

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony Brown
Lt. Governor

Brian Wilbon
Interim Secretary

November 30, 2010

The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
3 East Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Norman H. Conway
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
Lowe House Office Building, Room 131
84 College Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Senator Middleton and Delegate Conway:

House Bill 268 Welfare to Work – Green Jobs requires that on or before November 1 of each year and in consultation with the Maryland Association of Counties, the Secretary shall report, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee of the General Assembly, on:

- (1) the development of the local government hiring plan; and
- (2) the number of CURRENT AND FORMER recipients, children of current or former recipients, foster youth and obligors hired and retained by local governments.

In step with implementing new legislation, DHR is revising its model Hiring Agreement to meet these requirements. The agency's "Hiring Plans", including the Local Departments of Social Services' hiring plans and standard operating procedures with local governments, have been revised and are under review by the Attorney General's Office to ensure legal sufficiency. HB 268 expanded the participants from only FIP recipients to former FIP recipients, children of current or former recipients, foster youth and child support obligors. However at this time, we are only able to report on TCA recipients as systems modifications were necessary to begin collecting data on the new populations. The agency's data system (WORKS) was reconfigured in August 2010 to store, track and generate reports of employment activities for the expanded targeted populations. Local departments of social services have already begun to populate the system with this data. Over the course of this fiscal year, we will aggressively work with our local departments to obtain the data needed to generate a comprehensive automated report statewide in time for the Department's 2011 report. The Department is also exploring other approaches toward facilitating job opportunities to the targeted population and recording their dispositions or resulting data.

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The most recent available data for welfare recipients only records that during the 4th quarter of SFY 2009 there were 54 job placements with 34 retaining earnings in a subsequent quarter (1st quarter of SFY 2010). Additionally, the 1st and 2nd quarters of SFY 2010 records show that fifteen (15) local governments hired 176 recipients of which 123 had earnings in a subsequent quarter. This translates to a short-term retention rate of 69.8%. Comparatively, SFY 2009 recorded 192 job placements with 142 posting earnings in a subsequent quarter. This translates to a 73.9% retention rate. Most recent hiring data for the 3rd quarter of SFY 2010 records sixteen (16) local government entities placed 94 TCA recipients. Retention data is not currently available. During the 1st through 3rd quarters, there were 270 job placements recorded. Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County hired sixty-five (65), twenty-five (25) and sixteen (16) TCA recipients, respectively. There were a total of 324 job placements recorded for SFY 2010 of which hiring and retention data is available for 230 job placements. Of the 230 job placements, 157 retained earnings in a subsequent quarter, which translates to a 68.2% retention rate for SFY 2010.

In collaboration with the Maryland Energy Administration, the Department provided information regarding its paid internship funding program to counties and municipalities that received Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding. Through this program, the Department reimburses employers for hiring customers into positions that offer a competitive wage and the potential for long-term employment. This is a resource that local governments may use to address increased staffing needs resulting from the EECBG funding. In addition, the Department has worked closely with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) – Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) to encourage hiring of MD RISE customers by local WAP providers. In some jurisdictions such as Baltimore City, the WAP provider is a public entity.

The Department will continue to work collaboratively with the local departments of social services to continue the success of House Bill 268 Section 5-304C. If you require additional information, please contact Tammy Bresnahan, Executive Director, Office of Government, Corporate and Community Affairs, at 410-767-7193. Thank you for your concern and commitment to providing and improving essential services to Maryland's most vulnerable citizens.

Sincerely,



Brian Wilbon
Interim Secretary

cc: Stacy L. Rodgers
Kevin M. McGuire
Michelle Dinkel, Maryland Association of Counties
Directors and Assistant Directors Local Department of Social Services
Tammy Bresnahan

bcc: Vesta Kimble
John Huegelmeier
John Murray
Larry Ingram