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PRESS RELEASE

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Illinois Department on Aging Promotes Senior Community Service Employment Program During National Employ Older Workers Week

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Recognizing the vital role of older adults in the workforce, the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) is promoting the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to older job seekers during National Employ Older Workers Week.

“For a variety of reasons, older adults are working past traditional retirement ages, and these workers bring with them significant skills and experience,” said **Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) Director Paula Basta**. “During National Employ Older Workers Week, we recognize older employees’ value in the workplace, as well as aim to connect older job seekers with opportunities that might be a good fit for them.”

Held annually during the last full week of September, National Employ Older Workers Week is intended to increase awareness of older workers and develop innovative strategies to recruit, promote and retain them. IDoA is taking this opportunity to highlight the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which provides on-the-job skills training to individuals 55 or older who have very low income. Since its inception, SCSEP has helped over one million older adults nationwide enter or reenter the workforce.

The program is federally funded but administered in Illinois by the state Department on Aging, through the Area Agencies on Aging. Eligible participants are adults at least 55 years of age whose income does not exceed 125% of the federal poverty level. SCSEP places enrollees – usually for 20 hours a week at minimum wage – with local nonprofits and public agencies that help them build job skills and earn a modest income while giving back to their community. Participants also receive personalized employment-related counseling designed to assist them in securing permanent, unsubsidized employment.

SCSEP has a total of 1,572 authorized positions or slots throughout the state of Illinois, including 320 slots that are designated for IDoA and 1,252 slots for national providers. To find an SCSEP program near you, contact your local [Area Agency on Aging](#) or the statewide Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.

IDoA serves and advocates for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life. For information about the Department’s programs and services for older adults and persons with disabilities, visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/programs> or contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966; 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)