



New State Partnership Connects Child-Support Clients with Employment Services

Three Agencies Launch Initiative to Promote Family Success and Stability

January 6, 2020

A multi-agency state effort was launched today to assist parents in the child support system become employed or more employable to help ensure their children are receiving adequate financial support for their care and well-being.

The Employment Services Referral program offers a streamlined process for noncustodial parents involved in the child support system to connect to employment services at all 20 American Job Centers (AJCs) across the state. The AJCs are run by the State Department of Labor (CTDOL) and the state's five Workforce Development Boards, located in each geographical region.

The referral program is a joint venture between CTDOL, the state Dept. of Social Services' Office of Child Support Services (DSS OCSS), and the state Judicial Branch's office of Support Enforcement Services (SES).

Benefits of the new process include:

- Offering monthly on-site recruiting and hiring events at American Job Centers.
- Determining parents' eligibility for services such as online learning credentials, case management, training scholarships or job development services.
- Creation of activity reports outlining a parent's job-search activity during a specific period, including workshops attended.

"Connecting these parents with a job or making them more employable not only benefits them, but helps ensure their children are being raised in a healthy environment and receiving proper care such as adequate food, clothing and housing," State Labor Commissioner Kurt Westby said. "This is exactly the kind of concrete, forward-thinking initiative that makes our American Job Centers such a valuable resource for so many people across Connecticut."

The program's launch comes after a successful pilot initiative that ran from November 2018 to May 2019 in Hartford, Waterbury and New Britain AJCs, DSS OCSS offices, SES offices and Family Support Magistrate courts.

"While unemployment is relatively low in Connecticut, we know that some parents face challenges to finding work that will help them support their children," Social Services Commissioner Deidre S. Gifford said. "This promising initiative brings together the state's labor and child support systems to give special attention to non-custodial parents referred by Family Support Magistrates. With our partners, we hope to make a real difference in the employment success of parents who need the services, and in their ability to be fully present in their children's lives."

Judicial Support Enforcement Services Director Paul Bourdoulous said:

“We are very excited to collaborate on this initiative, and to help expand it statewide. Together, DSS-OCSS, CTDOL, and the Judicial Branch are leveraging existing government talent, resources, and services to better meet the employment needs of many parents in family court and the child support program.”

Under the program, SES and DSS OCSS staff will recommend to Family Support Magistrates that parents visit an AJC as a requirement for any job search order. A new referral form has been created in English and Spanish to formalize and better track the process.

The form allows AJC staff to easily identify that the individual is a child support client and provide appropriate assistance with accessing job-seeking resources, such as registration into the CT Hires online employment-resource system run by DOL.

For a schedule of American Job Center locations and hours, and more information on child support and employment services please visit:

<http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/UI-OnLine/Filing%20UI%20Schedule%20Poster%20effective%2012-31-2019.pdf>

<https://www.cthires.com/vosnet/Default.aspx>

www.ct.gov/dss/childsupport

www.jud.ct.gov/childsupport/fag_eng.htm.

<https://www.ct.gov/fatherhood/site/default.asp>

<http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/>

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