

## Kiosks to help people access benefits

As data continues to emerge regarding unemployment trends and the increase in people needing help with food expenses, Community Action Agency is piloting new public-use kiosks for people and families who have lost a job and need to file for unemployment and/or food assistance. The kiosks also provide direct access to other services provided by the Social Security Administration and U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. Kiosks are available for people who do not have internet access at home or need help completing applications online at the official State of Michigan Helping Hands website [www.michigan.gov/helpinghand](http://www.michigan.gov/helpinghand).

Marsha Kreucher, CEO of Community Action Agency said "the idea of linking services isn't new to CAA, but as we assist more people in programs

like Weatherization or Head Start, we can also provide internet access to connect people with essential services right here and with trained staff on-hand to help."

Kiosks are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on a first come first serve basis, and are located at the 4 main CAA office locations in Jackson, Lenawee, and Hillsdale and Lincoln School (Head Start: 154 Clark St. Jackson). Kiosks will be available for people to apply online for benefits such as:

- FAP- Food Assistance Program through the Department of Human Services
- Social Security benefits through the Social Security Administration web site
- Unemployment benefits through the State of Michigan website
- Veteran benefits through the US Department of Veteran

Affairs website

Staff will assist individuals in completing applications and helping to interpret eligibility.

Chris Kilmer, director of community programs said "some people don't apply online because they don't have a computer and internet access, or aren't used to using computers, our staff are working to help people feel comfortable. Right now it is about getting people help as quickly as possible, by applying and submitting documents on-the-spot we hope to speed up the process."

Community members will be able to print applications and fax eligibility paperwork in some cases; however, CAA does not guarantee or determine final eligibility.

For more information please contact your local CAA office, 1214 Greenwood Ave., Jackson, 517-784-4800 or 800-491-0004.