

# State Displaced Homemaker Legislation



In September 1975, the first state legislation for displaced homemakers was passed in California. Since that time, 29 states passed their own legislation. (Unfortunately, not all states continue to fund or renew the legislation.) As of 2001, twenty-six states provided funding for displaced homemakers through state legislation. The passage of state and federal legislation, the increase in public awareness of the problems facing displaced homemakers and the development of programs to help women achieve economic self-sufficiency are testaments to the hard work of advocates in this field.

The need for state displaced homemaker legislation has never been more important. The *Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998* dramatically changed the way in which federal dollars were distributed to and used by the states. The requirement that states reserve a percentage of federal funds for displaced homemaker and single parent programs was eliminated. In place of the requirement, Perkins makes funding these programs an option of local recipients. The result has been a decrease in federal resources for programming and services for displaced homemakers.

Restructuring the federal employment and training system through the *1998 Workforce Investment Act* (WIA) has also negatively impacted displaced homemakers in spite of provisions that could offer opportunities for funding. Displaced homemakers are defined as dislocated workers under WIA and are eligible for all services that pertain to dislocated workers. In addition, implementation of innovative programs for displaced homemakers is an allowable use of funds for statewide employment and training activities (15% of the dislocated worker funds going into the state). The funds may also be used for the implementation of programs to increase the number of individuals training for and placed in nontraditional employment.

Women Work!'s monitoring of WIA programs shows that very few Workforce Investment Boards are utilizing these WIA provisions for displaced homemakers.

Fortunately, the past two years have been relatively stable for displaced homemaker legislation. State funding has been maintained or slightly increased. However, some states have experienced or are facing potential cuts in funding. In addition, some states have seen changes in the agency that administers displaced homemaker legislation. As states respond to federal welfare reform and workforce development legislation, it is likely that more state programs will experience shifts in administering agencies, changes in funding levels, or changes in the types of services they are able to provide.

## What is a Displaced Homemaker?

The *federal* definition of displaced homemaker, found in the 1998 Workforce Investment Act, is as follows:

*An individual*

- *who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home,*
- *who has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income, and*
- *who is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.*

\*Under Section 134 on allowable statewide activities, public assistance recipients within two years of their lifetime TANF eligibility are included.

# Update 2002

# State Legislation & Appropriations

From 1999-2001, eleven states received the same amount of funding for displaced homemaker programs, eight states received a slight or moderate increase, and two states have seen their funds double. For example, Idaho has continued to increase their displaced homemaker funding amounts and sources over the last ten years despite a 75% decrease in Perkins funds. In addition Nevada, after losing funds in 1999-2000, has regained its pre-1998 levels and seen a moderate increase in funding. Still, in a few states, displaced homemaker

legislation is facing potential elimination. In Louisiana, the legislature attempted to cut all funding for displaced homemakers, but the Governor's Office of Women's Services fought hard to secure funding at the 1999-2000 levels for 2000-2001. Programs in Minnesota have been battling to maintain their state funding. North Carolina and New Jersey face potential cuts. In Pennsylvania, however, the 2001 state legislature allocated full funding for displaced homemaker/single parent programs to replace funding previously available through Perkins.

State	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
AL	\$115,000	\$107,000	\$107,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CO	\$130,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$103,000
CT	\$524,000	\$524,000	\$524,000	\$524,000	\$393,000	\$419,365	\$419,365	\$419,365	\$427,752	\$436,000
DE	\$217,000	\$217,000	\$217,000	\$232,000	\$232,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
FL	\$1,401,080	\$1,401,080	\$1,401,080	\$1,401,080	\$1,401,080	\$1,494,066	\$1,606,122	\$1,000,700	\$1,783,700	\$2,083,698
GA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
ID	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$165,600	\$200,600	\$201,000	\$201,400	\$401,400
IL	\$875,000	\$875,000	\$743,900	\$793,900	\$793,900	\$787,200	\$787,200	\$787,200	\$841,600	\$916,600
IA	\$125,460	\$125,775	\$125,775	\$125,775	\$125,775	\$125,775	\$125,775	\$125,775	\$200,000	\$200,000
LA	\$394,000	\$408,000	\$454,850	\$454,850	\$454,850	\$485,176	\$485,147	N/A	\$435,000	\$435,000
ME	\$461,728	\$489,418	\$489,418	\$489,418	\$489,418	\$394,230	\$569,230	\$569,230	\$569,230	\$661,805
MD	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$971,417	\$971,417	\$1,000,559	\$1,000,468	\$1,000,468
MA	\$561,536	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
MI	\$442,000	\$442,000	\$442,000	\$442,000	\$442,000	\$442,000	\$510,000	\$540,000	\$540,000	\$518,000
MN	\$1,361,000	\$1,361,000	\$1,361,000	\$1,512,000	\$1,512,000	\$1,815,000	\$1,817,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,949,000	\$1,827,000
MO	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000
MT	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$235,000	\$235,000
NV	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$299,227	\$312,983	\$320,000	\$100,000	\$285,000
NJ	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$1,500,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$1,870,000 <sup>1</sup>	\$1,870,000	\$2,080,000
NM	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000 <sup>2</sup>	\$80,000	\$80,000
NY	\$4,069,200	\$3,906,800	\$4,123,000	\$4,752,500	\$4,854,500	\$5,467,700	\$4,592,500	\$5,192,580 <sup>3</sup>	\$5,467,000	\$6,067,000
NC	\$0	\$0	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$675,000	\$675,000	\$1,115,000	\$1,175,000
ND	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$114,000	\$114,500	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
OH	\$270,689	\$270,689	\$270,689	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$979,984	\$979,984	\$244,996	\$244,996
PA	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$4,950,000	\$4,950,000
RI	\$157,471	\$157,826	\$106,246	\$88,378	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$765,000
UT	\$395,000	\$337,000	\$337,000	\$348,674	\$348,674	\$524,930	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$400,000	\$470,000
WA	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$522,000	\$522,000	\$529,538	\$529,538	\$528,980	\$542,132	\$536,463
WI	\$715,000	\$715,000	\$815,000	\$991,000	\$991,000	\$991,40	\$991,400	\$970,400	\$970,400	\$936,000

<sup>1</sup> Amount includes legislative award of \$135,000 for state network <sup>2</sup> DH programs received approx. \$40,000 from \$406,000 appropriated by the state to NM Commission on the Status of Women. <sup>3</sup> Amount includes \$600,000 in 1997-1998 reappropriated TANF funds

# Source of Revenue & Distribution of Funds to State Displaced Homemaker Programs

Sources of funding for state displaced homemaker programs vary from state to state. Line items in the state budget and designated funds, such as marriage and divorce filing fees, remain the most common funding sources. New Jersey, Idaho, Maine, Nevada and North Carolina combine these two types of funding sources. New York is unique in that much of its funding for displaced homemaker programs comes from the interest on late unemployment tax. Some states continue to receive funding from the *Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act*, and other county or city funds.

There are two ways states distribute funds to local programs. Twelve states use a request for proposal (RFP) to which programs respond. Thirteen states allocate funds according to a formula based on criteria such as population and need. However, North Carolina allocates funds in both ways. The funding generated from divorce fees are allocated according to a formula, while the annual appropriations are distributed using RFP.

In addition, three states, Louisiana, Maine and New Mexico, have one centralized program within the state that receives the displaced homemaker funds.

The size of grants to local programs vary widely, from under \$10,000 to over \$100,000.

STATE	Funding Source	Fund Distribution	Range of Grant Size
CO	Divorce Fee	FORMULA	\$5,000/program
CT	Line Item	FORMULA	\$100,000/program
DE	Annual Appropriation	FORMULA	Approx. \$10,000/program
FL	Divorce/Marriage Fee	RFP	\$40,000-183,908
ID	Divorce Fee/General Fund	FORMULA	\$63,107-75,866
IL	General Revenue	RFP	\$64,800-71,000
IA	Annual Appropriation	RFP	\$15,000-32,000
LA	General Fund	FORMULA - (5 sites)	Funding Centralized
ME	Line Item/General Fund	NA - 1 Program	Funding Centralized
MD	Annual Appropriation	RFP	\$13,749-206,000
MI	WIA (DOL) funds (out of dislocated worker allocation)	RFP	\$25,000-75,500
MN	Line Item	FORMULA	\$99,599-428,399
MO	General Revenue	FORMULA	\$877-2,941
MT	General Fund	FORMULA	\$14,200-31,059
NV	Divorce Fee/General Fund	FORMULA/ RFP	\$10,400-40,000/ \$38,000-190,000
NJ	Divorce Fee/Line Item	RFP	\$70,00-130,000
NM	Line Item	N/A-1 Program	Funding Centralized
NY	Unemployment Tax/TANF	FORMULA	\$184,000-331,000
NC	Divorce Fee/Annual Appropriations	FORMULA/ RFP	Approx. \$20,000/ \$4,000-18,500
ND	Divorce Fee	RFP	\$20,000-30,000
OH	General Fund	FORMULA	N/A
PA	General Fund/Governor's Budget	RFP	\$70,000-90,000
RI	Line Item	FORMULA	N/A
UT	Marriage Fee	FORMULA	\$40,000
WA	General Funds	RFP	\$50,000-105,000/2yrs.
WI	Line Item	RFP	\$35,000-150,000

# Displaced Homemaker Services

Services to displaced homemakers vary among states depending on how legislation is written and what agency administers funding. The definition of displaced homemaker greatly affects who will receive services. In some states, age is a requirement for displaced homemaker status, targeting middle-age to older women who are more likely to experience age discrimination. For example, Florida defines displaced homemakers as 35 or older and Maryland defines displaced homemakers as 30 or older. Other states merely give older women priority for services.

Some states, such as Idaho, reflect societal changes in their definition and describe a displaced homemaker as a *person who has lost the primary source of economic support and must gain employment skills in order to provide primary financial and custodial support for dependents*. This definition differs from previous definitions of a displaced homemaker as a person who is *entering employment for the first time*, after a period of unpaid work in the home.

Other states emphasize a specific number of years of providing unpaid services for family members. Washington state's definition requires ten years or more full-time, unpaid work while dependent on the income of another family member or on federal assistance. Utah's definition, requiring eight years or more, focuses on lack of work experience and the difficulty entering or reentering the workforce. Overall, the need for marketable job skills to provide economic self-sufficiency and care for dependents is apparent in all state definitions of displaced homemakers.

Most state laws authorize a comprehensive mix of services and activities to help displaced homemakers become economically independent. Not all statutes mention each of the services that displaced homemaker programs provide or use the same language to describe them, but there are some common themes. The authorized activities usually include outreach, referral, counseling, life skills workshops, pre-employment activities, support groups, job search assistance and training, including non-traditional training.

# Administration of Legislation

Funds for displaced homemakers are usually administered by the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, or Human Resources Agencies. The agency that administers a state program shapes the program to some extent. Recent shifts have been significant as states have had to realign their structures after major changes in federal job training and vocational education (WIA and Perkins) and welfare (TANF) programs. Moving the administration of the displaced homemaker program can be a way to better fit it into the state's overall job training and education structure. It may also be a way to push the program away from the mainstream or power base of employment and training.

Some states' legislation provides for a state advisory council that is responsible for recommendations regarding evaluation and implementation of state legislation. The council works with the governor, legislators and state agencies, and can include a broad range of representatives, including displaced homemakers, service providers, representatives from education, health, or labor agencies, employers and women's advocates. Data collected on clients served by displaced homemaker programs may be submitted in a report to the advisory council and the governor to be used in evaluation and advocacy efforts for supporting state legislation and maintaining or increasing appropriations. Advisory councils can be instrumental in this way, although heavy bureaucratic representation may weaken their ability to advocate effectively.

**When evaluating potential shifts in administering agencies, advocates should examine:** 1) the relative political power of the current and proposed agency, 2) which agencies will administer the job training block grants and the priorities and philosophy of each, and 3) the relationships of the agencies with service providers and local programs. Shifts in the state administering agency may include shifting responsibility to a different department (such as the Dept. of Community Colleges rather than HRS as FL did) and compensating the loss of Perkins funds with TANF dollars (as MD did).

## Summary

State support for displaced homemaker funding is more important than ever as federal employment and training pulls back from addressing the specific needs of this population and places priority on serving "all clients." From the beginning of the displaced homemakers movement, this approach has meant that the unique needs of and services for displaced

homemakers are most often overlooked or misunderstood. At the state level, advocates have the advantage of bringing state legislators the real life experiences of participants and programs they represent. The voices of successful participants are as effective today as they have ever been in making the case of why these programs are so important.



# State Contacts for Displaced Homemaker Legislation

*\* Women Work! retains copies of each state's Displaced Homemaker legislation.  
If you would like to receive a copy of a particular state's legislation, please contact  
Women Work! for details.*

## **Colorado**

Marie Valezuela  
Displaced Homemaker Program  
Department of Labor & Employment  
1515 Arapahoe Street, Suite 400  
Denver, CO 80202-4218  
(303) 620-4218

## **Connecticut**

Janice Hasenjager  
Program Manager, Apprenticeship & Job Training  
Department of Labor  
200 Folly Brook Blvd.  
Wethersfield, CT 06103  
(806) 263-6036

## **Delaware**

Alice Mitchell  
Division of Employment & Training Services  
4425 Market Street  
Wilmington, DE 19714-9499  
(302) 761-8117

## **Florida**

Beverly Sermons  
Division of Community Colleges  
325 West Gain Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400  
(850) 488-1721 (x 123)

## **Idaho**

Shirley Silver  
Division of Professional Technical Education  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83702  
(208) 334-3216

## **Illinois**

Melissa Lake  
Illinois Department of Labor  
160 N LaSalle Street, Suite C-1300  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(312) 793-7111

## **Iowa**

Charlotte Nelson  
Iowa Committee on the Status of Women  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
(505) 281-4461

## **Louisiana**

Vera Clay  
Governor's Office of Women Services  
1885 Woodale Drive, 9th Floor  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
(225) 922-0962

## **Maine**

Gilda Nardone  
Maine Centers for Women, Work & Community  
Stoddard House  
46 University Drive  
Augusta, ME 04330  
(207) 621-3440

## **Maryland**

Carolyn Edmonds  
Office of Transitional Services  
311 W. Saratoga Street, 2nd Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
(410) 767-7410

## *State Contacts for DH Legislation, continued*

### **Michigan**

Sharon Walker  
Michigan Works! Agencies  
Michigan Jobs Commission  
201 N. Washington Sq., 5th Floor  
Lansing, MI 48913  
(517) 335-7421

### **Minnesota**

Susan Johnson  
MN Dept. of Economic Security  
390 N. Robert Avenue, Suite 125  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 296-6060

### **Missouri**

Jean Cole  
MO Department of Elementary and  
Secondary Education  
PO Box 480  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
(573) 751-2661

### **Montana**

Connie Kinsey  
Department of Labor and Industry  
PO Box 1728  
Helena, MT 59624  
(406) 444-4571

### **Nevada**

Val Hopkins  
Job Training Office  
Capitol Complex  
400 W. King Street  
Carson City, NV 89710  
(775) 684-4210

### **New Jersey**

Elaine Feller  
Division on Women  
Department of Community Affairs  
Displaced Homemaker Program  
101 South Broad Street  
PO Box 801  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
(609) 292-9123

### **New Mexico**

Rebecca Jo Dakota  
NM Commission on the Status of  
Women  
4001 Indian School Road, NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
(505) 841-8920

### **New York**

Karen Coleman  
Displaced Homemaker Program,  
NY Department of Labor  
State Office Campus  
Building 12, Room 540  
Albany, NY 12240  
(518) 457-6998

### **North Carolina**

Elaine Monaghan  
NC Council for Women  
526 N. Wilmington  
Raleigh, NC 27604-1199  
(919) 733-2455

### **North Dakota**

G. David Massey  
Department of Public Instruction  
State Capitol Building  
600 E. Boulevard  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440  
(701) 328-2393

### **Ohio**

Leslie Sawyer  
OH Board of Regents  
30 E. Broad Street, 36th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43266-0417  
(614) 466-6000

### **Pennsylvania**

Mary Ann Eisenreich  
Pennsylvania Women Work!  
425 6th Avenue, Suite 1680  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
(412) 201-7424

### **Rhode Island**

Pat Nolan  
RI Department of Human Services  
600 New London Avenue  
Cranston, RI 02920  
(401) 462-6563

### **Utah**

Ilona Zenner  
Department of Workforce Services/  
Service Delivery Support  
140 E. 300 South, 5th Floor  
Salt Lake City, UT 84111  
(801) 526-9747

### **Washington**

Brenda Landers  
WA DH Program  
Higher Ed. Coordinating Board  
PO Box 43430  
Olympia, WA 98504-3430  
(360) 753-7827

### **Wisconsin**

Karen Showers  
WI Tech. College System Board  
310 Price Place, Box 7874  
Madison, WI 53707-7874  
(608) 267-9458

---

## **Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment**

**1625 K Street, NW Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006**

**Phone: (202) 467-6346 Fax: (202) 467-5366**

**Email: [womenwork@womenwork.org](mailto:womenwork@womenwork.org) Web: [www.womenwork.org](http://www.womenwork.org)**