



Public Engagement Newsletter

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[COVERING JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER]

Dear Community Partner,

On behalf of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), we hope you enjoyed the holiday season with friends, family and loved ones! There's something about the holiday season that makes us reflect on how fortunate and thankful we are for all of our blessings. While our hearts are filled with fond memories of joy and happiness from throughout the year, we also think about the New Year and make resolutions to better ourselves and those around us.

At the Department, we hold on to that spirit all year round and we are grateful for the work that we do and the lives we are able to touch every day. We also take pride in our efforts to foster relationships, partner with communities and build bridges to give a voice to individuals, families and communities across the state.

In this issue of our Public Engagement Newsletter, you'll learn that, July 1, 2012, we marked the 15-Year Anniversary since the creation of IDHS and after 15 years, our mission has been and will remain the same – to assist our customers to achieve maximum self-sufficiency, independence and health through the provision of seamless, integrated services for individuals, families and communities. Thanks to the partnerships we've developed over the past 15 years, we have made many strides in our efforts to achieve our mission, but the hardest work is yet to be done.

You'll also learn that our staff is dedicated to building on the success of our Culture of Caring in the variety of ways we serve our customers, work with our partners, and care for each other. You'll read that our Local Office PRIDE initiative has improved service processes and the physical atmosphere in many locations; IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler attended the C-4 drop-in center opening ceremony; and the Central Repository Vault has exceeded our expectations and garnered national recognition.

In addition, see which local offices received a visit from Secretary Saddler during her tour of Southern IL; learn why Unity Day is still alive and strong at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church after eight years; and get an inside look into IDHS' disabilities expo and employer panel.

This issue would not be complete without hearing what Secretary Saddler had to say at the Illinois Legislative Latino's 10th Anniversary Conference; reading how Redeploy Illinois saved the state \$40 million; congratulating Illinois for ranking 25th among 50 states in a national poll of states with the most volunteerism; and learning how Illinois Governor Pat Quinn plans to make a major investment in early childhood education.

In other agency news, several IDHS staff received awards from various organizations; IDHS participated in the Illinois Latino/a Behavioral Health Conference; the SECA Basketball Tournament raised \$1,731 for charities; and the Department's Culture of Caring extends beyond the brick and mortar of local offices.

As the New Year begins, IDHS is ready to embark on an aggressive statewide Earned Income Tax Credit public education campaign in partnership with the Governor's Office. We are recommitted to partnering with you to serve the individuals, families and communities who need us more now than ever!



IDHS marks 15-Year Anniversary

On July 1, 2012, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) hit a major milestone by marking its 15-Year Anniversary. Did you know, since the creation of IDHS in July of 1997, the Division of Rehabilitation Services has assisted more than 87,476 individuals with disabilities in obtaining competitive employment outcomes, an average of 5,832 per year? In addition, the Division of Mental Health has purchased mental health services on behalf of Illinois for more than 1 million individuals and as many as 256,000 customers have worked their way off of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. These are just a few examples of how IDHS has reached its goals of helping people achieve maximum self-sufficiency and independence over the past 15 years.

To commemorate this special occasion, IDHS has developed a series of strategies and activities to highlight the Department's successes and recount some of the untold stories behind those successes. Some of the activities that have taken place and are planned include:

- A commemorative *15-YEARS PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES* anniversary logo;
- A special [15-Year anniversary video message](#);
- The official statewide roll out of our Local Office PRIDE initiative; and
- Special community events to draw attention to IDHS services and sign up customers.



In addition, the Department is vigorously re-branding IDHS as the one-stop for human services needs; co-branding their partnerships, services and activities with providers; keeping staff abreast of IDHS happenings through internal messaging; and most importantly, engaging the public to improve IDHS services and policies.

"This is really a special time for all of our IDHS team members," IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler said. "We hope that these, along with other strategies, will help us take our message and spirit across the state to service providers who will continue to join us in support of our program services and initiatives."

Towards that end, IDHS has pledged to maximize their limited resources to strengthen engagement efforts with diverse communities through meetings, presentations and comprehensive public awareness campaigns.

Local Office PRIDE initiative furthers IDHS' culture of caring

Since the launch of the Illinois Department of Human Services' (IDHS) Local Office PRIDE (LOP) initiative last year in several of the Department's Family Community Resource Centers (FCRC), many front-line caseworkers, office managers and customers are increasingly feeling and embracing the Department's culture of caring.



With improved employee morale, streamlined business practices, and decreased waiting time for customers, the initiative is focused on ensuring that anyone who enters one of the Department's local offices can see and experience the Department's culture of caring. Some FCRCs have moved away from a caseload-based model in lieu of process-based teams that include waiting rooms greeters. Others have also had facility "makeovers" by having their local offices painted, rearranging the lobby area and receiving new office signage to streamline customer flow and traffic.

"The feedback we are getting from our local offices has been very positive," Division Director of Family and Community Services Linda Saterfield said. "Our employees feel appreciated and proud about what they do and our customers feel respected and valued as members of our IDHS family."

The LOP launches in the Woodlawn and Northwest FCRCs helped kick-start a ripple effect throughout other local offices such as DuPage County, Southeast, Northern and South Suburban, who today serve as model offices for consistently maintaining and displaying their local office pride. FCRCs throughout the state are also using the Department's 15-Year Anniversary as an opportunity to refresh and renew their efforts to expand and further the Department's culture of caring.

[IDHS Secretary attends C-4's drop-in center opening ceremony](#)

Illinois Department of Human Services Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler took part in the grand opening of the new "Drop-in Center" operated by the Community Counseling Centers of Chicago (C-4).

The center helps meet the terms of the Williams Consent Decree, which calls for a range of community-based services for people with mental illness.

Williams follows what began with the Supreme Court Olmstead decision that people have a right to live in the least restrictive setting possible. Williams, Colbert and Ligas decisions – and Money follows the Person - have supported Olmstead and the idea of community-based living.

The drop-in center, which serves up to 50 people a day, is an innovative idea to create an environment of support, socialization, self direction and empowerment for individuals in a non-clinical situation.

The center is for people who have lived in the larger settings for some time and may still want an environment where they can socialize with other class members.

The goal is to empower individuals to set recovery goals and take ownership of their own recovery through a community that promotes personal growth, empowerment, responsibility and greater independence, while incorporates messages of wellness, discovery and recovery.



[Centralized Repository Vault recognized by national organization](#)

According to the National Council of Nonprofits, Illinois has taken a big step forward in government-nonprofit contracting.

Launched in July of 2012, the [Centralized Repository Vault](#) (CRV) is the state's new information portal designed to eliminate duplication and confusion in the business process. Contracted partners can both download standard required documents such as Form 990s, and upload information they are required to provide such as their list of board members. It is expected to promote more efficient monitoring and auditing, and since all five state human services agencies will make use of this for their partners in service, all providers will save on administrative time and costs. This should allow dollars to be reinvested to an increased level of service to the community.

"Our community service providers fill a critical role in Illinois and we need to do everything we can to relieve them of burdensome processes that waste time and resources," Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler said. "This new reporting tool is allowing providers to reduce administrative costs and reinvest those dollars into programs that help the most vulnerable among us."

The CRV is a key component of the Management Improvement Initiative. This 2011 law is aimed at increasing efficiency and easing the administrative burden on providers while they work with limited resources and manpower. Secretary Saddler was appointed by Governor Quinn to lead this charge, and all five human services agencies are required to participate in the Initiative.

The CRV accepts and securely stores data using an easy-to-use web form to make entries and upload documents for review by the state's five human service agencies – Department of Human Services, Department on Aging, Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Healthcare and Family Services, and the Department of Public Health. Relevant data and documents from human service providers are collected at once and staff at each of the state agencies have access. This relieves providers of the administrative burden of repetitive requests for similar information. To date, more than 1257 providers have registered with the CRV and uploaded nearly 13,926 documents, saving an estimated \$40,000 in paper, printing, and administrative costs.



Authorized personnel of community service providers under contract with a state human services agency have access to the CRV. Service providers register and receive authorization to use the system by visiting the [Centralized Repository Vault](#).

IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler tours Southern IL local offices

Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler visited 15 local offices in 12 Southern IL counties, in September of 2012. The tour included stops in Anna, Harrisburg, Marion, Golconda, Metropolis, Cairo, Murphysboro, Benton, Chester, Mt. Carmel and Mt. Vernon. The visits were an opportunity for Secretary Saddler to meet staff and hear their concerns first hand.

Some pictures chronicling her FCRC/DRS office visits are below.



Region 5 Administrator Alan Summers gives a tour of the Williamson County Family Community Resource Center to Marion Mayor Robert Butler, State Rep. John Bradley and IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler, in September of 2012, in Southern, IL.



MASSAC COUNTY FCRC



UNION COUNTY DRS



POPE COUNTY FCRC



SALINE COUNTY DRS



SALINE COUNTY FCRC



CHOATE DEVELOPMENTAL CTR.



RANDOLPH COUNTY FCRC



UNION COUNTY FCRC



CHOATE MH CENTER



WABASH COUNTY FCRC



MARION PROVIDER MEETING

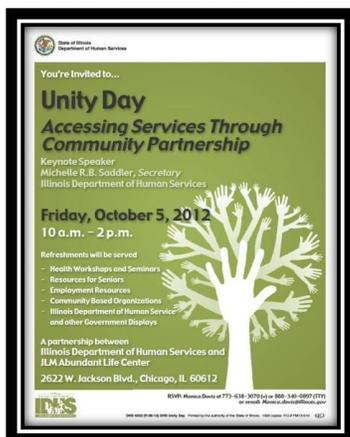
Unity Day at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church still stronger than ever after nine years

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) celebrated its annual *Unity Day* at Mount Vernon Baptist Church/JLM Abundant Life Center, in October of 2012, in Chicago, IL. Under this year's theme *Accessing Services through Community Partnership*, IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler served as the keynote speaker and used the opportunity to talk about change and how it requires the individual to want to change if they want to move from where they are to where they want to be or who they wish to become.

"We are proud of our diversity, our efficiency and the services that the agency and its community partners provide to Illinois citizens," Secretary Saddler said. "While the Department can be with you every step of the way, change starts within your core and your desire to better yourself and those around you."

Now in its ninth year, more than 300 individuals and approximately 45 social service agencies representing local, state and federal service providers were in attendance.

Unity Day is a gathering of churches, community organizations, businesses and citizens to increase awareness of IDHS services, fosters partnerships and provide potential job opportunities to attendees. Some of the other activities included a job fair, health screenings, information on social services available in the community and a free lunch.



IDHS hosts disabilities expo and employer panel

The Illinois Department of Human Services' (IDHS) Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) hosted a job fair and disabilities expo, in October of 2012. As many as 80 local employers were prepared to distribute information, accept applications and perform on-the-spot interviews with prospective employees. Hosted in the Orr Building on the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield, the disabilities expo drew several hundred job seekers and interested individuals, including more than 150 DRS customers.



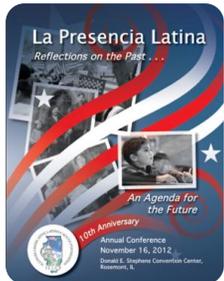
In addition, DRS and the Knox-Warren Transition Planning Committee (TPC) also hosted an Employer Panel discussion, in November of 2012, at Galesburg High School.

Local employers shared success stories and provided information about their business, available positions and the type of training and qualifications necessary for employment. Employers were also available to answer questions from the students about job search and employment.

DRS' Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program is operated from 44 offices across the State of Illinois and employs approximately 230 VR counselors, who assist persons with disabilities in becoming employed. Staff provide vocational guidance and counseling; assist customers in developing an individualized plan for employment; and arrange for provisions of training, restorative services and job placement to help customers achieve their employment goals.



Secretary Saddler attends ILLCF's 10th Anniversary Conference



Where We've Been and Where We're Going was the topic of a panel discussion at the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation's (ILLCF) 10th Anniversary Conference, in November of 2012, in Rosemont, IL, attended by Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler, Acting Assistant Secretary Nelida Smyser-DeLeon, and several other IDHS staff members.

The conference recognized the accomplishments Illinois Latinos have made in the past decade and looked at the challenges to be faced in the next 10 years. Secretary Saddler pointed out the success IDHS has had in hiring Latinos. "The department now has 878 Latino workers or 6.6 percent of the workforce, including 48 in management positions," she said.

The conference theme this year was *La Presencia Latina: Reflections on the Past...An Agenda for the Future*. The keynote speaker was Ray Suarez, an acclaimed author and well-known senior correspondent for PBS' *The News Hour*. His expert perspective on the meaning of The Brown of America provided the audience an insight on the status of Latinos in America. They had six conference topics: Education, Health Care, Jobs and the Economy, Immigration, Leadership and Human Services.

During one of the breakout sessions, Secretary Saddler served as a panelist on the Human Services Workshop. During her participation, she talked about IDHS' Latino and bilingual initiatives for individuals and families with limited English proficiency in the state.

"IDHS has taken the lead in forming a committee to address the needs of the Latino community by having IDHS divisions represented in the Limited English Proficient (LEP) committee to discuss the strides we've made in the past and our vision for the future," Secretary Saddler explained. "In fact, one of the Governor's initiatives is to form a statewide LEP."

She informed the audience that the Department has an Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs that does in-house interpretations and translates documents from English to Spanish and Spanish to English all while serving over 43 different languages. She also talked about the IDHS Welcoming Center and how State Rep. Lisa Hernandez advocated strongly on this initiative to serve the people of the state. Secretary Saddler mentioned that the Welcoming Center is what IDHS calls, "Su casa ... You're home!"

“It’s a model office that makes you feel like you are at home and welcomed,” Saddler explained. “A place that will talk to you in your primary language and provide you not only with nutritional and health assistance, but assess you for child services, employment, job readiness, and other supportive services.”

According to IDHS officials, several sister agencies are co-located in the same location; making the Welcoming Center a “One Stop Shop.”



Michelle R.B. Saddler, Illinois Department of Human Services Secretary; Lawrence Benito, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights; and Judith Gethner, Illinois Partners for Human Service serve on various panels during the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation’s 10th Anniversary Conference, in November of 2012, in Rosemont, IL.

Redeploy Illinois program saves state \$40 million

The Illinois Department of Human Services' (IDHS) [Redeploy Illinois](#) initiative has saved the state \$40 million in incarceration costs by helping to steer young people away from the prison system and onto the right path.



“Redeploy Illinois' success is proof that community-based services are not only the best tools we have to truly help rehabilitate justice-involved youth, but they are also more cost effective,” IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler said. “In diverting our young people from the path of imprisonment, we save them - and our state - from the social, emotional and financial costs of incarceration.”

Redeploy Illinois was established in 2005 to provide financial support to counties in their efforts to provide community services for delinquent youth as an alternative to incarceration. Since that time, the program has cut in half the number of juveniles committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice, according to the program's most recent annual report. At the start of Redeploy Illinois, an average of 356 youth were incarcerated from the participating counties every year. Over the past seven years, that number fell sharply to an average of 178 youth.

A total of 854 juveniles were incarcerated from participating counties since Redeploy Illinois was implemented, which is more than a 50 percent decrease from the estimated 1,713 youth that were previously on track for incarceration. This 50 percent reduction in youth commitment rates resulted in an estimated savings to the state of \$40 million in related incarceration costs.

Redeploy Illinois supports a wide array of services to help delinquent youth including counseling; substance abuse and mental health treatment; life skills education; and parent and family support services.

The program began in 15 counties and was later expanded to 29 counties, including Macon, Peoria, St. Clair, Lee and McLean. The report reflects the results achieved in 28 of the 29 participating counties – the outlying county, LaSalle, recently joined the program and has not yet collected data.

The program has been successful in mobilizing communities to direct resources to youth offenders who otherwise would have been incarcerated. Counties receiving Redeploy Illinois funds commit to reducing their number of commitments by 25 percent in exchange for grant funds.

Illinois ranks 25th among 50 states on volunteerism

The Illinois Department of Human Services’ Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Serve Illinois) recently commended the state’s 2.73 million volunteers that made a difference through volunteerism last year. Illinois volunteers served nearly 360 million total hours, which is valued at \$8.1 billion.

“Involved citizens do so much to make our communities stronger,” Executive Director of the Serve Illinois Commission Brandon Bodor said.

“We view volunteerism as a vital piece of infrastructure here in Illinois. From education to health to disaster response, service threads through each community is fundamental to addressing critical issues in the state. We look forward to expanding the awareness of volunteer opportunities so that Illinois can build upon the momentum that we’ve displayed in this report.”



According to the recently released [Volunteering and Civic Life in America \(VCLA\) report](#), nearly 30 percent of Illinoisans demonstrated their commitment to improving their communities by volunteering, ranking the Land of Lincoln 25th among the 50 states.

The report shows the national volunteer rate reaching its highest level since 2006. More than 64 million Americans – or roughly one in four adults – volunteered approximately eight billion hours, valued at \$171 billion. In addition, two out of three citizens nationally (65.1% or almost 144 million citizens) engaged in informal volunteering by doing favors for and helping out their neighbors, an increase of 9.5 percent from last year.

The VCLA data is part of the most comprehensive study of volunteering and civic engagement across the country. The annual report is issued by the Corporation for National and Community Service as part of its efforts to expand the reach and impact of America’s volunteers, in partnership with the National Council on Citizenship, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau for Labor Statistics.

The Serve Illinois Commission is a 40 member, bi-partisan board appointed by the Governor. Its mission is to improve Illinois communities by enhancing traditional volunteer activities and supporting national service programs. The Commission is accomplishing this mission through the support of local community-based efforts to enhance volunteer opportunities and the administration of Illinois' AmeriCorps program. To find a volunteer opportunity, or to learn more about the Serve Illinois Commission and volunteerism in Illinois, visit www.Serve.Illinois.gov.

Governor announces major investment in early childhood education

Governor Pat Quinn and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler joined students, families and teachers to announce \$45 million for vital improvements to early childhood education facilities in high-need communities across Illinois.

The 14 Early Childhood Construction Grants (ECCG), announced in December of 2012, are funded through Governor Quinn’s *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital construction program and will expand access to early childhood education, which experts have noted is critical to a student’s success.



The ECCG announcement is part of the governor’s comprehensive plan to strengthen Illinois’ education system by improving early childhood education; modernizing school facilities; expanding science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) instruction; and implementing bold reforms that put children first.

“The achievement gap begins before a child steps foot into kindergarten,” Governor Quinn said. “We know that investing in early childhood education is the best way to ensure lifelong success for our students. By setting our youngest learners on the right track now, we can prepare them for a lifetime of growth and strengthen our economy for the future.”

The ECCG is the first program in the nation of its kind, created by Governor Quinn and funded through his *Illinois Jobs Now!* to increase early childhood services in underserved areas across Illinois. Organizations receiving the awards went through a competitive grant process, specifying how the funds will be spent to improve early childhood education in their communities. The awards may be used to acquire or construct a facility or expand an existing facility as well as to purchase equipment and make safety improvements. Early childhood providers in Cook, McHenry, Will, Winnebago, St. Clair, Kane and Kankakee counties were among the successful applicants.

The announcement was made at Cicero’s *Through A Child’s Eyes* pre-K program, which focuses on helping children deemed to be at-risk of academic failure. In the last school year, the program served 467 students, with 95 percent coming from families at or below the poverty level. By the end of the school year, approximately 90 percent of at-risk three and four-year-olds had met or exceeded expectations in literacy learning skills following their participation in the program.

“Thanks to these funds, some of our most vulnerable children will get access to early childhood education and services that might not otherwise be available,” State Board of Education Chairman Gery J. Chico said. “Studies have proven time and time again that such programming changes lives and yields social, academic and economic benefits. This is especially important as we work to reduce the achievement gap in the coming years.”

The ECCG awards follow an earlier announcement the same month that Illinois was awarded a \$34.8 million Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant from the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The funds will support quality improvements to Illinois' early learning system including the development of a unified system that enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of programs.

The \$34.8 million grant will allow the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Human Services and Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to work together to improve the quality of all early learning and development programs in the state. The federal grant will be used to create a new Quality Rating and Improvement System to inform parents about program quality through a website that will be fully implemented in July of 2014. In addition, the grant will help communities connect children with the greatest needs to high-quality programs, strengthen the quality of early learning programs, and support the development of great teachers for early learning programs. These funds will also allow the state to make important one-time investments to improve efficiency, streamline program administration and data systems and evaluate effectiveness for early childhood programs.



“Making sure young children and their families get the support they need to prepare children for success in school and later life requires a coordinated effort from all of our agencies,” IDHS Secretary Saddler said.

Since taking office, Governor Quinn has made strengthening Illinois' education system a top priority. Earlier this year, the Governor announced \$623 million in *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital funding to help dozens of school districts statewide make critical repairs, additions and technology updates to classrooms. Combined with local dollars, the funding will allow school districts to complete projects totaling more

than \$1.2 billion. The program also includes \$1.5 billion for higher education, including \$788 million for public universities and \$400 million for community colleges. The funds have been used to support many landmark projects including Lincoln Hall at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, Cole Hall at Northern Illinois University, the Advanced Chemical Technology Building at the University of Chicago, the Transportation Education Center at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, as well as Western Illinois University's Riverfront campus expansion in Moline.

In addition to improving facilities, Governor Quinn has worked to enhance academic offerings in the state by supporting the Illinois Pathways Initiative, an innovative public-private partnership between public education institutions and the business community to foster STEM learning. The governor's goal is for 60 percent of Illinois adults to earn a college degree or career certificate by 2025.

OTHER HAPPENINGS AT THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IDHS staff honored at El Rincon's 40th Anniversary Celebration



Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Acting Assistant Secretary Nelida Smyser-DeLeon; and

Hilda Frontany, IDHS staff from the Division of Family and Community Services, were honored at El Rincon's 40th Anniversary Celebration, in August of 2012, in Chicago, IL. Hilda Frontany received El Rincon's Lifetime Commitment to Advocacy Award.

Nelida Smyser-DeLeon receives El Rincon's CARE Award for Community Advocacy from MC Lourdes Duarte, WGN News; El Rincon's Executive Director, Rolando Correa; and media personality Bill Zayas, in August of 2012, in Chicago, IL.

In mid December of 2012, IDHS staff delivered several boxes of new and used coats; dozens of hats, gloves and scarves; and toys and small gift items to a variety of organizations, shelters and needy individuals and families.

“I want to thank my colleagues and friends who have donated so generously during the holiday season,” Spencer said. “I appreciate all of my co-workers for being willing to help in any way they can.”

IDHS staff have been collecting coats during the holidays for several years. This is the second year IDHS has conducted the combined clothing and food drive for Springfield and Chicago area shelters.

“It’s amazing what we can accomplish when we collectively put our efforts into a good cause,” Frontany said. “And what better time than the holiday season to demonstrate to someone that you care.”



State promotes Earned Income Tax Credit and free tax preparation for families

Thousands of Illinoisans are boosting their paychecks by taking advantage of important tax benefits for workers. Governor Quinn is urging low-income Illinoisans to become aware of all of the federal and state tax benefits available to them. IDHS is reaching out to workers who are also eligible for IDHS programs to inform them of the [Earned Income Tax Credit](#) (EITC) and free tax counseling services offered by IRS VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program tax sites, the Center for Economic Progress and Ladder Up.

In 2012, Governor Quinn signed major legislation to double the State’s EITC over two years, saving low-income workers an extra \$105 million per year. The federal EITC can be worth up to \$5,981 for a household with three or more children. Residents who claim the EITC can claim as much as \$475 for the 2012 tax year.

Free income tax filing assistance is available to families with incomes under \$50,000 or single persons with incomes of less than \$25,000. Tax assistance will be available at 39 sites across the state. Last year the programs assisted more than 25,000 income tax filers. To locate an IRS VITA program tax site, please visit www.irs.gov or call 1-800-906-9887.

IDHS is sending information on the [EITC and free tax](#) help to all IDHS customers. Several other state agencies are also doing their part to promote these important benefits.

For more information visit the IDHS [EITC home page](#). Please feel free to share, reproduce and distribute the attached EITC PDF files to your colleagues, networks and clients.

We hope you enjoyed reading this special year-end edition of our Public Engagement Newsletter. Please feel free to forward and share our newsletter with your networks, partners, colleagues, customers and friends!

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