

US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration

News Release

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Contact Name: Mike Trupo or Lina Garcia

Phone Number: (202) 693-3414 or x4661

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US Department of Labor announces \$2.4 million grant to provide Maryland, Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina workers with health insurance payments

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Labor today announced a \$2,422,473 grant to provide an estimated 1,892 jobless workers with partial premium payments for health insurance coverage.

"Finding new employment is a challenging enough task without having to worry about lacking health coverage for yourself or your family. This funding will help eligible workers avoid that prospect by helping them pay for health insurance while they look for a job," said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis.

The grant is awarded to the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, and will be administered in partnership with Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina to support eligible individuals from those states. The grant will be used to make "gap filler" payments for unemployed individuals who are receiving Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits and are eligible for the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) program. Under HCTC, eligible individuals can receive 80 percent of premium costs for qualified health insurance programs.

These payments cover the gap period, that is, the time it takes to complete Internal Revenue Service enrollment, processing and first payments under the HCTC program. The four states will provide two to three months of gap filler payments for the participants.

The amount of the grant released today will be funded by resources made available for health coverage through National Emergency Grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

National Emergency Grants are part of the secretary of labor's discretionary fund and are awarded based on a state's ability to meet specific guidelines. For more information, visit <http://www.doleta.gov/NEG/>.