



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee members
From: Sorsha Anderson, Senior Staff Associate
Date: March 29, 2022
Subject: Grant Request – JFO #3094

Enclosed please find one (1) item, which the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the Administration. **The VT Department for Children and Families has requested an expedited review of JFO #3094. Please respond by Monday, April 4, 2022.**

JFO #3094 – 11 (eleven) limited-service positions to the VT Agency of Human Services, Dept for Children and Families, to administer and support emergency and transitional housing programs.

A list of positions is as follows:

- 7 (seven) Benefit Program Specialists
- 1 (one) Benefit Program Specialist
- 2 (two) ESD Supervisor
- 1 (one) Fair Hearing Specialist

Positions funded through previously approved grant #3034 (U.S. Emergency Assistance Rental Program) and funded through 9/30/2025.

[Received 3/23/2022, expedited review approved on 3/29/2022]

Please review the enclosed materials and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Sorsha Anderson: sanderson@leg.state.vt.us) if you have questions or would like this item held for legislative review. Members will be polled on Monday, April 4, 2022, if they have not responded before then.



Department for Children and Families
Commissioner's Office
280 State Drive, HC 1 North
Waterbury, VT 05671-1080
(802) 241-0929 Fax (802) 241-0950
www.dcf.vermont.gov

MEMO

TO: Joint Fiscal Committee

FROM: Sean Brown, Commissioner, Department for Children and Families 

DATE: March 25, 2022

RE: Limited Service Positions – DCF Emergency and Transitional Housing Programs

The Department for Children and Families (DCF) respectfully submits the request for 11 additional federally funded Limited Service positions. These positions are needed to support and administer the emergency and transitional housing programs.

Currently, 2,200 Vermonters are participating in the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program. To serve the participants with application and servicing needs, the DCF Economic Service Division (ESD) operates a dedicated phone line that receives 300-400 phone calls daily. The benefit phone line is staffed by our housing unit. This unit is currently understaffed to meet the phone call volume and requires coverage from other ESD eligibility staff, in turn impacting the timeliness of other federal programs (SNAP/3SquaresVT, LIHEAP, TANF/Reach Up). The Limited Service positions will bring staffing to an adequate level to serve the Vermonters in the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program.

In addition to the high current call volumes, the Transitional Housing Program administered by DCF is scheduled to launch April 1, 2022 to provide more stability to the households currently served by the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program. Language in the Budget Adjustment Act for SFY022 was instrumental to the creation of the program, which was enacted March 16, 2022. The Department needed to wait for the language to ensure the creation of the program before asking for the positions. The new program will lead to an additional need to support households through the transition, exacerbating the need for additional supports. The program will be administered by the Department until September 30, 2025, when the federal funding expires. It is necessary to have staff brought on-board immediately to allow for successful implementation of this program.

ESD oversees the Reach Up program, which began the Reach Up Emergency Rental Assistance (RUERA) program in April 2021. Vermont received Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program funding in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act to assist with rental payments and remain in their homes. RUERA is administered out of the Reach Up Central Office, and ESD has had to redeploy two case managers to support this new work stream. This has caused strains on other case managers covering the caseloads of the redeployed staff. The requested positions will help with the continuation of the RUERA benefits for Reach Up families and allow Reach Up Central Office to focus on administering the Reach Up program.

The Department for Children and Families submitted this request in February 2022. While it is noted that the Committee received the expedited request at a later date, the positions are still of the utmost importance to the delivery of essential services to Vermont households in an efficient manner. It is with this urgency that DCF remains committed to the timeliness of this Limited Service positions application.



Department for Children and Families
Commissioners Office
280 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-1020

Agency of Human Services

To: Joint Fiscal Committee members

From: Sean Brown, Department for Children and Families Commissioner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Brown".

Date: January 31, 2022

Re: Position Request

In order to expend the additional Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance funds allocated for General Assistance and Reach Up, DCF- Economic Services is requesting 11 additional Limited Service positions:

- 3 Benefit Program Specialists - General Assistance: Transitional Housing
- 4 Benefit Program Specialists - General Assistance: Emergency Housing
- 1 Benefit Program Specialist - Reach Up: Emergency Rental Assistance Program
- 2 Economic Services Supervisors
- 1 Fair Hearing Specialist

The ERAP 2 funds have been authorized under the grant packet #3034 and has the same Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance as ERAP 1 (21.023). Without these additional positions, we are unable to provide appropriate oversight and monitoring of the administration of these funds, and support inter-agency coordination, and the coordination of Fair Hearing requests.

Attached are the required documents for the position request to be reviewed at an upcoming Joint Fiscal Committee meeting: Limited Service Position Request form, Request For Review (Form C), and an organizational chart.

The Department is respectfully asking for an expedited review of this request.



STATE OF VERMONT Joint Fiscal Committee Review Limited Service - Grant Funded Position Request Form

This form is to be used by agencies and departments when additional grant funded positions are being requested. Review and approval by the Department of Human Resources must be obtained prior to review by the Department of Finance and Management. The Department of Finance will forward requests to the Joint Fiscal Office for JFC review. A Request for Classification Review Form (RFR) and an updated organizational chart showing to whom the new position(s) would report must be attached to this form. Please attach additional pages as necessary to provide enough detail.

Agency/Department: Agency of Human services - DCF Economic Services Date: 1/21/22

Name and Phone (of the person completing this request): Suzanne Shibley, 802-760-0476

Request is for:

- Positions funded and attached to a new grant.
- Positions funded and attached to an existing grant approved by JFO # 3034

1. Name of Granting Agency, Title of Grant, Grant Funding Detail (attach grant documents):

Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance funds, appropriated to Vermont in Division N of H.1r. 133, the Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021- new additional funding.

2. List below titles, number of positions in each title, program area, and limited service end date (information should be based on grant award and should match information provided on the RFR) position(s) will be established only after JFC final approval:

Title* of Position(s) Requested	# of Positions	Division/Program	Grant Funding Period/Anticipated End Date
Benefit Program Specialist	7	ESD/General Assistance: Emergency Housing (4) and Transitional Housing (3)	
Benefit Program Specialist	1	ESD/Reach Up: Emergency Rental Assistance Program	
ESD Supervisor	2	ESD/General Assistance	
Fair Hearing Specialist	1	ESD/General Assistance	The end date for the ERAP 2 is 9/30/25

*Final determination of title and pay grade to be made by the Department of Human Resources Classification Division upon submission and review of Request for Classification Review.

3. Justification for this request as an essential grant program need:

In order to expend the additional Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance funds allocated for General Assistance and Reach Up, DCF requires 11 additional staff to conduct programmatic and financial monitoring, assist with additional invoicing and expenditures, support inter-agency coordination, federal reporting, and the coordination of Fair Hearing requests.

I certify that this information is correct and that necessary funding, space and equipment for the above position(s) are available (required by 32 VSA Sec. 5(b)).

Sean Brown

Digitally signed by Sean Brown
Date: 2022.01.31 08:22:00 -05'00'

DocuSigned by:
Richard Donahay 2/25/2022
DC83ECCB842D385

Signature of Agency or Department Head
Aimee Pope
Digitally signed by Aimee Pope
Date: 2022.03.02
09:29:25 -05'00'

Approved/Denied by Department of Human Resources
Adam Greshin
Digitally signed by Adam Greshin
Date: 2022.03.03
16:19:57 -05'00'

Approved/Denied by Finance and Management
[Signature]
Date

Approved/Denied by Secretary of Administration
[Signature]
Date

Approved/Denied by Governor (required as amended by 2019 Leg. Session)
[Signature]
Date **3/21/22**

Comments:

DocuSigned by:
Tracy O'Connell 2/25/2022
E30932098A8F482.. DHR - 08/12/2019

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL
Request for Classification Action
New or Vacant Positions
Existing Job Class/Titles ONLY
Position Description Form C

- **This form is to be used by management to request the allocation of a new position, or reallocation of a vacant position, to an EXISTING class title.**
- Employee requests must be submitted on the separate "Position Description Form A."
- Requests for full classification, to determine the appropriate pay grade for any job class must be submitted on "Position Description Form A."
- This form was designed in Microsoft Word to download and complete on your computer. This is a form-protected document, so information can only be entered in the shaded areas of the form.
- To move from field to field use your mouse, the arrow keys or press Tab. Each form field has a limited number of characters. Use your mouse or the spacebar to mark and unmark a checkbox.
- Where additional space is needed to respond to a question, you will need to attach a separate page, and number the responses to correspond with the numbers of the questions on the form. Please contact your Personnel Officer if you have difficulty completing the form.
- All sections of this form are required to be completed unless otherwise stated.
- The form must be complete, including required attachments and signatures or it will be returned to the department's personnel office.

**Request for Classification Action
New or Vacant Positions
EXISTING Job Class/Title ONLY
Position Description Form C/Notice of Action
For Department of Personnel Use Only**

Notice of Action # _____	Date Received (Stamp)
Action Taken: _____	
New Job Title _____	
Current Class Code _____	New Class Code _____
Current Pay Grade _____	New Pay Grade _____
Current Mgt Level ____ B/U ____ OT Cat. ____ EEO Cat. ____ FLSA ____	
New Mgt Level ____ B/U ____ OT Cat. ____ EEO Cat. ____ FLSA ____	
Classification Analyst _____	Date _____
Comments:	Effective Date: _____
	Date Processed: _____
Willis Rating/Components:	Knowledge & Skills: _____ Mental Demands: _____ Accountability: _____
	Working Conditions: _____ Total: _____

Position Information:

Incumbent: **Vacant or New Position**

Position Number: tbd-7 Current Job/Class Title: Benefits Programs Specialist / 513700

Agency/Department/Unit: AHS/DCF/Economic Services Division GUC: 3440010500

Pay Group: 22 Work Station: Waterbury Zip Code: 05676

Position Type: Permanent Limited Service (end date) 6/30/25

Funding Source: Core Sponsored Partnership. For Partnership positions provide the funding breakdown (% General Fund, % Federal, etc.)

Supervisor's Name, Title and Phone Number: vacant, tbd

Check the type of request (new or vacant position) and complete the appropriate section.

New Position(s):

a. **REQUIRED:** Allocation requested: Existing Class Code 513700 Existing Job/Class Title: Benefits Programs Specialist / pg 22

b. Position authorized by:

Joint Fiscal Office – JFO # Approval Date:

- Legislature – Provide statutory citation (e.g. Act XX, Section XXX(x), XXXX session)
- Other (explain) -- Provide statutory citation if appropriate. in process of seeking authorization

Vacant Position:

- a. Position Number:
- b. Date position became vacant:
- c. Current Job/Class Code: Current Job/Class Title:
- d. REQUIRED: Requested (existing) Job/Class Code: Requested (existing) Job/Class Title:
- e. Are there any other changes to this position; for example: change of supervisor, GUC, work station? Yes No If Yes, please provide detailed information:

For All Requests:

1. List the anticipated job duties and expectations; include all major job duties: The primary function of the Benefits Programs Specialist (BPS) worker is to determine the eligibility for services and benefits that are offered and/or available through the State of Vermont Economic Services Division (ESD) and/or through multiple community partners. There are five unique programs, some include sub-programs, that the BPS considers during this evaluation and there are several factors that are applied to analysis. BPSs perform financial resource, expense, and environmental analysis on each case and apply appropriate rules and regulations. Once the benefit is determined, the BPS worker must insure that proper processing of all case actions are performed as required by statutes, rules, and procedures. The BPS may prepare and testify in Fair Hearings and/or court events. The BPS is the subject matter expert with regard to eligibility and may assist with training new staff. Quality control is another task performed by BPS. The BPS must analyze random cases to make sure benefits are processed timely and accurately.

2. Provide a brief justification/explanation of this request: The general assistance emergency housing funds will represent a substantial influx of new funds that will require additional staff to process and determine eligibility in order to meet the needs of Vermonters.

3. If the position will be supervisory, please list the names and titles of all classified employees reporting to this position (this information should be identified on the organizational chart as well). these 7 positions will not supervise

Personnel Administrator's Section:

4. If the requested class title is part of a job series or career ladder, will the position be recruited at different levels? Yes No

5. The name and title of the person who completed this form: Suzanne Shibley, ESD Workforce Development Director

6. Who should be contacted if there are questions about this position (provide name and phone number):

Suzanne Shibley, 802 760-0476

7. How many other positions are allocated to the requested class title in the department: a total of 8 BPS
positions are being requested

8. Will this change (new position added/change to vacant position) affect other positions within the organization? (For example, will this have an impact on the supervisor's management level designation; will duties be shifted within the unit requiring review of other positions; or are there other issues relevant to the classification process.) no

Attachments:

- Organizational charts are **required** and must indicate where the position reports.
- Class specification (optional).
- For new positions, include copies of the language authorizing the position, or any other information that would help us better understand the program, the need for the position, etc.
- Other supporting documentation such as memos regarding department reorganization, or further explanation regarding the need to reallocate a vacancy (if appropriate).

Kim Kanios

2/3/22

Personnel Administrator's Signature (required)*

Date

vacant

Supervisor's Signature (required)*

Date

Erin L Henderson

2/4/22

Appointing Authority or Authorized Representative Signature (required)*

Date

* Note: Attach additional information or comments if appropriate.

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL
Request for Classification Action
New or Vacant Positions
Existing Job Class/Titles ONLY
Position Description Form C

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- This form was designed in Microsoft Word to download and complete on your computer. This is a form-protected document, so information can only be entered in the shaded areas of the form.
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EXISTING Job Class/Title ONLY
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For Department of Personnel Use Only

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Current Pay Grade _____	New Pay Grade _____	
Current Mgt Level _____ B/U _____	OT Cat. _____	EEO Cat. _____ FLSA _____
New Mgt Level _____ B/U _____	OT Cat. _____	EEO Cat. _____ FLSA _____
Classification Analyst _____	Date _____	Effective Date: _____
Comments:		Date Processed: _____
Willis Rating/Components:	Knowledge & Skills: _____	Mental Demands: _____ Accountability: _____
	Working Conditions: _____	Total: _____

Position Information:

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Agency/Department/Unit: AHS/ DCF/ Economic Services Division GUC: 3440010500

Pay Group: 22 Work Station: Waterbury Zip Code: 05676

Position Type: Permanent Limited Service (end date) 6/30/25

Funding Source: Core Sponsored Partnership. For Partnership positions provide the funding breakdown (% General Fund, % Federal, etc.)

Supervisor's Name, Title and Phone Number: Melissa Bocash, Benefits Programs Administrator

Check the type of request (new or vacant position) and complete the appropriate section.

New Position(s):

a. **REQUIRED:** Allocation requested: Existing Class Code 513700 Existing Job/Class Title: Benefits Programs Specialist/ PG 22

b. Position authorized by:

Joint Fiscal Office – JFO # Approval Date: