

Memo

To: DHHS Adult Developmental Services Case Managers and DOL Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

From: Betsy Hopkins, Assistant Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services & Bill Hughes Program Manager, Developmental Services

Date: 10/12/2010

Re: Joint Memo regarding vocational support services for individuals receiving services from Adult Developmental Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services

This memo is directed to case managers representing people who are eligible for and receiving services from Developmental Services and to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors working with these same individuals. We are sending you a joint memo to update you on the status of services in both organizations, as well as to review the joint long term support process (please see attached procedure and forms) that we have in place to support people in our respective departments.

These are obviously very challenging times. Developmental Services is experiencing shut downs of both its waivers for the first time in over twenty-five years. Vocational Rehabilitation has also experienced General Fund cuts and high demand for services, which means trying to serve more people with fewer resources while addressing and trying to eliminate a long term wait list for cost services.

Given this, it is extremely important to be as clear as possible to the people we support regarding the status of their situation in our systems, the options they have before them, and what the future may hold for them to the best of our ability. Critical to this is that our departments work together to support each other, so that we in turn can provide clear, pertinent information to our clients and their families.

Status of Developmental Services-

1. **Section 29 Waiver** - As you all know, Section 29 is closed and there are currently over 70 individuals on a wait list. A youth who is 18 or older, has been found eligible for Developmental Services, and is in high school can apply to the Waiver Program while still in school. If they are found medically and financially eligible for Section 29, they will presently be placed on a waitlist, according to the date they were found eligible.

Under Section 29 when funding is available for people to come off the wait list, they will come off starting with the person who is number 1 on list and thereafter. This is very important and should be understood by all case managers who are assisting families at the present time. **With the present financial situation it is very important that people and their families plan with the knowledge that this program is not available at the present time. We will continue to work to find ways to be able to bring people onto the program in the future.**

2. **Section 21 Waiver** - This program has been closed for 16 months and there are currently 250 people on a waiting list. Of those, over 150 are identified to be in Developmental Services' highest priority category. The rules for Section 21 do not require that a person who is on the wait list the longest come off first, but in fact, state that the Department must have a process to identify the person in most need (health and safety) to be served first. Our system is extremely challenged at the present time in meeting the health and safety needs of some individuals. We hope to be allowed to place a small number of individuals into the program to assure their safety.

Procedure for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors -

1. Individual Already Determined Eligible for VR Services:

a. Confirm that the Individual is already eligible for Adult Developmental Services).

b. If uncertain, check on the client's waiver status (Section 21 or Section 29) in one of the following ways:

- Ask the Developmental Services (DS) or Community Case Manager (CCM)
- Check to see if you already have a sign off for long term supports
- Complete a LTS form requesting long term supports (assuming you already know this will be needed for the person), and sending it to the local DS office. (This form with the policy is attached to this e-mail.)

2. **Don't Know if Individual is Eligible for Adult Developmental Services:** If you are uncertain if a client is eligible for Adult Developmental Services, please see the attached eligibility criteria. At this point, if found eligible for services, it means the individual will be able to qualify for case management services. An individual must be found eligible for Adult Developmental Services before they can be considered for waiver services.

3. **Individual Already Determined Eligible for VR and Adult DS but Not on Waivers:** If it has been determined that a client requires long term support services for successful employment and they are not on either of the waivers:

- Explore all other options for long term supports, including referral to VR or Brain Injury LTS if support needs are anticipated to be under the \$2,000.00 annual cap. (Rule changes occurring late May 2010 with VR LTS will adjust this cap to \$3,000 with LTS under the Brain Injury remaining capped at \$8,000 per year.)
- If no LTS supports can be identified at this time, then VR can close the individual's case until LTS supports are identified in the future. Initiate a request back to the Adult Developmental Case Manager that the individual apply for Section 29 waiver to be found medically eligible and be placed on the wait list for Section 29 or 21. Once the person comes off the wait list and

has the waiver, the case manager can then encourage the individual to reapply for VR services and start the process again for requesting a long term support sign off from the local office.

4. **Important Reminder to all VR counselors** – According to our Rules, **VR cannot deny or refuse applications for individuals, even if the counselor believes the individual may not have long term supports in place.** Eligibility (and then Order of Selection) is determined based on all our criteria for eligibility. Once that is completed, if it is determined that the individual will require long term supports and there is no funding, then the person would be closed and asked to re-apply once he/she has secured long term supports. (See #3 above)
5. **For Transition Students:** If already found eligible for VR services – See # 1 and # 3 above.

The important issue for all to remember in both departments is that Adult Developmental Services currently has over 2000 individuals who are already on one of the two waivers, but are not using any of those waiver dollars for employment supports. Those individuals may be able to benefit from VR services by utilizing long term supports under one of the two waivers after they have been placed in a job through VR. If at any time you are working with an individual and that person wants to work and you are unclear how to proceed, please feel free to contact your local VR or Adult Developmental Services office.

Thank you – We are fortunate to have many dedicated, hard working staff in both departments who clearly want to provide quality services to our shared clients. We are going to continue to work together at all levels to maintain and improve this cooperation between our two departments.

Betsy and Bill