

**COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

**DIVISION ON WOMEN**

**Displaced Homemaker Programs**

**Proposed Readoption: N.J.A.C. 5:60**

Authorized By: Joseph V. Doria, Jr., Commissioner,

Department of Community Affairs.

Authority: N.J.S.A. 52:27D-53.24c.

Proposal Number: PRN 2009-

Calendar: Reference: See Summary below for explanation of exception to calendar requirement..

Submit written comments by September 18, 2009 to:

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**JOSEPH V. DORIA, JR., Commissioner**

The agency proposal follows:

**Summary**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:14B-5.1, N.J.A.C. 5:60, the rules concerning Displaced Homemaker Programs, are scheduled to expire on July 7, 2010. The Department has

reviewed this chapter and finds that that it continues to be necessary and appropriate for the purpose for which it was adopted and is therefore proposing that it be readopted without change.

These rules were originally adopted in response to P.L. 1993, c.188, which increased filing fees in divorce actions by \$25.00. The added revenue is deposited in the Displaced Homemaker Trust Fund, which is used to provide grants-in-aid to programs assisting displaced homemakers, as identified by the Division on Women. The rules proposed for re Adoption include eligibility requirements and procedures for programs to qualify for this aid.

A “displaced homemaker” is defined as a person who has not worked in the labor force for a substantial number of years but has, during that time, worked in the home providing unpaid services for family members, and was supported by the income of another family member, but no longer has that support. Such an individual must also be receiving public assistance because of dependent children but be within a year of no longer being eligible for that assistance, be either unemployed or underemployed and having difficulty obtaining or upgrading employment, or be at least 40 years of age.

In order to qualify for funding, a program for displaced homemakers must provide the following services: job counseling; job training and placement; health education and counseling; financial management; educational assistance; legal counseling and referral; and outreach and information.

The Division on Women implements this program by issuing a request for proposals to “qualified existing programs.” When all such programs have reached at least an identified minimal level of funding for core services, the Division issues a new

request for proposals to fund new programs, with preference going to programs in counties not served by existing programs. The following is a summary of the rules establishing eligibility requirements and application procedures for the program:

Subchapter 1 contains general provisions. It discusses the purpose of the Displaced Homemaker Trust Fund and the disbursement of grants-in-aid from the Fund.

Subchapter 2. sets forth eligibility requirements. It contains definitions, delineates how “qualified existing programs” are identified, and specifies the services that must be provided.

Subchapter 3 sets forth procedures for awarding funds to “qualified existing programs” and to new programs.

As the Department has provided a 60-day comment period on this notice of proposal, this notice is excepted from the rulemaking calendar requirement pursuant to N.J.A.C. 1:30-3.3(a)5.

### **Social Impact**

The rules proposed for re adoption would have a positive social impact in that they would allow the Division on Women to allocate funds to increase the number of displaced homemakers served by qualified existing programs and to reach additional people in need of services by funding new programs in counties not now served.

### **Economic Impact**

There are currently 14 community-based organizations, operating a total of 15 programs serving approximately 4,000 individuals, receiving funding under the program. Re adoption of the rules is necessary in order to maintain funding of these programs.

### **Federal Standards Statement**

No Federal standards analysis is required because these rules are not being proposed for re adoption in compliance with, or in order to implement, any Federal law or rules or any State law referencing any Federal law or rules.

### **Jobs Impact**

Continuation of funding as a result of re adoption of these rules would provide resources to enable participants in the program to gain employment, or improve existing employment. Failure to re adopt the rules might result in a loss of jobs at the centers that receive funding.

### **Agricultural Industry Impact**

The Department does not anticipate any impact upon the agricultural industry as a result of the re adoption of this chapter.

### **Regulatory Flexibility Statement**

These rules may impose reporting, recordkeeping or compliance obligations upon “small businesses,” as defined in the New Jersey Regulatory Flexibility Act, N.J.A.C. 52:14B-16 et seq. The rules affect organizations that provide services to displaced homemakers, regardless of their size or form of organization. These organizations are required to prepare proposals outlining existing and proposed activities and, upon receipt of a grant, to prepare quarterly performance and fiscal reports. Organizations that do not have staff members or volunteers who can prepare these reports will have to engage the services of professionals, whose charges will vary depending on the nature and extent of the services rendered. The Department does not expect, however, that these reports will be difficult for organizations to prepare. In any event, these reports are necessary in

order to provide assurance that public funds are being used properly. Lesser requirements, therefore, cannot be provided for organizations that might qualify as “small businesses.”

### **Smart Growth Impact**

Readoption of this rule would not have any impact upon either “smart growth” or the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

### **Smart Growth Development Impact**

This proposal concerns programs assisting displaced homemakers. It would be most unlikely to have any impact upon housing production within planning areas one and two or within designated centers under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

### **Housing Affordability Impact**

This proposal concerns programs assisting displaced homemakers. It would be most unlikely to have any impact upon housing production costs or to affect affordability.

**Full text** of the rules proposed for readoption may be found in the New Jersey Administrative Code at N.J.A.C. 5:60.