

# **Barrier Busters Network Action Group**

---

**November 30, 2005, LLRC**

**1:30pm—3:00pm**

**BBN Attendees:** Angela Edmunds, Julie Steiner, Mary Beth Lampe, Beth Manuel, Harriet Bakalar, Paul Sher, Krista Girty, Rebecca Lee, Sandy Reeber, Jodi Trisdale, Patricia Parker Self, Shirley Tarvis, Amity Walter, Michelle Leaphart, Helena Prince, Mike Day, Mary Debber, Joanna Baines, Patricia Love, Joan Doughty, Emily Preston, Jill Ratajczak, Cindy Maritato, Mel Batkins, Gary Bell, Paula Bartha, N. Price-Reed, Vickie Frederick-Toure, Efrion Smith

**Staff Present:** Mike Scholl, Staff Coordinator HSCC

**DTE Reps:** Sylvia Sartin, Paul Ganz, Terry Lewis, Cheryl Tramble

## **I. Welcome/Introductions**

- Mary Beth Lampe opened the meeting

## **II. Public Comment**

- None

## **III. DTE – Utility Payment Disucsion**

- Representative from DTE Energy were invited to attend the meeting and discuss utility issues in light of the rising cost of natural gas.
- Sylvia Sartin addressed the group regarding the availability of different plans for low-income customers.
- These include the *Winter Protection Plan* which is available during the winter months. It provides shut off protection during winter months.
- The *Budget Assistance Plan* is also available. Amortize the payments over 12 months plus they add in a percentage of the past due amount. The number for the case management is 1-800-545-8046 or 1-800-287-6719.
- The *Budget Wise Billing Program* a calculated average monthly amount is paid based on previous year's usage.
- The customer care number is 1-800-477-4747.
- It takes 90 days to enter into a shut off process. They do not receive the shut off notice until non-payment of the second bill.
- They will issue a date at which the shut off will occur on or after.
- The customer generally has 22 day notice of a shut off.
- There was a request that it be done earlier so that customers would seek case management services.

## **Barrier Busters Network Action Group**

---

- The DTE representatives took that under consideration.
- Agencies can sign up for Double Notice Protection whereby DTE will contact both the individual and the agency if they customer agrees to such protection.
- For low income support please call the 1-800-545-8046. For amounts owed over \$750 the customer goes directly into the DTE case management system.
- The representatives indicated that DTE allows for online access to accounts from third parties.
- They can request a 10 day hold but they must commit to paying a portion of the bill.
- DTE representatives agreed to conduct training for all interested agencies before Christmas.
- DTE also indicated it would send a list of contacts for Barrier Buster Agencies.

### **IV. SE Michigan Legal Services Discussion**

- Paul Sher, as part of the Michigan Poverty Law Program is required to gather information from the community regarding legal needs in SE Michigan.
- If you have any feedback for Paul please contact her at [psher@umich.edu](mailto:psher@umich.edu)
- Also, the background information is attached and part of the agenda.
- The discussion was cut short in part because of time constraints.

### **V. Announcements**

- The December meeting is cancelled.
- The next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2006 – 1:30 PM at the LLRC.
- Please look out for announcements regarding the DTE Training.

Adjourned 3:30 pm

***The Next Meeting is scheduled for  
Wednesday, January 26, 2006 - 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm @ LLRC***