The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Program Description: The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) places older individuals in community service positions and provides job training. Through this program, older workers have access to SCSEP services as well as other employment assistance available through the One-Stop Career Centers of the workforce investment system.

Community service employment strengthens the ability of older individuals to become self-sufficient, provides much-needed support to organizations that benefit from increased civic engagement, and improves the communities that are served by such organizations. In turn, regional economies and employers benefit from the increase in the pool of experienced, dependable labor in the local workforce.

Available Services:

- *Subsidized community service jobs* are provided in public and non-profit agencies, allowing these agencies to enhance and provide needed services and older workers to gain employment skills. Program participants work an average of 20 hours a week and are paid the highest of Federal, State or local minimum wage. Community service placements include day-care centers, senior centers, schools, hospitals, and other non-profit and public facilities. It is intended that these community service experiences serve as a bridge to other employment positions that are not supported with Federal funds.

- *Participant services* are available including Individual Employment Plan (IEP) development, orientation, community service placement, training specific to an individual's community service assignment, and other training as identified in an individual's IEP. Supportive services, annual physicals, assistance in securing unsubsidized employment, and access to local One-Stop Career Centers are also available.

Eligible Participants: Program participants must be at least 55 and have a family income of no more than 25% over the Federal poverty level. Enrollment priority is given to persons over age 65, or those who have a disability, have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills, reside in a rural area, are veterans, have low employment prospects, or are homeless or at-risk for homelessness. Preference is also given to minority individuals and eligible individuals who have the greatest economic need. SCSEP serves approximately 100,000 seniors annually.

Authorizing Legislation: SCSEP was authorized by Congress in Title V of the Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 to provide paid, part-time, community service employment for low-income persons age 55 and older who have poor employment prospects. Recent OAA amendments were effective July 1, 2007. New regulations are under active development.

Program Funding: The SCSEP is currently funded for Program Year 2007 at $483,600,000. Twenty-two percent of the funds are allocated among the States and territories by formula; 78% are provided to eighteen national organizations that compete to provide services. Grantees must provide a 10% non-federal match. To maximize resources for older workers, SCSEP grantees have established agreements with other service providers including One-Stop Career Centers, the private sector, educational organizations and adult literacy agencies.