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**CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY CELEBRATES ONE-YEAR
ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE CONNECTOR PROGRAM**

**Employment and referrals for long-term family stability illustrate successes
October 10, 2002**

Accessibility and accountability have been the critical components to the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA's) success with its one-year-old Service Connector Program, the authority announced on Thursday.

The Service Connector Program, which opened its first offices in August 2001, is funded by CHA and administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS). It is a system-wide program that allows CHA residents to get referrals for help with everything from employment to lease compliance issues, substance abuse, family stability, child care and more. As a referral system, the goal of the Service Connector Program is to ensure that residents are able to work, pay rent, maintain their units and to keep children busy, learning and healthy.

"Many of our residents have needs that can be met through a network of help that already exists," says CHA CEO Terry Peterson. "CHA residents have been cut off from those services for too long. The Service Connector is their bridge."

Unlike other social service models, the Service Connector system has some very specific targets, tasks that can be measured for effectiveness. They include:

- 1) Employment - This has been the most successful area for the Service Connector system. With 1,228 job placements to date, Service Connector has already exceeded the 1,200 jobs that were set as a goal for this entire year. Despite the economy, job placements increased by 26 percent.
- 2) Identifying families and Opening Cases - 12,604 cases have been opened, meaning the Service Connector system has been able to reach a substantial percentage of the individuals/families living in CHA developments.
- 3) Lease Compliance - 8,065 referrals have been made for lease compliance issues. These referrals address issues with rent payment, housekeeping and utility payment to ensure that residents do not become non-lease compliant.
- 4) Family Stability - Over 15,500 referrals have been made for family stability

issues, which can include substance abuse, child care, supplemental food, domestic violence, health and other issues that can affect an entire family.

While the system has done well, there certainly is room for improvement. Service Connector will receive a 17 percent budget increase, allowing for more case managers who can work directly with some of CHA's harder-to-reach families. Future employment measures will include a sharper focus on job retention and helping people get jobs that pay more. And there will be a closer look at exactly who provides services once people get referrals. The Service Connector Program wants to ensure that resources are being allocated in the most beneficial and cost-effective manner.