



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 21, 2005**

Contact:

Ray Filippone (401) 462-8415  
*Assistant Director, Income Support*

## **Rhode Island Receives Federal Department of Labor Award**

CRANSTON – Governor Donald L. Carcieri and Department of Labor and Training Director Adelita S. Orefice announced today that Rhode Island has been awarded \$1,205,866 in supplemental funding by the Federal Department of Labor (DOL). The award, which is part of a \$63 million federal award to states, will be used to strengthen unemployment compensation systems. “The release of these grant funds is a positive step by DOL to help states improve their programs,” stated Director Orefice. She added, “The grants will enable states to continue upgrading the integrity of their Unemployment Insurance (UI) systems.”

According to Raymond Filippone, Assistant Director of Income Support, “The funds awarded to Rhode Island will allow us to implement programs and procedures that target areas of risk assessment, combat identity theft, reduce benefit overpayments, and identify UI claimants eligible for reemployment services.”

Filippone acknowledged that identity theft is a major concern for all state agencies. “Insuring the integrity and confidentiality of the data maintained by the Department of Labor and Training is paramount in our continuing efforts to combat identity theft.” He further commented, “Since identity theft has become such a big problem nationwide, this funding will allow Rhode Island to become one of the best prepared states in dealing with the protection of our customers’ information.”

During the next two years, Rhode Island plans to implement voice authentication software as an added deterrent to identify theft. This software uses voiceprints to secure access to specific information and transactions over the phone. The voiceprint functions much like a fingerprint and is used to verify a person’s identity. Prior to authorizing transactions, customers’ spoken voiceprints are compared to those previously recorded.

Funds from this award will also be used to provide assistance in the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper UI benefit payments. This involves maximizing automated systems to detect and recover improper payments as well as matching claims data with the National Directory of New Hires and other government databases to identify fraudulent claims activity,

– more –



in particular, working while collecting UI benefits. Filippone noted, “It is critical that the integrity of the UI program remains financially secure and funds are available to those who are legitimately entitled to receive benefits.”

In addition, these funds will supplement a previous Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) award made to the Department of Labor and Training this past year. The REA funding targets individuals who have filed for UI benefits and whose employment background matches occupations in high growth industries based on a directory search of job orders. Claimants calling Tele-Serve for their weekly benefit payment will be notified of any job vacancies matching their code. Filippone said the department is currently working on a program to match UI claimants to appropriate job openings and is hopeful to have it available by December 1<sup>st</sup>. The accurate coding of job orders for job matching of UI claimants will assist in the reemployment of displaced workers.

The awarded funds will also allow for implementation of Internet fact-finding for customers’ statements. This project will give customers the option to provide fact-finding information when they file an Internet claims application. Filippone stated, “We expect that this system will improve customer service by reducing the time it takes to make determinations on claims filed.”

– 30 –

*The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training offers a wide array of employment and training services to both the general public and to individuals with unusual barriers to employment. DLT is ready to assist any job seeker, whether the goal is a first job, a better job, or a career change. Rhode Island’s work force is protected through the enforcement of labor laws, prevailing wage rates, and work place health and safety standards. Temporary income support is available to unemployed, sick, or injured workers and a comprehensive rehabilitation program is available to those injured on the job.*

*DLT is dedicated to the growth and competitiveness of Rhode Island industry, administering a variety of training grants, tax credits, and apprenticeship programs to help employers. Economic indicators and labor market information are available for long-range planning. The Agency engages in active outreach, helping large and small employers retain their best workers or retrain their existing work force. At no cost to the employer, DLT will also screen job applicants, post job vacancies, and help businesses institute cost-sharing programs that can avert layoffs.*

*For more information on the innovative programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders at the Department of Labor and Training, please call (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at [www.dlt.ri.gov](http://www.dlt.ri.gov).*

*Equal Opportunity Employer  
Auxiliary aids and services are available up on request to individuals with disabilities  
TDD (401) 462-8006*