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\$3.6 MILLION PROGRAM TO PROVIDE 532 JOBS FOR NEWARK UNEMPLOYED

Plans for a \$3.6 million emergency federal program to provide 532 jobs to unemployed residents of Newark were announced today by Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson.

The one-year program, funded through the U.S. Department of Labor, will give priority to people who have lost their jobs and exhausted their unemployment benefits.

"This is a necessary effort, and it will mean much to families that have had no steady income in recent months," the Mayor said at a City Hall press conference. "And yet, this program will scarcely dent Newark's unemployment rate, which is already at least 17 per cent and climbing steadily."

Harry L. Wheeler, director of manpower for the city, said hiring for the program will begin Monday at three locations in Newark. He explained that the program will have three major sections:

- (1) Part-time employment program for older adults — this will provide 104 jobs for the elderly and handicapped. Each job will pay \$3 an hour for a 20-hour week. This program will be administered through the North Jersey Community Union, 105 Charlton St.
- (2) Work experience for those 18 and over — this will provide 200 slots, and will pay \$3.50 an hour for a 30-hour week. A special effort will be made to recruit Spanish-speaking workers. The program will be administered by the city's Comprehensive Manpower Delivery System (CMDS), 32 Green St., with participation of the Newark Tenants Council and Mount Carmel Guild.

- (3) Public service jobs for adults -- this will provide 228 jobs in city and state departments. The average pay will be \$7,800 with a maximum of \$10,000 a year. This will be operated through the Public Employment Program, 1 Lincoln Ave.

Wheeler reported the U.S. Department of Labor is allocating \$440,000 for the older adults program, \$1,065,793 for the work experience program, and \$2,052,149 for public service jobs. In addition, \$107,831 is being provided for administrative costs. Total cost of the program is \$3,665,388.

The program is set up under the Emergency Jobs and Unemployment Assistance Act of 1974. A total of \$875 million is being distributed throughout the nation, with priority to areas of high unemployment.

Under the act, Wheeler said, preference in hiring must be given to: (1) those who have exhausted all unemployment benefits; (2) those who have worked in the past, but are ineligible for unemployment payments; (3) those who have been out of work 15 weeks or more. After that, Wheeler added, the program will take in those who have had top priority in past manpower efforts -- the hard-core unemployed and economically disadvantaged.

In most cities a person must be out of work for 30 days before applying for the new program. But in Newark and other places with high unemployment rates, applications will be accepted after only 15 days of unemployment.

The new program requires a "maintenance of effort" by local governments. This means the federal money cannot be used for jobs or services that are already provided by the city. Mayor Gibson has assured the Labor Department that the city, in spite of a serious budget crisis, will comply fully with the limitation.

As chairman of the executive board of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Gibson has lobbied in Washington for additional employment funds for urban areas. Another \$1 billion may be appropriated this spring under the 1974 act.

Newark is also receiving special unemployment assistance under the act. This will provide another 13 weeks of benefits for those who have already used up the 39 weeks provided by New Jersey Unemployment Insurance Commission. In addition, for the first time, domestic, farm and government workers can qualify for 26 weeks of payments if they lose their jobs.

Newark is also expected to receive help through a Jobs Opportunities Program, which will expand or initiate public works projects in high-unemployment areas. This will be administered through the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Wheeler stressed that the new three-part program is a temporary, emergency arrangement prompted by the nationwide recession and inflation. It will not provide any permanent jobs, he said.

The program will be administered through the existing CMDS structure. The work experience effort will be under Rev. Ralph Grant, who was named manager of all city work experience programs this week by Mayor Gibson. Public service jobs will be under Alvin Moore, manager of the Public Employment Program (PEP).

Wheeler said this will be one of the first employment programs run by the city for the elderly. Most of them will be assigned to various agencies.

Hispanic organizations will be asked to help recruit for the work experience program, Wheeler said. Most of the people in this program will be assigned to work in housing projects and various agencies.

Those in the public service section will work with the city's Departments of Public Works, Finance, Health and Welfare, and Recreation and Parks, and the Municipal Courts.

Further information about the program is available from Wheeler's office in City Hall; telephone 733-8500.