



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Maryland's Social Services Agency



PRESS RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES AWARDED \$196,000 BONUS FOR MEETING ADOPTION GOALS

BALTIMORE –The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded \$196,000, to the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) for increasing the number of children adopted from foster care. The money will enhance programs for abused and neglected children.

"I am pleased that the Maryland Department of Human Resources is being recognized for aggressively placing foster children in safe and stable adoptive homes. Strengthening the safety net for our vulnerable children just one of the ways we continue to put families first," said Governor Martin O'Malley.

The Adoption Incentive program encourages states to find children – particularly older children and children with special needs – loving adoptive homes. States are evaluated on their adoption rate, which compares current year adoptions to the number of children in care at the end of the previous year. States receive additional money if they exceed their highest foster child adoption rate for previous years back to 2002.

States receive \$4,000 for every foster child adopted above their 2007 baseline, plus a payment of \$8,000 for every foster child age nine and older and \$4,000 for every other special needs child adopted above the respective baselines. In addition, states receive \$1,000 for every foster child adopted over and above the level of the state's highest foster child adoption rate for previous years.

The Maryland Department of Human Resources finalized a total of 770 adoptions during fiscal year 2009, outpacing its goal of 707 adoptions. The 770 adoptions represent a 25 percent increase over fiscal year 2008 when 617 adoptions were finalized. Almost half -- 384 adoptions -- were finalized by the Baltimore City Department of Social Services (BCDSS).

"Nothing matters more to a child than a place to call home. While successfully reaching our adoptions goal will bring additional funding into the state, it is even more important to note that this success means 770 more children have permanent, loving families to call their own," said DHR Secretary, Brenda Donald.

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• Martin O'Malley, Governor

• Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

• Brenda Donald, Secretary

The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state's social service provider. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to: provide foster care, adoption and protective services to children; collect and distribute child support payments; and provide temporary cash, food stamps and medical assistance to families. It also funds programs for homeless persons, refugees, migrant workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered or assaulted. Last year, DHR served 638,000 people in need. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is Maryland's fourth largest state agency.