

## **Governor Rell Launches 27<sup>TH</sup> Annual Holiday 'Care & Share' Drive to Support Food Pantries**

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced the kickoff of the 27<sup>TH</sup> annual Governor's Care and Share Holiday Drive, a collection of cash and non-perishable food to benefit Foodshare and the Connecticut Food Bank.

All state employees are encouraged to participate in the campaign. Last year, the state employee-supported Care & Share drive collected more than 6 tons of food and contributed over \$10,000 in cash.

"Our state employees answer the call year after year, making a difference in the lives of thousands of Connecticut families," Governor Rell said. "Their generosity of spirit and willingness to help is truly commendable. Particularly at this time of the year as families gather for the holidays and count their blessings, it is important to remember those who struggle just to put food on the table."

The Care & Share campaign will run from November 9 through December 9. Non-perishable food donations can be dropped off on December 9 between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. at the Oak Street and Capitol Avenue parking lot. Financial donations will be accepted through the Care & Share virtual food drive at: <http://vad.aidmatrix.org/vadxml.cfm?driveid=2740>

Foodshare and Connecticut Food Bank estimate that a \$1 donation can provide three meals to one adult and a \$50 donation can feed 150 children a holiday meal.

"Need for emergency food assistance jumped an incredible 30 percent between January of 2009 and the summer of 2010. Not a week goes by but that I hear about someone in a line to get food who tells us that they used to donate, but now need the assistance. In the past, state employees have been very generous with their gifts to this effort – this year, it's needed more than ever," Foodshare President and CEO Gloria McAdam said.

"Many of our state employees, who are in the front lines of serving the public, see firsthand the struggles that many of our friends, families and neighbors are facing in this challenging economy. That is why we greatly appreciate the leadership of Governor Rell and state employees in the fight against hunger," Connecticut Food Bank Chief Executive Officer Nancy L. Carrington said. "With their continued support, we have been able to feed hundreds of thousands of men, women and children served by our network of food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. We know they will make a difference again this year."

This year's Care & Share campaign will also include a benefit volleyball tournament among state agencies on November 18 in the O'Neill Armory.