

NEWS

Pat Quinn, Governor

Michelle R. B. Saddler, Secretary



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 2014

CONTACTS:

Aurelio Huertas: (312) 793-2345

Illinois Department of Human Services

Jing Zhang: (773) 293-8460

Asian Human Services

Tuyet Ngo: (773) 784-2900

Chinese Mutual Aid Association

North Side Communities Welcome Expansion of IDHS Services for Area Residents

Resource Fair Highlights Employment and Rehabilitation Services

CHICAGO — The Illinois Department of Human Services' (IDHS) Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), in collaboration with Asian Human Services (AHS), the Chinese Mutual Aid Association (CMAA) and partners at the University of Illinois-Chicago Asians with Disabilities Outreach Project Think-Tank (ADOPT), will host a Welcoming Community Event and Resource Fair on **Monday, May 5, 2014, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at Lakeshore Medical Center, located at 4700 N. Marine Drive, Chicago.** The event will celebrate the arrival and opening of the newest IDHS office in the diverse north side neighborhood of Uptown.

The new IDHS Family and Community Resource Center/Division of Rehabilitation Services local office at 5050 N. Broadway will improve access to culturally competent disability and social services for immigrants and refugees, including Asians and for the broader population —disabled and non-disabled alike. The previous office located on Chicago's west side, was difficult for individuals with disabilities of all ethnicities and cultures to access in search of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to obtain employment.

“Ensuring that our residents can easily access and apply for our services is paramount to the success of the department,” says IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler. “Residents of Chicago's north side will now be able to gain meaningful access to the state's VR system, as well as other employment-related resources and human services.”

Researchers at University of Illinois-Chicago's project ADOPT believe the new location will improve accessibility and outreach to more than one underserved community.

“Immigrants and refugees with disabilities living in Chicago's north side neighborhoods will no longer have to travel outside their community to access VR services,” says Jae Jin Pak, ADOPT's Community Outreach Coordinator. “Closing this gap in VR services will improve the health and economic security of all members of the disabled community.”

During the resource fair, participants will be able to make connections and obtain information on how to access a variety of health care, nutrition, vocational training and rehabilitation services, as well as job-search tools and other employment-related resources. Numerous private, non-profit and government agencies will distribute information about available services. The event will highlight VR and employment resources, as well as other human services that are available for all community members, with and without disabilities.

The free resource fair will also feature appearances and remarks from north side community leaders, representatives of various city and state departments, and elected officials. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information about the Welcoming Event and Resource Fair, please contact ADOPT partner Rooshey Hasnain (312) 413-0416 or Jae Jin Pak (312) 996-9171.

###

