

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Christie Whitman today authorized the issuance of an emergency regulation which will enable the Department of Human Services to implement a pilot project extending emergency assistance (EA) benefits for up to 12 months to some 2,400 single persons and families in the state's welfare program, Work First New Jersey.

The emergency regulation will apply to welfare recipients that the Department of Human Services previously announced were unemployable.

"In most cases, people are able to find work within the 12-month limit and leave emergency housing," the Governor said. "This pilot project will provide needed help to those who were not able to work while we determine what support they need to find jobs and housing."

To be part of the pilot program, the recipient must:

- Have a chronic history of unemployability, substance abuse or severe mental problems;
- Have a disability insurance or SSI application pending;
- Have acute AIDs or be HIV positive with symptoms, or be terminally ill and unable to perform activities of daily living.

The Governor signed a Certificate of Imminent Peril, which was required under the law for Human Services Commissioner Michele Guhl to issue the emergency regulation

Emergency Assistance, emergency housing and homeless prevention efforts for people on welfare has a lifetime limit of 12 months. The program started in July, 1997 and was created as a temporary program to serve as a bridge until people can find permanent shelter.