

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 9-11
	DATE September 21, 2011

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER SYSTEM LIASONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS

FROM: JANE OATES /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Hardest Hit Fund

1. Purpose. To advise states about President Obama’s Hardest Hit Fund and advise states to consider ways that unemployed workers facing severe financial hardship can be informed of the program, specifically through One-Stop Career Centers, state websites, and other methods as identified by the individual state.

2. Background. President Obama established the Hardest Hit Fund last year to provide targeted aid to struggling homeowners in states hit hard by the economic and housing market downturn. These states represent those that have been hardest hit by unemployment and steep home price declines. In total, 18 states and the District of Columbia received funding through the program. These states are:

Alabama	Kentucky	Ohio
Arizona	Michigan	Oregon
California	Mississippi	Rhode Island
Florida	Nevada	South Carolina
Georgia	New Jersey	Tennessee
Illinois	North Carolina	Washington DC
Indiana		

Each state housing finance agency has designed its program to meet the particular challenges struggling homeowners in their state are facing. Hardest Hit Fund programs may include the following:

- Mortgage payment assistance for unemployed or underemployed homeowners;
- Principal reduction to help homeowners get into more affordable mortgages;
- Funding to eliminate homeowners’ second lien loans; and
- Help for homeowners who are transitioning out of their homes into more affordable places of residence.

3. Dissemination of Information about the Hardest Hit Fund. States are asked to consider how they may disseminate information about the Hardest Hit Fund. While state Unemployment Insurance (UI) agencies may not use UI funds for non-UI purposes, such information may be disseminated for little or no cost when, for example, it is posted on the state website, including the UI page utilized by unemployed workers. Information may also be made available at One-Stop Career Centers and with the local Workforce Investment Boards in the form of posters or pamphlets.

The U.S. Department of Labor will be adding a link to the U.S. Department of Treasury’s website which provides information about the Hardest Hit Fund and links to state specific information (<http://www.treasury.gov/initiatives/financial-stability/programs/housing-programs/hhf/Pages/default.aspx>). On this Web site, individuals will find the links to their state’s housing finance agency which will provide more information about applying for the Hardest Hit Fund.

Nine states and the District of Columbia have developed consumer fact sheets with program details:

California	Florida
Georgia	Illinois
Indiana	Kentucky
North Carolina	Rhode Island
Tennessee	Washington, DC

The fact sheets about the Hardest Hit Fund, as it applies to these states, can be found on the website listed above and copies can be made for individuals inquiring about the program.

4. Action Requested. State administrators are requested to distribute this information throughout the workforce investment and UI communities and to interested stakeholders.

5. Inquiries. Questions may be referred to the appropriate Regional Office.