



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
**GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY**

**GOV. MALLOY: STATE TO EXPAND EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES TO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced that a pilot program connecting Waterbury-area veterans, military service members and their families with state employment and social services will be expanded to the Bridgeport area next month.

“In Connecticut and across the country, there are service members and veterans who are finding it difficult to support their families or themselves,” Governor Malloy said. “We need to do everything possible to increase their opportunities in the job market and to make sure they are aware of all the services they are entitled to. It’s our job to step up for these men and women, as they have stepped up for us.”

In January 2014, the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Labor (DOL) launched the program, Supporting Military Members/Veterans and Their Families in Accessing Community Services, to improve outreach and access to job-related services, health coverage, food assistance and other support.

“As part of our efforts to serve military families and veterans, I asked our labor and social services commissioners to ensure that all possible steps are being taken in their areas of responsibility,” Governor Malloy said. “We are extremely pleased with the progress made with a pilot program in Waterbury, and I have authorized its expansion to the Bridgeport area.”

“Connecticut’s military men and women have so much to offer our communities and businesses,” said Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman. “This initiative will help connect returning military members to the services and programs that support the transition to civilian life, and help veterans improve their quality of life. We are deeply grateful for everything our military has done for us, it is our turn to serve them.”

The Waterbury-area pilot program successfully increased the number of veterans and military service members participating in DOL’s employment services and DSS’s medical, food and financial assistance benefits.

Governor Malloy said his administration is meeting with Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch and service organizations today to lay the groundwork for expanding the pilot to the Bridgeport area.

“I’m the son of a veteran,” said Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch. “I recognize the importance of protecting our freedoms. I can’t thank those who served – and continue to serve – our country enough. Thanks to help from Governor Malloy, we’re growing support for veterans in Bridgeport. And, as our city gets better every day, we’re ensuring our heroes have a fair shot at good paying jobs, future success, and the opportunity to live a safe and healthy life.”

“Through better identification of military veterans and military service families, this pilot program has enabled DSS staff to now make online referrals to our Department of Labor partners when a veteran is applying for DSS benefits,” said DSS Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby. “This allows the veteran to be scheduled immediately for an interview with the DOL veterans’ employment specialist. By the same token, the DOL specialist can also assist a veteran in applying directly for DSS benefits when he or she initially contacts the Labor Department for workforce assistance. So far, DSS has connected more than 1,200 veterans with medical assistance, nearly 500 with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and 16 with cash assistance programs. This support has been critical in helping sustain military families and individuals in the community. We are proud to be part of this initiative.”

Governor Malloy noted that veterans and military members can go online at [www.ctvets.org](http://www.ctvets.org) to request an appointment with a DOL veterans’ specialist, sign up for DSS services, or obtain information about employment programs and workshops. Employment services include the Subsidized Training and Employment Program for veterans, also known as the “Step Up for Vets” program in which employers may be eligible to receive a wage subsidy up to \$12,000 when hiring an unemployed veteran.

Since the new system went into place, DSS and community partner New Opportunities Inc. have been able to make referrals to the Step Up program, which is administered by DOL and the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board in the Waterbury area.

“As a result of this partnership between DOL and DSS, the number of veterans being provided services by both agencies has increased by approximately 44 percent at our American Job Centers in the Waterbury region,” noted Labor Commissioner Sharon M. Palmer. “During that same time, 22 employers have taken part in the Step Up for Vets program which has provided employment to 39 unemployed veterans. An additional six veterans completing the Advanced Manufacturing Technology program at Naugatuck Valley Community College have also started new jobs, and we are working with other referred veterans to provide career counseling, résumé and interview skills assistance, and to connect them with employers that are seeking the specific skills they have learned while in the service. This is clearly a worthwhile initiative and we look forward to expanding the concept to other parts of the state.”

According to Commissioner Palmer, DSS programs have provided vital assistance to those veterans who have yet to attain employment, while DOL services have been key in helping unemployed veterans find jobs.

“The collaboration between DOL and DSS has been an immense benefit to all parties involved with this pilot program,” Commissioner Palmer added. “The addition of DOL veterans’ resource site web links on partner websites, combined with public service announcements in the DSS Waterbury field office about the pilot, is helping to bring about a range of new outreach measures that are making a positive difference in the lives of our veterans.”

Governor Malloy’s office has also developed a web site with a variety of state and federal programs available to veterans. The site can be accessed at [www.veterans.ct.gov](http://www.veterans.ct.gov).

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