

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 4, 2009 Contact: Howard Sutter 714.834.6203 office Howard.Sutter@ocgov.com

County to Receive Additional Funding Due To Enrollment Growth in Assistance Programs

(Santa Ana, CA) — Enrollment growth in the CalWORKs, Food Stamp and Medi-Cal programs will result in a \$9 million net increase in Federal and State funding for the Orange County Social Services Agency (SSA), allowing the agency to fill 99 vacant employee positions.

"The continuing economic downturn has resulted in more people applying for the CalWORKs, Medi-Cal and Food Stamp programs," said Ingrid Harita, SSA Director. "For example, the number of Medi-Cal recipients in Orange County has increased by 30,000 in the past year and the number of people receiving food stamps has increased by 39,000 over the same period. The increase in Federal and State funding will allow us to rehire social workers, eligibility technicians and other support staff needed to meet this increased demand for services."

The County plans to reinstate former SSA employees who were laid off earlier this year, as well as bring back employees who were released during their probationary period. The employees will be brought back in groups to facilitate refresher training for the positions. "While we remain concerned that so many people are in need of the assistance available through these programs, we are pleased that we have this opportunity to reinstate many SSA employees who were impacted by previous budget reductions," stated Director Harita.