

First Call for Help 211 Tips for the Recently Laid Off or Unemployed in Bartholomew County

Suggestions to consider today

Unemployment benefits

Find out if you are eligible for unemployment benefits. Call the unemployment office, 376-3351 or visit their web-site to file for benefits www.in.gov/dwd.

Employment

Consider taking advantage of local employment and training program. Prepare your resume and list of current references. Take advantage of local GED, computer and college classes. Public computer terminals are available for free use at Bartholomew County Public Library, Eastside Community Center, and Lincoln-Central Neighborhood Family Center.

Insurance

- If you have children, are they eligible for Hoosier Healthwise? Call 376-9361, visit their web-site www.in.gov/fssa, or visit your county office of Division of Family Resources.
- Take advantage of your current insurance benefits by arranging medical and dental appointments before benefits expire.
- If COBRA is too expensive, is a short-term, major medical policy a good alternative for you?

Taxes

Earned Income Tax Credit is a tax credit for low-income wage earners with or without children. The amount depends on family size and income. Call 1-800-829-3676.

Child Care Credit is a tax credit for low-income families who pay for child care expenses. You will need receipts or cancelled checks and the providers, Tax ID number (or Social Security Number).

Household Expenses

Write down all your monthly expenses and anticipated income. Prepare a budget for potentially reduced future income. Can you realistically afford to maintain your current housing situation? Subsidized rental housing and home purchase programs are available, although often have waiting lists. Call First Call for Help 211, 376-6666, for more housing information or a housing list.

Generally, you should pay rent/mortgage expenses first, then pay utilities and then pay for expenses such as food, car payments, insurance, etc. Food pantries and hot meal sites provide a way to save cash for rent and utilities. Thrift stores offer clothing and household goods at reduced cost.

Are you eligible for community programs such as WIC, HUD, food stamps, Energy Assistance Program, and Child Care Voucher programs? Even if you think you will find employment quickly, apply for programs available to you as soon as possible.

Human Services, 1585 Old Indianapolis Rd., Columbus, 376-9431

Accepts applications for Energy Assistance Program and weatherization program; maintains an emergency food pantry; childcare subsidy; also offers free workshops to the public such as budgeting.

Bartholomew County Division of Family Resources, 1531 13th St., Ste. 2750, 376-9361

Accepts applications for Food Stamps, TANF, and Hoosier Healthwise/Medicaid for children and pregnant women. Must provide documentation of income and expenses.

Bartholomew County Health Department, 1971 State St., 379-1555

Provides free health education and testing for blood pressure, pregnancy, and immunization clinic for children. Also administers WIC (Women, Infant, and Children) program that provides supplemental food and formula for pregnant women and young children.

Childhood Connections, 1531 13th St., Ste. 1130, 375-2208
Provides resource and referral program to find quality child care.

Bartholomew County Township Trustees

A township trustee is an elected official who is responsible for providing basic assistance including emergency shelter, food, rent and utility assistance, prescriptions and other basic needs. Applicants must prove residency in township. Trustees may use their discretion and guidelines in making determinations. The application is lengthy and requires documentation of income and expenses.

Clay	Christa Acton, 378-4838
Clifty	Twila Romine, 579-5730
Columbus	Fred Barkes, 372-8249
Flatrock	Lisa Moore, 344-8896
German	Chris West, 526-5505
Harrison	David Dwyer, 343-0662
Hawcreek	Ronald Hatton, 546-5947
Jackson	David Hoene, 812-522-8043
Ohio	James Wayne Feeman, 342-0313
Rockcreek	Larry Boyle, 579-6939
Sandcreek	Jan Jines, 579-5804
Wayne	Pamela Huffman-Meek, 342-6746

Love Chapel, 311 Center St., 372-9421

Provides financial assistance with rent, utilities, and miscellaneous expenses. Also maintains an emergency food pantry.

Angel Food Ministries, 1-877-336-3646, www.angelfoodministries.com

Food purchasing program that offers \$60-\$70 worth of food for only \$30.

Budgeting Tips

Once you have created a list of you monthly expenses, explore ways to reduce expenses on necessities and non-necessities. Examples include:

- Notify all creditors via telephone or writing about your circumstances. Can you afford a smaller monthly payment instead? Can you pay the interest only? Be sure to keep a record of you contact and follow through with any payment arrangements you make.
- Explore budget payment plans with local utilities.
- Cancel additional feature on telephone (Caller ID, call waiting & forwarding, voice mail, etc.).
- Reduce or cancel television services such as cable or satellite.
- Explore free entertainment activities such as those offered by the Bartholomew County Public Library, Columbus Parks & Recreation Department, Columbus Area Arts Council, and Schools.

Call Memontive Consumer Credit Counseling, 372-1015, for additional help in budgeting.

Taking care of yourself

Losing a job is one of the most stressful life events. Be aware that you and your family will likely go through a range of emotions that are very natural. Make an effort to do the following each day:

- Maintain a routine by getting up each day and making you job search & training you new job.
- Eat healthy food and avoid alcohol.
- Exercise regularly and make time and space for relaxation.
- Talk about your feelings.
- Begin exploring all job opportunities by telling your family, friends, & neighbors what you are seeking.
- Take advantage of programs available to you, including Employee Assistance Programs, Employment and Training Programs, resume writing workshops, free classes, etc.

If the stress begins to get you down, seek professional help. Talking with a trained professional can ease your burden and help you re-focus your energy. Counseling and support services are available through Centerstone, 379-2341 or 1-800-832-5442 or Family Services, 372-3745. You may also consider asking you family physician, child's school counselor, or minister for trusted counseling referrals.

First Call for Help 211 can provide information about resources available to you. Call 812-376-6666 weekdays 8am-5pm, dial 2-1-1 24hours, or visit our web-site www.firstcallforhelp211.org

Feedback on this Tips Sheet can be sent to data@fcfh211.org