



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 14, 2007**

CITY'S WORK ADVANTAGE PROGRAM BRINGS JOBS TO JOB SEEKERS LIVING IN SHELTER

-- DHS/HRA Work Advantage Job Fair Connects
Shelter Residents with Employment Opportunities --

November 14, 2007 - The New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and the Human Resources Administration (HRA) will host a Work Advantage Job Fair on Thursday, November 15 - a component of the Work Advantage program to assist shelter residents in their transition to sustained permanent housing. Shelter residents will have the opportunity to meet with more than 35 prospective employers, including Banco Popular, Fed Ex Ground, Lincoln Medical Hospital and Staples.

“Getting a job or a higher-paying job is a critical step to help an individual or family not only move back into their community but to stay there long-term,” said DHS Commissioner Robert Hess. “Work Advantage helps people to take that step by adding a host of services, like the job training and placement opportunities, to enhance the rental subsidy.”

Work Advantage provides a one-year rental subsidy with a possible second year extension. While receiving the rental assistance, participants are employed at least 20 hours per week and are encouraged to save their earnings. These savings will be doubled so that when the rental assistance ends, participants have an established financial cushion. Work Advantage rewards clients for working and saving money rather than penalizing them by taking away their rental assistance for working.

“The employers in attendance today share our commitment to helping homeless New Yorkers access the supports they need to achieve self-sufficiency,” said HRA Commissioner Robert Doar.

The Work Advantage Job Fair is part of the continuing work by DHS and HRA to assist shelter residents in obtaining employment. These efforts have included sending DHS, HRA and contracted employment agency staff directly into the shelters to provide residents with the employment services necessary to obtain and retain jobs, as well as to facilitate enrollment in work supports, such as transitional child care, public health insurance and food stamps that expand the income of low-income families. In 2007, these enhanced services have led to more than 4,000 job placements for shelter residents.

In preparation for the Job Fair, an interagency employment services team prepares participants with workshops and individual guidance, and, simultaneously, works to expand the pool of participating employers in the private and public sectors. To further support employment for shelter residents, HRA’s Employment Services (ES) has implemented a new program design that integrates pre-employment and hands-on sector training for industry-specific jobs.

Among the employers scheduled to attend the Work Advantage Job Fair are Bally's Total Fitness, Banco Popular, Bed Bath and Beyond, Century 21, Citibank, Fed Ex Ground, Lincoln Medical Hospital, Securitas Security Services USA, Staples, VIP Health Care Services and WAMU. Representatives from several community based financial institutions will be on hand to help participants access banking services as well.

The job fair on November 15 is the second in a series of ongoing Work Advantage Job Fairs.

###

Contact: Eric Deutsch/Linda Bazerjian, DHS, 212-361-7973
Barbara Brancaccio, HRA, 212-331-6200