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AWI Communiqué

DATE: December 21, 2007

TO: Workforce Florida, Inc., Select Regional Workforce Boards (RWBs) and Optional Workfare Program (OWP) Administrative Entities

FROM: Lois A. Scott, Program Manager, One-Stop and Program Support

SUBJECT: Work/Participation Limits in the Employment and Training Program

PURPOSE:

To remind select RWBs and the OWP providers of the work/participation limits for individuals referred for participation in the Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) program and OWP.

REFERENCE:

Section 6(d)(4)(F)(i) and (ii) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C 2015(d)(4)(F)(i) and (ii)); State of Florida Food Stamp Employment and Training Program State Plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2008; and State of Florida Food Stamp Employment and Training Program Plan of Operations for Optional Workfare Programs for Federal Fiscal Year 2008.

BACKGROUND:

While reviewing the 2008 Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) FSET plans, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) discovered a trend developing in some state programs. In their plans, these state agencies describe employment and training components in which participants are allowed to “volunteer” to take part in activities that exceed the maximum hours permitted by statute. State agencies justify this practice by arguing that the extra hours are necessary to enhance the opportunities afforded food stamp recipients working in low-wage jobs and to permit unemployed employment and training participants to take part in full-time employment and training programs. While the desire to maximize training and education activities for food stamp recipients is commendable, this practice violates federal law.

AUTHORITY:

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

ACTION REQUIRED:

The RWBs operating an FSET program and administrative entities operating OWP should ensure that program participants are not allowed to “volunteer” to take part in activities that result in exceeding the maximum hours permitted by Florida Statute and federal law.

ATTACHMENT:

November 20, 2007 Federal Guidance