Ciudadanía (Immigration/Citizenship Assistance Program) que ofrece una variedad de servicios a todos los inmigrantes (no solamente a personas de origen irlandés), incluyendo información y referencia, servicios inmigratorios, asistencia para empleos, programa de cruce de culturas y defensa para el derecho de los inmigrantes. El centro, acreditado por el Departamento de Justicia (Department of Justice), tiene la capacidad de representar a las personas en entrevistas con

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dicho departamento. Está ubicado en el 100 Franklin St., planta baja, Boston, MA 02111, teléfono 617-542-7654.

Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Office (Oficina Católica de Amparo para Refugiados e Inmigrantes), teléfono 617-451-7979, ayuda a refugiados, asilados y personas de nacionalidad cubana y haitiana en libertad condicional (personas detenidas por el Departamento de Justicia de E.E.U.U. y actualmente liberadas bajo juramento). Sus servicios incluyen lo siguiente: asistencia en efectivo, asistencia en empleo, manejo de casos, clases de inglés y referencias de servicios sociales. También realiza clases de ESOL (Inglés para Hablantes de Otras Lenguas).

Los asilados pueden recibir servicios dentro del primer mes posterior a la obtención de su estatus de asilado y califican durante dicho mes para más servicios como asistencia en efectivo y servicios de empleo. Está ubicada en el 275 W. Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127.

Pair Project (Proyecto Par), teléfono 617-742-9296, proporciona asistencia legal gratuita a personas de ingresos bajos o sin ingresos que están buscando asilo. También proporciona asistencia a los detenidos por las agencias inmigratorias. Llame para una cita.

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (Centro Comunitario de Servicios Legales y Consejería), teléfono 617-661-1010, 1 West St., Cambridge, proporciona servicios legales y asesoría sobre problemas de la familia, discapacidad, inmigración y vivienda. Los servicios legales son gratuitos y el honorario para los servicios de asesoría se calcula en base a la escala ajustable. Llame a la oficina para obtener información de los servicios específicos.

Ayuda para padres y madres bajo estrés

Parental Stress Line (Línea de Padres y Madres bajo Estrés) es una línea telefónica de emergencia sin costo para brindar apoyo a padres y madres que están bajo estrés. La línea está disponible durante las 24 horas del día, 7 días a la semana. Organiza grupos de apoyo para padres y madres, el cual es anónimo y confidencial. Llamar al teléfono 1-800-632-8188.

Educación Superior

TERI College Planning Center (Centro de Planificación Universitaria TERI) puede ayudarle a buscar becas si usted califica en términos de ingreso, seleccionar universidades, llenar solicitudes de admisión y ayuda financiera, obtener exención de matrícula universitaria y obtener asesoría para pagar la universidad. Usted puede hablar con un consejero, usar las computadoras para buscar becas y revisar los libros de recursos — todo sin costo alguno.

Hay 6 Centros de Oportunidad Educativa (Educational

Opportunity Centers) en todo Massachussets. El número telefónico de Boston es 617-536-0200 (en la primera planta de la Biblioteca Pública de Boston). Está usualmente abierto de 9:00 am a 9:00 pm de lunes a jueves y de 9:00 am a 5:00 pm los viernes y sábados. Los domingos está abierto de 1:00 pm a 5:00 pm, desde octubre a mayo. Para otras áreas, llame al número principal 617-536-0200.

Becas para mujeres de bajos ingresos

The Patsy Takemoto Mink Scholarship distribuya becas de \$2,000 para ayudar a mujeres que necesitan asistencia para pagar por un programa de su propio educación. Para calificar, necesita ser una mujer que tiene hijos bajo de 18 años. Visite el sitio web <http://www.patsyminkfoundation.org/edsupport.html>

Educación y Entrenamiento

Entrenamiento en educación de niños de temprana edad, salud comunal, climatización y “empleos verdes” ABCD ofrece entrenamiento en estos campos. Llame al teléfono 617-357-6000 x7453. El programa ofrece:

- Pasantías a base de carreras con estipendios;
- Cursos a nivel universitario;
- Asesoramiento en empleo y ayuda para la ubicación laboral.

La elegibilidad se determina, entre otros, por: residencia en Boston; título de bachiller o GED; capacidad de escribir un ensayo en inglés; edad (tener al menos 18 años); verificación de antecedentes, incluyendo CORI; situación económica (tener bajo ingreso, estar desempleado o ser destinatario de beneficios públicos). El programa de climatización WAGE (ahorra energía con climatización) enseña maneras de climatización y ayuda a los estudiantes para encontrar empleos. El programa de Empleos Verdes enseña maneras técnicas “verdes” como el reciclaje. Los programas comienzan en febrero y marzo de 2011. Llame al teléfono de Brad Howard, x7450.



Rally de Inmigración para incluir la matrícula en la universidad de estado para los niños de familias inmigrantes. Capitolio de Massachusetts. Foto por Lenore Pereira

St. Mary’s Women and Children’s Center (Centro de St. Mary para Mujeres y Niños), teléfono 617-436-8600, 90 Cushing Avenue, Dorchester, MA, proporciona capacitación para trabajos, habilidad en informática, educación básica para adultos y preparación para GED. Su Centro de Aprendizaje para Mujeres (Women’s Learning Center) instruye hasta 20 estudiantes al mismo tiempo en Educación Básica para Adultos (Adult Basic Education, ABE) y preparación para una serie de exámenes de Desarrollo Educativo General (General Educational Development, GED). El programa es altamente flexible — ofreciendo admisión rodante y la opción de instrucciones a tiempo parcial y completo, y las clases son diseñadas de manera que satisfaga las necesidades individuales del estudiante.

Project Hope — Programas gratuitos de capacitación en atención a la salud

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El Project Hope (Proyecto Hope) ofrece 3 programas gratuitos de capacitación. <http://www.prohope.org/openhouse.htm#P90#P90>

Socios en el Desarrollo de Carrera y Fuerza de Trabajo (Partners in Career and Workforce Development, PCWD)

Un programa gratis de 6 semanas de capacitación de preparación con Partners HealthCare que se enfoca en habilidades de servicio al cliente, elaboración del currículum y habilidades de entrevista. PCWD está diseñado para individuos interesados en empleo de nivel principiante en uno de los hospitales de Partners. Es un programa de entrenamiento sin salario, de lunes a viernes, de 9:00 am a 5:00 pm, y un programa que se aprueba de DTA y Sección 30. <http://www.partners.org/jobtraining>

Socios Comunitarios en Profesiones de la Salud (Community Partners in Health Professions, CPHP)

Para individuos que desean una carrera en atención a la salud pero que no tienen las habilidades necesarias. CPHP tiene un énfasis fuerte en académico, comunicación, profesionalismo, y habilidades en informática. Es un programa de preempleo de 10 semanas sin salario que se lleva a cabo de lunes a jueves, de 9:00 am a 3:00 pm. Los viernes son dedicados a manejo de casos. Es un programa que se aprueba de DTA.

Programa de Preparación Profesional (PREP)

PREP es un programa que puede mejorar las habilidades de trabajo para personas en nuestra comunidad. PREP encuentra dos veces por mes a las 1:30-4:30 PM martes y jueves. Participantes que completan el programa pueden recibir recomendaciones por el BWH Community Partnership Program (siguiente), CPHP o otros programas.

Sociedad Comunitaria del Hospital Brigham and Women’s (Brigham and Women’s Community Partnership, BWH)

En colaboración entre Project Hope y el Hospital Brigham and Women’s, BWH, se ofrecen servicios de capacitación y empleo específicamente para residentes en las comunidades en el Gran Boston.

Para calificar para estos programas, los aplicantes deben:

- Atender a una reunión informativa (http://www.prohope.org/openhouse_faq.htm)
- tener una diploma de bachiller/colegio o equivalente
- hablar, escribir y entender inglés; pasar evaluación en lectura, lenguaje y computación
- hacer chequeo de CORI
- tener al menos 1 año completo de experiencia laboral con 1 empleador
- ser capaz de atender y completar la capacitación diurno durante 6 semanas.

Project 90 (P90)

El Proyecto 90 es un programa de formación profesional gratis de 12 semanas. Los participantes reciben ayuda para aplicar por empleos y, además, ayuda para aplicar por programas de entrenamiento en especialidades. Visite el sitio web www.prohope.org y complete el

formular en el siguiente sitio www.prohope.org/openhouse_form.htm. Llame a 617-442-1880 x218 si tenga preguntas del programa.

Condiciones a participar en Project 90:

- Su edad es más que 18 años
- No vive en un hogar permanente
- Tiene las ganas de trabajar, estudiar, tiempo para participar y interés en este programa
- Puede hablar y escribir en inglés
- Tiene la capaz para trabajar legalmente en los EEUU
- Está sobrio/a por más que 90 días.

Planificación familiar de emergencia

Si ha tenido sexo sin protección o piensa que su método de planificación familiar ha fracasado, puede usar la “píldora de la mañana siguiente” (“morning-after-pill”) para prevenir el embarazo. Esta no es una píldora abortiva como la RU-486. La píldora se llama Preven y Plan B, y efectivamente evita el 89 % de los embarazos si se la usa correctamente. Se la debe tomar lo más pronto posible después del sexo sin protección, dentro de 5 días. Si usted es sexualmente activa, es recomendable tener esta píldora a mano por si la necesita. Simplemente solicite a su fármaco la Plan B One-Step o Next Choice. Ahora está disponible sin prescripción para adultos, pero personas menores de 17 necesitan una prescripción. Si su doctor o el hospital se niegan a darle una prescripción, llame a la Línea de Anticoncepción de Emergencia, 888-not-2-lat (888-668-2528) o visite el Sitio Web sobre Anticoncepción de Emergencia, ec.princeton.edu. En el sitio web encontrará el nombre de las farmacias en su cercanía donde puede obtener la píldora. El sitio web también contiene consejos para personas menores de 17.

Más información útil

La Oficina de Servicios a Destinatarios del DTA (DTA Recipient Services Office) es muy atenta en proporcionar información sobre las políticas y a qué tiene usted derecho. Llame al teléfono 617-348-5502 o 1-800-445-6004.

Los reglamentos del DTA están disponibles en la web: www.state.ma.us/dta.

Beneficios para personas que viven en Massachussets

Visite el sitio web www.massresources.org para aprender más.

Los reglamentos de beneficios para cuidado de niños y otras informaciones están disponibles en la web en www.QualityChildCare.org, la cual es el sitio web correspondiente a la Oficina de Servicios del Cuidado de Niños (Office of Child Care Services) del estado.

Guía de Regreso a Casa: Una Guía de Recursos para Ex-Ofensores que Están Regresando a las Comunidades del Gran de Boston (Coming Home Directory: A Resource Directory for Ex-Offenders Returning to Greater Boston Communities) es un libro exhaustivo de recursos publicado por el Crime and Justice Institute (Instituto de Crimen y Justicia). Está disponible en línea en

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www.cominghomedirectory.org. La guía es publicada por el Crime and Justice Institute, teléfono 617-482-2520, ext. 130.

Guía de Recursos para Personas Mayores (Elder Resource Guide) es publicado por el Consejo de Brookline sobre Envejecimiento (Brookline Council on Aging) y el Centro para Mayores de Edad de Brookline (Brookline Senior Center). La guía contiene abundante información para las personas mayores. Está disponible en línea en www.brooklinema.gov. Haga clic en “Departments (Departamentos),” “Council on Aging (Consejo sobre Envejecimiento),” “Latest News (Últimas Noticias),” y “Elder Resource Guide (Guía de Recursos para Personas Mayores).” Las copias en papel están disponibles en el Centro para Mayores de Edad de Brookline, en el 93 Winchester Street, Brookline, MA 02146. El Centro no tiene las facilidades para enviarlas por correo.

¿Tiene un Récord Criminal? ¿Tiene problema en encontrar trabajo o vivienda debido a su CORI? Si usted tiene CORI y necesita información sobre trabajos, vivienda, sellado de su récord, errores en su CORI u otros problemas, llame al Centro de Ayuda Legal y Recursos (Legal Advocacy and Resource Center), al teléfono

617-603-2700. Para más información sobre las leyes pertinentes a CORI, visite el sitio web, www.masslegalhelp.org/cori.
Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy Benefits Access Line (Línea de Acceso a Beneficios de la Alianza de Massachusetts sobre Embarazos de Adolescentes), es para padres y madres adolescentes y las personas que trabajan con ellos. Le contestará preguntas acerca de asistencia social, cupones de alimentos, viviendas, cuidado de niños y otros servicios en su área para los cuales los adolescentes y sus hijos posiblemente califiquen. Llame al teléfono 1-800-645-3750 ext. 115.

Jane Doe, Inc. Una línea de emergencia patrocinada por Mass. Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (Coalición de Massachusetts contra el Asalto Sexual y la Violencia Intrafamiliar) ayuda a personas que fueron asaltadas sexualmente o que huyen de la violencia intrafamiliar. Llame al teléfono 617-248-0922.

“Mantener el calor y las luces para los residentes de Massachusetts” es un folleto de poner a cabo por el National Consumer Law Center acerca de cómo evitar el cierre de los servicios públicos y hacer que poner de nuevo, y cómo obtener ayuda con las facturas de energía, la asistencia de combustible, y las facturas de teléfono. Para obtener una copia de este folleto, escribe a consumerlaw@nclc.org

Gracias a Melanie Malherbe of Greater Boston Legal Services, Kelly Hurley of Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Pat Baker of the Food Stamp Coalition, Roxanne Reddington-Wilde of ABCD, Charles Harak of the National Consumer Law Center, The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and Health Care for All, por su ayuda.

Nota: Hemos revisado esta información cuidadosamente y creemos que está correcta a la fecha escrita, enero 2011. Sin embargo, algunas veces

las cosas cambian. A veces, las agencias agotan el dinero o cambian sus políticas. Antes de emitir otra edición, revisaremos de nuevo la información. Así que suscríbase al Survival News para obtener los más recientes puntos claves para sobrevivir! Los Puntos Claves para Sobrevivir fueron compilados por Betty Reid Mandell. Si tiene preguntas acerca de la información, o si tiene puntos claves útiles para sobrevivir, puede contactarla por teléfono llamando al 617-327-4219 o enviando correo electrónico a mmandell@curry.edu.

¿De cuántas maneras se puede cortar la asistencia social? Déjame contar las maneras.

Escrito por Betty Reid Mandell; traducido por Mercedes Becerra
Si alguna vez ha solicitado la asistencia social, quizás sepa todos los obstáculos que tiene que saltar por encima para hacerlo, y usted sabe que después de saltar por encima de todos los obstáculos, es posible que no lo entiendo.
Cuando usted va a la oficina de bienestar (llamado el DTA, el Departamento de Asistencia Transicional, en Massachusetts), probablemente tendrá que esperar mucho tiempo antes de que un trabajador lo atienda. Si tienes suerte, obtiene un trabajador que lo atienda con respeto, pero tienen las mismas probabilidades de obtener un trabajador que lo atienda mal. Si el trabajador es bueno o malo, ella (o él) se pasan más tiempo en la entrevista buscando en el ordenador que te mira.
El trabajador le dirá que obtener un trillón de documentos - certificados de nacimiento, recibos de renta y servicios públicos, estados de cuenta bancarios, recibos de salarios, tarjeta de Seguro Social, registros de vacunación, etc, etc
Cuando llegue a casa y quieres llamar al trabajador para hacer una pregunta, es probable que recibira un mensaje diciendo que el buzón del trabajador está lleno.
Si el trabajador determina que usted es elegible para recibir ayuda (llamado TAFDC, Asistencia Transitoria para Familias con Hijos Dependientes, en Massachusetts), lo cuesta no esta libre. Si su hijo menor tiene más de dos años, el trabajador le apreciará para que consiga un trabajo. No es probable encontrar un trabajo en estos tiempos de alto desempleo, pero si lo hace, es probable que sea temporales o de media hora sin beneficios y los salarios demasiado bajos para mantener una familia.
Peter Edelman fue asistente para la planificación y evaluación en el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos en

la administración Clinton, y renunció en protesta cuando Clinton firmó el bienestar de "reformular" la ley (PRWORA, Responsabilidad Personal y Reconciliación de Oportunidades Laborales Acta de 1996). Dijo que el objetivo principal del bienestar de la "reforma" es echar a la gente de las listas. Esto es lo que dijo sobre el bienestar de manera "reforma" realmente funciona:

Estas son las técnicas de reducción radical: cerrar la puerta de entrada casi por completo, el personal de la puerta de atrás con el equivalente de un club nocturno difíciles, y, mientras tanto, los solicitantes sin problemas hasta el punto en que se dan por vencidos y se van.
En la puerta de entrada de muchos estados sólo decir que no, que evoca recuerdos del período anterior a la década de 1960, cuando las reglas de discreción sin límites. Algunos la capa de cobertura con el eufemismo de "desviación", que significa, "Te ves capaz de cuerpo. Salir a buscar un empleo. "
En la puerta de atrás hay sanción - patear la gente de las listas, ya que llegaron tarde a una asignación de trabajo (no hay excusas para los niños enfermos, los autobuses tarde, o las averías del automóvil) o no se presentan a una cita en la oficina de asistencia social (no excusas por no recibir la notificación de una cita o una incapacidad para comprender Inglés). En algunos estados múltiples infracciones de este tipo puede dar lugar, legalmente, en la descalificación de por vida.
En medio están los requisitos para interponer un expediente completo de los documentos con el fin de navegar por el laberinto de aplicación, preguntas impertinentes sobre la vida privada de la demandante, las asignaciones a los programas de trabajo degradante que a veces pregunta a la gente a trabajar sin equipo de protección necesario, las citaciones regulares e irregulares para venir en la re-determinación de elegibilidad, y mucho más. Muchas personas necesitadas se niegan a someterse a las humillaciones asociadas a pedir ayuda.



NOTICIAS DE SUPERVIVENCIA

Volumen 23, Número 1

...las voces de las mujeres de bajos ingresos

La Asamblea para Eliminar la Pobreza



Foto por Harvey Finkle

La Asamblea para Eliminar la Pobreza es una organización nacional estadounidense que se formó con la resolución sobre pobreza nacida en el Foro Social de los Estados Unidos 2010 (USSF). El Foro se llevó a cabo en Detroit y fue comprendido de líderes de grupos contra la pobreza de todo el país.

En las primeras horas del día del 22 de junio de 2010, más de 350 personas comprometidas se reunieron en la Cumbre de Pobreza USSF a vislumbrar a los EEUU del futuro sin pobreza y a empezar a planear los pasos para crear esa realidad.

Basado en estas discusiones, los líderes del Grupo de Trabajo Sobre la Pobreza redactaron la Resolución de la Cumbre de Pobreza para unirnos en el reclamo que se use la abundancia de los Estados Unidos para abastecer las necesidades humanas básicas de todas las personas. Esta resolución se adoptó unánimemente en una sesión subsecuente de la Cumbre de Pobreza.

La Resolución de la Cumbre de Pobreza exhorta la creación de un nuevo grupo para unirnos y apoyar a los frentes de lucha y resistencia en nuestras comunidades. Este nuevo grupo se llama la Asamblea para Eliminar la Pobreza (nombre interino). Al corazón de la Asamblea están grupos que trabajan para eliminar la pobreza, el desempleo, la degradación ambiental, la discriminación, y la exclusión de grupos de personas de su justa reivindicación a los derechos humanos y los recursos.

Resolución de la Cumbre de Pobreza, junio de 2010 en el Foro Social de los Estados Unidos

Tenemos claro que la pobreza no resulta de fracasos personales. La pobreza es el producto de un sistema económico que la aumenta y la profundiza, ya que concentra la abundancia de este país y del mundo en las manos de unos pocos. Aquellos que controlan este sistema, teniendo a los gobiernos como instrumentos, han triturado "la red de protección" que históricamente abasteció algunas necesidades humanas básicas. Han abandonado a los que ya no necesitan. Han creado una clase creciente de desposeídos. Somos miembros conscientes de esta clase.

A través de nuestros grupos y organizaciones, hemos luchado durante décadas por la reforma. Tenemos claro ahora que nuestros esfuerzos han sido, y siguen siendo, necesarios - pero no suficientes. Tenemos claro que debemos unirnos como nunca antes para exigir que se use la abundancia de este país para abastecer las necesidades humanas básicas de su población – sin excepción.

Nos comprometemos a esta unidad. Como un primer paso, por este medio creamos una **Asamblea para Eliminar la Pobreza** a través de la cual podemos compartir nuestros conocimientos y

habilidades, apoyar el uno al otro, concientizar e involucrar a nuestros vecinos y amigos, y actuar democrática y colectivamente para levantar nuestras demandas y asegurar nuestra reivindicación a la justicia económica.

Para emprender esta llamada, exhortamos al Grupo de Trabajo USSF Sobre la Pobreza que redacte una constitución para la Asamblea para Eliminar la Pobreza, que se nos deberá ser presentada para deliberación y ratificación dentro de tres meses. Y nos comprometemos a actuar colectivamente en nuestras comunidades locales a través de nuestros grupos y organizaciones durante un día nacional de la acción

que se propondrá con aquella constitución.

Finalmente, nos comprometemos a regresar a nuestras comunidades con la claridad que hemos sido desposeídos pero no derrotados, que tenemos un reclamo justo a la abundancia que hemos producido, y que debemos - y podemos - retomar nuestro país y nuestros gobiernos para vivir responsable y respetuosamente en este planeta con todos los pueblos del mundo.

La Asamblea EEUU para Eliminar la Pobreza

- Una asamblea de organizaciones comprometidas al movimiento al largo plazo a eliminar la pobreza
- Educación política y talleres de desarrollo de liderazgo
- Construyendo colectivamente estrategias y tácticas ante la aniquilación "de la red de protección" y el contrato social
- Analizando, proponiendo, y desarrollando soluciones sistémicas a la crisis económica

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Encuentre PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR e la página 29

