



The Chicago Ticket to Work Pilot Project Selects Three Employment Network Grantees

On October 29, 2004, the City of Chicago's Mayor's Office of Workforce Development and Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services, announced the grantees of the Chicago Ticket to Work Pilot Project. The three grantees are **Thresholds, Community Assistance Programs, and Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center**. The Pilot Project will provide up-front funding of up to \$40,000 to these three Chicago Employment Networks to serve eight Ticket-holders.

The Pilot Project was created through the Mayor's Task Force on Employment of People with Disabilities. Believing that the Ticket to Work Program was being underutilized by both service providers and Social Security beneficiaries, the Task Force wanted to create a Project that would encourage service providers to participate in the Ticket to Work Program. By bringing together two city agencies and the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency, the Task Force was able to raise enough funds to support three Employment Networks in assisting individuals in returning to work.

Under the Pilot Project, the three chosen Employment Networks will work closely with the three Social Security Administration and Department of Labor-funded Navigators of the Chicago Workforce Board to recruit Ticket-holders for services. That recruitment process is beginning immediately. Each of the three Employment Networks will assign the Tickets of eight beneficiaries to both the Ticket to Work Program and the Chicago Pilot Program. The Chicago Pilot Program will pay the Employment Network \$2,000 upon placement, \$2,000 upon six months of employment, and \$1,000 upon one-year of employment. In addition to this Pilot revenue, the Employment Network will receive its Ticket payments under the Ticket to Work Program.

The City of Chicago and Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services hope that through this initial increase in revenue, the Employment Networks will successfully assist 24 beneficiaries in achieving self-sufficiency and utilize some of these extra funds to build the staffing to be able to accept more Tickets in the future.

For general information on the Chicago Ticket to Work Pilot, contact John Coburn of Health & Disability Advocates at [jacoburn@hdadvocates.org](mailto:jcoburn@hdadvocates.org).