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## **West Deerfield Township stands ready to provide support to furloughed federal employees amid the government shutdown**

*Township officials also preparing to step up assistance to people who rely on  
federal programs hampered by the shutdown*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Deerfield, IL -- With the federal government shutdown entering its fourth week, West Deerfield Township officials announced today that an array of services are available for both furloughed federal employees and individuals/families that have been indirectly impacted because services they rely upon are not functioning.

“Our mission as a township is to step in under emergency circumstances to lend a hand to those we serve,” said West Deerfield Township supervisor Alyson Feiger. “Clearly, with no end to the federal government shutdown in sight, we’re ready to provide emotional and practical support to our residents who are facing real challenges.”

Feiger said that Dr. Jerry Zachar, the Township’s new counseling director is available to help furloughed federal employees and their family members process their emotions and cope with the stress that the shutdown may have brought on for many. West Deerfield Township hired Dr. Zachar, the former director of social services for the Deerfield Police Department, last fall to augment the Township’s outreach to residents in need of financial, emotional or family support.

“This uncertainty definitely takes a financial toll on families of federal government employees,” said Dr. Zachar. “But, perhaps more importantly, the shutdown is likely exacting an emotional toll on individuals and families. I have no doubt that there is anxiety, stress and even some depression that is setting in for federal employees and their families. West Deerfield Township residents seeking emotional support or someone to just talk to about their feelings should know we’re available and eager to help.”

Any furloughed federal employee or his/her family members that are seeking the assistance of a counselor who can provide emotional support can call West Deerfield Township at 847.945.0614 All inquiries will be kept confidential.

West Deerfield Township is also stepping up efforts to provide assistance to individuals and families that may face hardships because the programs they rely upon for food, shelter and other critical services are not operational. If there are delays in the delivery of financial support via the federal government's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), for example, those individuals can contact the West Deerfield Township Food Pantry (phone number) to take full advantage of the services it provides.

The Township's food pantry, which depends on donations from local businesses and residents, provides food and household necessities nearly 270 individuals, couples and families every year. West Deerfield Township also employs case workers who connect food pantry patrons and other residents to other critical programs that deliver housing and healthcare services. These case workers are available to provide assistance to residents who may need some help finding services that they need now, but are not receiving due to the shutdown.

"Our message to those we serve is twofold. Firstly, if you or a loved are lacking the support and services you depend on because of the federal government shutdown be it food, housing, healthcare or anything else, we're here to help you," said West Deerfield Township Food Pantry president Robert Rosenbacher. "Secondly to the hundreds of families and businesses who generously donate food to keep our shelves stocked, consider making an extra donation in anticipation of potential increased demand of our services."

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