TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 6-09
	DATE August 11, 2009

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS
STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS
STATE UI DIRECTORS
STATE APPRENTICESHIP DIRECTORS
COMPREHENSIVE AND AFFILIATE ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER DIRECTORS
SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GRANTEES
INDIAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAM GRANTEES
MIGRANT SEASONAL FARMWORKER GRANTEES

FROM: JANE OATES
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: US Department of Housing and Urban Development and US Department of Labor Partnership

1. Purpose. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) was signed into law by President Barak Obama on February 17, 2009. The Recovery Act is intended to preserve and create jobs, promote the nation's economic recovery, and assist those most impacted by the recession. Under the Recovery Act, Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) will receive funding to improve the energy efficiency of public housing units across the country. On May 26th Secretary Shaun Donovan of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis issued a joint letter announcing the establishment of a pilot program to link public housing residents with their local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and its One Stop Career System. This notice is intended to alert the workforce investment system to the partnership between HUD and the Department of Labor (DOL) and to be prepared to work with representatives from local Public Housing Agencies and connect public housing residents to One Stop Career Centers.

2. References.
   - The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Pub. L. No. 111-5, 123 Stat. 115, Division A, Title VIII (February 17, 2009).

- Green Jobs Act of 2007, Pub. L. No. 110-140, 121 Stat. 1748 (codified at 29 U.S.C. § 2916).
- Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub. L. No. 105-220, 112 Stat. 939 (codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. § 2801 *et seq.*)

3. **Background and Strategic Vision for Partnership between the Public Housing Agencies and the Workforce Investment System under the Recovery Act.**

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) will receive funding to improve the energy efficiency of public housing units across the country. As part of this initiative, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) are establishing a pilot program to link public housing residents with their local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and its One Stop Career System. The pilot will attempt to connect qualified PHA residents to training and jobs in weatherization within their own communities' facilities, and ultimately, to longer term weatherization and green collar work for these residents.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is making $995 million of Recovery Act funding available to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) to make capital improvements. In addition to providing a powerful stimulus to the economy through job creation, this funding has the potential of transforming the public housing program in a number of ways. First it will direct a significant amount of funding to address the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. Second, it will provide a substantial amount of funding to transform distressed public housing. Third, it will provide gap financing to complete projects that have stalled because of funding shortages. Finally, it will make a large investment ($600 million) in improving the energy efficiency and environmental performance of public housing. All four areas of investment have the potential to create jobs for un- and underemployed workers, with a particular interest in engaging job seekers who are residents of public housing. HUD is looking to the Workforce Investment system to provide career counseling and job training assistance to job seekers who can fill positions created by HUD's Recovery Act funding. HUD released its Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) on June 1. A copy of the solicitation document can be found at: www.hud.gov/recovery/recovery-comp-grants.pdf. Grant applications will be received and processed on a rolling basis through August 18, 2009 with all funds obligated by September 30, 2009. PHAs receiving funds will be required to commit these funds within 120 days and have been encouraged to engage their local Workforce Investment Boards as part of their implementation plan.

HUD and DOL have jointly created the following set of "Frequently Asked Questions" to describe the public housing and workforce systems and to facilitate greater linkages between the two systems at the local level. Each Department is sharing this set of questions and answers with its respective systems.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: **What is a Public Housing Agency (PHA)?**
Answer: Public housing agencies (PHAs) are funded by the federal government. They are local government entities, generally created through state charters, which have the authority to own public housing and operate rental assistance programs. The rental assistance can either be in the units owned by the PHA (conventional public housing) or as a tenant-based voucher used on the open rental market (known as Section 8 or the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program).

Question: **How did the Recovery Act affect public housing agencies?**
Answer: Under the Recovery Act, each PHA that owns public housing received an extra formula-based allocation of capital funds. If the PHA accepted these recovery funds, it is required to conduct capital improvements, which should create jobs and contracting opportunities.

Question: **How can I find a local PHA?**
Answer: To locate a public housing agency within your jurisdiction, refer to http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/

Question: **What is the public workforce system?**
Answer: The public workforce system is made up of the U.S. Department of Labor, State Workforce Agencies, State Workforce Investment Boards, Local Workforce Investment Boards, One Stop Career Centers, and local service providers.

Question: **What is a Workforce Investment Board (WIB)?**
Answer: Both state and local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) generally include representatives from local industries, educational institutions and training providers, community organizations, public and private economic development professionals, and state, county or local public officials. WIBs support economic development strategies, education, and labor market analysis with the goal of providing a well-trained workforce to meet economic growth.

Question: **What kind of training can workers get from a WIB?**
Answer: Workforce Investment Boards are not training providers, but identify and link training providers (schools, non-profit groups, apprenticeship programs and more) with the workforce system.

Question: **What is a One Stop Career Center and what services does it provide?**
Answer: One Stop Career Centers provide job seekers with career counseling, job training, continuing education, and social services support. They also provide employers with labor exchange support, matching job openings with qualified candidates.

Question: **How do I find the nearest One Stop Career Center?**
Answer: www.servicelocator.org or call 1-877-US2-JOBS (1-877-872-5627).

Question: **Who is eligible to receive services from a One Stop Career Center?**
Answer: All job seekers needing assistance with additional training, career counseling and/or identifying job opportunities are eligible for services.

Job seekers do not have to be currently unemployed or underemployed to receive services from One Stop Career Centers. State and local areas are responsible for establishing criteria for job seekers to receive special services or additional support.

Question: **Do One Stop Career Centers serve employers as well?**
Answer: Of course! One Stop Career Centers provide assistance to employers by posting job openings and providing a pool of possible "recruits" to employers.

PHAs and their contractors are encouraged to post job openings to the local One Stop Career Center job opportunity database.

Question: **What training and education support is available through these centers?**
Answer: Qualified job seekers may receive stipends or other forms of assistance in securing training toward upgrading job skills or obtaining basic skills necessary to enter the workforce. Generally, job training for qualified individuals is arranged through approved training providers in the community, including community colleges, vocational institutions, labor unions, non-profit institutions and apprenticeship programs.

Question: **How may PHAs and WIBs collaborate?**
Answer: Start by identifying the appropriate staff within the PHA/WIB and describe current operations in both entities:

1. Discuss existing overlaps in clients/residents;
2. Identify training needs associated with the PHA's capital plans; and,
3. Identify available WIB training.

Question: **Can you give me some examples of collaborative activities that would facilitate partnership?**

Answer: Each city or local area will generate unique opportunities specific to its workforce, housing stock, climate and economy. Here are just a few examples of green activities that PHAs and WIBs could conduct together:

- Explore whether job-readiness training is available to public housing residents. Make sure the training is accessible.
- Research available construction-related training or apprenticeships.
- Post PHA capital fund and/or Recovery Act contractor position openings through the One Stop Career Center.
- Market existing training opportunities together. One way is a joint WIB and PHA flyer on available trainings distributed to residents, with follow-up meetings and outreach.
- WIBs can also perform onsite outreach at public housing developments – either by holding group meetings or working directly with residents.
- The One Stop Career Center could share its intake form/screening guidelines with the PHA. This would help the PHA Service Coordinator conduct screening at the PHA and make appropriate referrals.

Question: **How can PHA Service Coordinators help with job placement?**

Answer: PHA Service Coordinators could help most by identifying employment challenges or barriers faced by the residents of public housing. The Coordinator could then help public housing residents overcome barriers to work by involving partners in the community who can help provide work supports to enable PHA residents to be successful. "Partners" may include community colleges that can assist with adult basic education and GED preparation; vocational trade schools; transportation and child care providers; credit unions that provide financial literacy classes; churches or non-profit organizations that could provide work-appropriate clothing or counseling, etc.

Question: **What should PHAs do to advertise potential job openings?**

Answer: You or your contractor may post job announcements through your One Stop Career Center free of charge, helping you locate and hire workers quickly. Utilizing the public workforce system does not limit you from other hiring activities.

To locate the public workforce system job banks near your PHA, visit http://www.jobbankinfo.org

In addition, One Stop Career Center specialists can help employers by:

- Pre-screening candidates, conducting skill assessments, and referring job-ready candidates;
- Providing assistance in organizing job fairs and specialized recruitment efforts - this may be especially helpful in recruiting residents of your public housing system for weatherization training and employment.

Visit http://www.doleta.gov/business/SolutionsToBuild.cfm for more information.

Question: **What are the procedures for posting job announcements through my One Stop Career Center?**

Answer: Contact your local One Stop and identify yourself as an employer. Tell them why you are calling and ask to be referred to the person who can best handle your request—that might be the One Stop manager or a Business Service Representative, which many One Stops have.

To locate One Stop Career Centers, visit http://www.servicelocator.org or call 1-877-US2-JOBS or 1-877-889-5627 (TTY).

To use on-line services to post job openings, see: http://careeronestop.org/Audience/Businesses/Businesses.aspx

Question: **For PHAs and our contractors, is there any advantage in using the One Stop Career Center to post jobs? I've never had any trouble finding workers before.**

Answer: There are other advantages for contractors in posting PHA-related job openings on One Stop Career Center job banks.

- Posting open jobs helps grantees and contractors meet the expectations of transparency set by the Obama Administration in its allocation of Recovery Act funding;
- Facilitates the ability to count and document the jobs being created by Recovery Act-funded projects;
- Provides a strategy for meeting Section 3 hiring requirements; and
- Fulfills contractors' job listing requirements as outlined by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

In addition, the public workforce system can help navigate other general employment regulations for Federal contractors, such as ensuring that all individuals have an equal opportunity for employment.

Question: **Is there federal financial assistance for PHA/WIB collaborations?**

Answer: There are no specific funds or set-asides for PHA/WIB collaborations. Separately, both HUD and DOL have distributed significant Recovery funding to states and local entities through their normal structures. The recovery process requires an effective use of these funds, including collaborations across many disciplines and agencies that both serve America's most vulnerable populations and leverage funds to avoid waste.

HUD ...awarded $3 billion in formula awards to PHAs for capital fund improvements with deadlines to commit funds. An additional $1 billion is available competitively for capital work.

DOL ...has distributed nearly $4 billion in formula funds to states for workforce investments and unemployment benefits. Through the Recovery Act, there is an additional competitive DOL grant program that distributes up to $500 million for green job training.

Question: **How does the Recovery Act help PHA residents find jobs and/or secure training?**

Answer: The Recovery Act serves a twofold purpose: 1) to preserve and create jobs; and 2) to help workers gain new skills.
To prioritize training and support services funded through the Act, the legislation identified eligible target populations:

- Workers impacted by national energy and environmental policy;
- Individuals in need of updated training related to the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries;
- Veterans, or past or current members of the reserves;
- Unemployed individuals;
- Individuals, including at-risk youth, seeking employment pathways out of poverty into economic self-sufficiency; and,
- Formerly incarcerated, adjudicated, non-violent offenders.

Question: **What is a green job?**

Answer: There is no single definition of a green job. According to the Green Jobs Act, green jobs encompass any workplace activity that involves energy efficiency or renewable energy manufacturing, installation and maintenance; building retrofits to improve energy use, as well as energy assessments; deconstruction and materials re-use, and manufacturing of sustainable products using sustainable processes.

The White House Middle Class Task Force has suggested that green jobs share three general characteristics:

- Green jobs involve some task associated with improving the environment, including reducing carbon emissions and creating and/or using energy more efficiently;
- Green jobs should be good jobs that provide a sustainable family wage, health and retirement benefits, and decent working conditions;
- Green jobs should be available to diverse workers from across the spectrum of race, gender and ethnicity.

Question: **What support services are available to PHAs from the workforce system/Department of Labor?**

Answer: One Stop Career Centers offer a full range of services to both PHA managers and residents:

- Workers who have been laid off may apply for unemployment benefits through their One Stop Career Centers.
- Social services support for qualified job seekers, such as payments for child or dependent care, housing, education or training programs, assistance for transportation to secure training or reach a job site, help in obtaining an assistive device or service to enable people with disabilities to perform their jobs, and other forms of support may be available to job seekers through their local One Stop Career Center.
- One Stop Career Centers also connect workers to emergency and other social services offered in their communities, including food, shelter, clothing and mental health services.

Question: **How much does career counseling and training cost? Does the job seeker have to pay for this?**

Answer: All One Stop Career Center "Core" services are free to job seekers, including career search and placement assistance, and administrative assistance to secure social services support or educational training funds.

One Stop Career Centers also offer two more comprehensive levels of services free of charge to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals (where funds are limited):

- Intensive services - Includes more comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans and counseling and career planning; and
- Training services – Both occupational training and training in basic skills are covered. Participants use an "individual training account" to select an appropriate training program from a qualified training provider.

Question: **Are there any special requirements to receive assistance?**

Answer: Any job seeker may receive assistance in job searches and resume writing. To receive unemployment benefits, the individual must meet the requirements set by the state in which he/she resides. Generally:

- If you were part of a large layoff or plant closing, s/he may be eligible for job search and training services through the state's Dislocated Worker/Rapid Response program.
- The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provides training and job opportunities for low income persons age 55 and older.
- The National Farmworker Jobs Program provides job training and employment assistance for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.
- Indian and Native American Programs provide employment and training services to Native American communities.

Eligibility for other types of service is set by each state. Veterans, youth, persons with disabilities, dislocated workers and other populations may all receive services through their One Stop Career Center, depending on eligibility.

Question: **What Federal regulations and rules apply to this program?**

Answer: **Davis-Bacon Act (Labor):** The Department of Labor has issued All Agency Memorandum (AAM) No. 207 that provides important guidance regarding application of the Davis-Bacon Act to construction projects funded under ARRA. The AAM can be located at http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/recovery/AAM207.pdf For more information on the applicability of Davis-Bacon to the Capital Fund ARRA Competition, please see the Notice of Funding Availability http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/capfund/ocir.cfm.
Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968: HUD has issued guidance for Section 3 and Recovery Act funding at http:www.hud.gov/recovery.

Question: **Where can I find more information on HUD's Section 3 and reporting requirements?**

Answer: Section 3 ensures that employment, training, and contracting opportunities created as a result of the expenditure of certain HUD funding are directed to low- and very low-income residents of the community where the funds are spent, particularly those living in assisted housing, and the businesses that substantially employ these persons. To learn more about the requirements of Section 3 visit: www.hud.gov/section3.

Question: **Besides this HUD-DOL partnership, are there other employment and training programs available to residents of public housing?**

Answer: Residents of public housing may qualify for additional government services because of employment status, income, or because they are a member of a target population under the Green Jobs Act, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), or other Federal and state law.

Labor unions, community- or faith-based organizations, the city or county, philanthropic foundations, individual employers, or other non-federal entities may provide additional employment and training programs to residents of public housing.

Question: **Is child care available to allow job-seekers to attend training and subsequently accept employment?**

Answer: Each state and locality establishes eligibility standards for support services for job seekers. If public funding is not available in your area to cover child care expenses, the One Stop Career Center may be able to connect the residents with additional resources from the community to help cover this expense.

Another option is TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). Each state establishes its requirements, but generally assists clients with the following:

- Cash assistance to help pay for basic needs.
- Employment training and job placement.
- Vocational Training and Education: Clients may get reimbursement for vocational training and educational expenses, but not for tuition.
- Employment-Related Expense: Clients may receive assistance to help pay the cost for certain personal items necessary to accept a job offer, or to retain employment.
- Transportation: Clients may receive transportation reimbursement if they are enrolled in a training or education program or if they are working.
- Child care.

In most states, PHA residents may be eligible to receive a monthly cash benefit to help cover ongoing basic family needs. The amount of the benefit is typically based on family size and amount of other income, including other public assistance payments.

Question: **Many of my residents have a disability – are support services available to accommodate their employment?**

Answer: Each state and locality establishes eligibility for support services for job seekers, including assessment and employment support for people with disabilities. The One Stop Career Center should be an access point for all these services and programs, and may also be able to connect them with additional resources from the community to help accommodate their employment needs.

Question: **English is the second language of many of my residents – is English language education available?**

Answer: Each state establishes eligibility criteria for language and basic skills education and training assistance for qualified job seekers. If an individual qualifies as low-income or receives public assistance, he/she may qualify for language training assistance.

Question: **Some of my residents are older workers – can they participate in this program?**

Answer: All PHAs and One Stops are encouraged to collaborate. In collaboration, outreach will be conducted regardless of age, sex, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work based training program for older workers, providing subsidized, part-time, community service work based training for low-income persons age 55 or older who have poor employment prospects. See http://www.doleta.gov/Seniors/ .

Older workers who are not low-income may still receive "core" employment assistance services through their One Stop Career Center, as can any job seeker.

Question: **Some of my residents were previously convicted of a crime – are they eligible to work under this program?**

Answer: Persons who were previously incarcerated because of non-violent offenses are eligible for employment services from your local One Stop Career Center.

4. Action Requested. States are encouraged to share this notice broadly with local WIBs and other stakeholders.

5. Inquires. Notice of all Federal solicitations is posted in the Federal Register and at www.grants.gov, and DOL-specific information is also available on our Web site at www.doleta.gov/grants. Additional information on funding available through the

Recovery Act is on the Web at www.doleta.gov/recovery. Information on the workforce investment system and its locations nationwide is available at www.careeronestop.org.