

The Resource Partnership
News Release

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RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP AWARDED SOCIAL SECURITY GRANT

Natick, Massachusetts, May 21, 2001 – The Resource Partnership has been awarded a five-year grant from the Social Security Administration to provide outreach, educational services, and benefits assistance to individuals with disabilities in Massachusetts.

The new initiative called BenePLAN program employs three employees directly including, two Benefits Specialists and a Marketing Manager. The Benefits Specialists will assist in the counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire in western Massachusetts and in the eastern counties of Middlesex (excluding Somerville) and Worcester. The Marketing Manager will be located in Resource Partnership's headquarters in Natick with responsibilities including BenePLAN's marketing and outreach.

“Our goal is to provide assistance to as many people as possible in the Massachusetts community. Our Benefits Specialists are highly qualified, educated professionals who have a great passion for their work,” said Kandice Bazar, Marketing Manager, Resource Partnership.

Both Benefits Specialists will be assisting SSI and SSDI beneficiaries, family members, and professionals by providing information on areas such as Medical Benefits, Social Security, Transitional Assistance, Public Housing, and Workers' Compensation. BenePLAN will provide for personalized benefits planning and assistance; the evaluation of work situations and effects on benefits, ongoing assistance on issues concerning benefits, and information and referral on education, training and rehabilitation services.

“BenePLAN is the piece of the job placement puzzle that seemed to be missing, and it is critical to assisting consumers in their vocational planning,” said Brian Forsythe, Benefits Specialist, Massachusetts Eastern Region, Resource Partnership.

“Often when people with disabilities consider going to work their first thought is ‘I can't afford to lose my benefits’. With BenePLAN, customers see how they can manage their benefits and that they truly can ‘afford to work’,” said Teresa O'Shea, Benefits Specialist, Massachusetts Western Region, Resource Partnership.

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The Resource Partnership was established in 1978 as a non-profit statewide employer-managed membership organization dedicated to advancing the career potential of individuals with disabilities. Resource Partnership programs include BenePLAN, First Resource, Skill Source, and the MassBLN. For more information about BenePLAN or the Resource Partnership, please visit www.resourcepartnership.org or call toll-free 1.877.YES.WORK.

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