



# The Poverty Institute

at the Rhode Island College School of Social Work

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Nearly twenty thousand Rhode Islanders  
have one month left to claim federal stimulus payments**  
*Most of those eligible are low -income seniors, veterans, disabled;  
Deadline Is October 15*

**PROVIDENCE, RI (September 15, 2008)** ---- More than 20,000 low-income seniors, veterans and people with disabilities in Rhode Island had yet to claim their economic stimulus payments from the federal government as of this summer, The Poverty Institute announced today. Residents have until October 15<sup>th</sup> to file a tax return in order to receive a stimulus payment. These payments could put \$6,600,000 into residents' hands and boost the local economy.

“We must ensure that low-income seniors, veterans and people with disabilities realize they may qualify for an economic stimulus payment but that they need to file a claim. These folks are among the hardest hit by sharp increases in food and energy prices because they live on modest incomes. We must get the word out that it is not too late to file a claim and that free assistance is available,” said Kate Brewster, Executive Director of The Poverty Institute.

Most people haven't claimed their payment because their incomes were too low for them to have to file a tax return this year. (You must file a 2007 tax return in order to receive the payment, though people with no other filing requirements only need to fill out part of the return.)

This means the payments —worth a minimum of \$300 per person — are not getting to many of the people who most need them to cover basic expenses like food and shelter. These are also the people who are most likely to spend the payments quickly, helping the economy as Congress intended when it approved the payments earlier this year.

“Many of the seniors who haven't filed yet are home-bound and may need special assistance,” explained Rick Keller, Coordinator of the Family Economic Success Program at the John Hope Settlement House in Providence. “Family members and friends should check in with the seniors they know to make sure they're aware they can qualify for the payment and get the help they need.”

In Rhode Island there are several ways individuals can get help claiming the payment. A number of community agencies and the Internal Revenue Service are offering free assistance in various parts of the state including Westerly, Johnston, Providence, Newport, Woonsocket, Cranston, East Providence, and Warwick.

Individuals interested in filing a claim should contact the United Way of Rhode Island 2-1-1 number for a complete list of sites and times when assistance is available. In many cases, an appointment is necessary.

The local IRS office is also offering help and can be reached at 525-4282. (<http://www.irs.gov/localcontacts/index.html>). AARP and the National Council on Aging have developed an online tool (<https://aarp-stimulus2008.benefitscheckup.org/espp/welcome.do> or <https://stimulus2008.benefitscheckup.org/espp/welcome.do>) that provides a simple way to fill out the required form and information about where to send it.

### **About The Poverty Institute**

The Poverty Institute is a non-partisan organization that develops and promotes policies to improve the economic security of low and modest-income Rhode Islanders and to ensure that tax and budget policies are equitable and adequate to fund vital public services.