



Christie Administration Awards \$117,000 Grant to Center for Family Services of Southern New Jersey During Season of Service

For Immediate Release

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Date: December 14, 2012

Camden, NJ - As part of the Christie Administrations Season of Service initiative, New Jersey Commissioner of Education Chris Cerf visited the administrative headquarters of Center for Family Services, a non-profit organization serving the southern region of New Jersey, to announce a \$117,000 grant for the organization to create additional emergency shelter beds for victims of domestic violence in Cumberland County.

"Organizations like the Center for Family Services, who provide much needed support to individuals during their times of need, are often the unsung heroes of our towns and state," Commissioner Cerf said. "One of the most rewarding aspects of the Governor's Season of Service is that it provides us with an opportunity to see community in action. These reminders that we are all New Jerseyans are ones that should inspire us to all work a bit harder and give a bit more."

The funding comes through a Shelter Support grant program awarded annually by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. Grants can be used to create new emergency shelter beds, abate code violations, address life safety issues in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities, support existing shelter beds, and purchase equipment, furnishings and vans, resulting in improved living conditions for homeless individuals, victims of domestic violence and military veterans.

It is estimated that the shelters and transitional housing facilities receiving Shelter Support grants will assist more than 3,000 households over the next year.

The Center for Family Services provides more than 50 programs across southern New Jersey supporting and empowering individuals, families, and communities to achieve a better life through vision, hope and strength. SERV is a program of Center For Family Services and is the NJ State Designated Domestic Violence provider in Gloucester and Cumberland Counties, providing 24/7 crisis intervention, advocacy, counseling, and support to female and male victims of domestic violence. Center for Family Services SERV also provides emergency safe housing to female victims of domestic violence and their children. All services are confidential, free of charge, and offered in English and Spanish.

"Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of age, race, educational levels, sexual orientation or gender. Center for Family Services is committed to providing victims of domestic violence with the highest quality of comprehensive care, including the advocacy and counseling that empowers victims to become survivors," Richard Stagliano, President of Center for Family Services, said. "Funding from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs assists us in providing emergency safe housing to female victims of domestic violence and their children in Cumberland County which enables us to work with these families to help them develop plans for a safe and hopeful future."

Today's event, which included a tour of several Center for Family Services programs, is part of the Christie Administration's second annual Season of Service. Last year, Cabinet members participated in approximately 60 events across the state – from serving meals on wheels to shut-ins and helping to serve and stock food pantries to stuffing care packages for military service members overseas and holiday letter writing to troops abroad to collecting and delivering coats to homeless shelters. Governor Christie has emphasized the importance of community service since his inaugural in 2010.

Today, approximately 1.5 million New Jerseyans contribute about 170 million hours of service each year, bringing a positive influence to neighborhoods and communities throughout the Garden State through local groups, houses of worship and civic organizations.

