

News release



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Contact: Kevin Flood
(860) 240-0078
Kevin.Flood@cga.ct.gov

State officials & national experts gathering in Hartford on Wednesday for forum on employability

HARTFORD — The Connecticut departments of Labor and Social Services are joining with the Commission on Children to hold “Improving Pathways to Employment: A Best Practices Forum,” on **Wednesday, September 24, from 9 a.m. to noon in Room 1-D of the Legislative Office Building, at 300 Capitol Avenue in Hartford.**

TANF, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, was launched by the federal government in 1997 as a centerpiece of welfare reform. The forum will explore how Connecticut currently uses the program to help needy families acquire the tools they need to land jobs in today’s competitive economy and whether other state programs may offer best practices that could be adopted for Connecticut.

The forum will also provide an opportunity for Labor Commissioner Sharon M. Palmer and Social Services Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby to outline preliminary recommendations of Connecticut’s TANF Redesign Work Group. Anne Foley, undersecretary for the state Office of Policy & Management (OPM) and chair of the state’s Child Poverty and Prevention Council, will deliver opening remarks. Commission on Children Executive Director Elaine Zimmerman will moderate the event.

Six national and state experts have been invited to provide presentations on the ways TANF can connect people to jobs and employment opportunities. Presenters include:

- State Representative Toni Walker of New Haven, who co-chairs the legislature’s Appropriations Committee (“The TANF Block Grant: Implications for Low-Income Families”);

- LaDonna Pavetti, vice president for family income support policy at the Washington, D.C.-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (“The TANF Landscape in the U.S.: Lessons Learned”);
- Brian Campbell, special assistant for the District of Columbia’s Department of Human Services (“Closing Obstacles, Opening Opportunity to Employment”);
- William Durden, policy associate for the Washington State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (“The I-BEST Model”);
- Rochelle Finzel, group director for the National Conference of State Legislatures (“Building Career Pathways”); and
- Charisse Hutton, director of Support Enforcement Services for Connecticut’s Judicial Branch (“Don’t Forget the Fathers: TANF & Child Support.”)

For more about the forum, including an agenda, speaker biographies and handouts, visit the Commission on Children website, at www.cga.ct.gov/coc.

Immediately following the forum, at the same location, DSS will hold a public-comment session on Connecticut’s proposed plan for allocating its TANF block grants for federal fiscal years 2015-2017. The state receives about \$267 million in TANF funding annually from the federal government and is therefore required to submit an allocation plan every three years. For details, visit the DSS website at www.ct.gov/dss/tanfplan.

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