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## **\$560,000 in federal funds for new county job program**

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RACINE COUNTY - Jobless county residents ineligible for unemployment benefits will soon have another tool to help put money in their pockets and get them back to work.

Racine County has been awarded \$560,580 in federal stimulus money, the county announced Thursday.

Through the program, the county will work with private and nonprofit companies to hire people for up to six months. The grant money will allow those people to be paid minimum wage without any cost to the employer, said Alice Oliver, Racine County Workforce Development Center director. She estimates the grant will pay for about 60 to 70 employees.

The county has programs such as boot camps that offer training and small subsidies for businesses that help train people, Oliver said. But through this program the entire cost of the employees will be paid while participants get actual work experience, Oliver said.

The employer is not obligated to keep the employee after the program is finished, she said.

The employees will get paid \$7.25 per hour, and the goal is to get the workers jobs before their six months are up, Oliver said.

While participants are in the program they will also work with workforce development staff to seek a job and will continue to work with staff to make sure they keep the job, Oliver said.

The program is for adults ages 21 to 64 who live in Racine County, she said. There are maximum household income requirements.

Employers interested in hosting a program participant can call (262) 638-6620. Applications from interested employers are due by noon Aug. 6.

The county will take applications for program participants in the near future.