

CAP UPDATE

Inside this issue:

Eligibility	1-3
Alphabet Soup	3
Seek & Find	4
About CAP	4

Message from the Outreach Coordinator

by *Lucinda Crissman*

As the Outreach Coordinator for the Client Assistance Program (CAP), my overall goal is to provide information to many programs, projects, and facilities receiving funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act. These will include agencies and vendors working directly with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) and Centers for

Independent Living (CIL). I am hoping to increase our outreach efforts throughout the state and add these new contacts to our outreach database. I am initially going to focus on the rural counties across Pennsylvania. Please feel free to check out our website at www.equalemployment.org and look under the *Upcoming Outreach Events* tab you will find a *Message from the Outreach Coordinator*.

I am continuously looking for informative disability websites, and as I locate new ones I will be sharing them with you. Feel free to email me directly at:

lcristman@alltel.net

We will gladly accept any resources that you may want to share with us as well. You can contact CAP directly or email them to me.

To be or not to be...Eligible

by *Margaret McKenna & Jennie Philip*

Ann was pleased with her initial interview with her counselor. She followed up by providing her counselor with the medical documentation that was requested.

Ann's 60 day clock for an eligibility determination started ticking when she signed OVR's application. During these 60 days, your counselor may request your

participation in assessments and or evaluations by qualified professionals of your choice. The results of these assessments will help give OVR a clear picture of your



“The assessment process is required to take no more than 60 days...”

abilities so a proper eligibility determination can be made. Ann and her counselor discussed some doctors' to verify Ann's need for OVR services.

Anne asked her counselor, “How long will it take for an eligibility determination to be made?” Her counselor replied, “The assessment process is required to take no more than 60 days, however sometimes this is not enough time for all the reports to be sent and reviewed.” The counselor can ask the client to sign a waiver if this process takes longer than 60 days. Anne was glad her counselor did not try to get her to sign this waiver when she applied. An applicant is not required to sign a waiver.

In PA there is an order of selection; individuals with the Most Severe Disabilities (MSD) are served first. Anne commented to her counselor, “As long as you find me eligible, I can get funding from OVR right?” This was a very good question. Anne's counselor replied, “No, this is not so.” Anne asked for clarification. Her counselor explained that to be eligible you must be an individual with a disability and require OVR services to prepare for, secure, or retain employment over an extended period of time. In PA there is an or-

der of selection because there are not enough resources to serve everyone who is eligible for services. After Anne's counselor reviews all of her medical records and assessments, she should be able to let Anne know if she meets the MSD criteria. Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection can be provided non-cost services (counseling, guidance, job placement, information and referral). Anne became concerned she asked her counselor, “What will happen if I do not meet the MSD criteria.” Her counselor informed her that she can still receive non-cost services such as counseling, guidance and help with job placement if she is not determined MSD. Her counselor asked if there is any medical/psychological information that she did not disclose. Anne's counselor needs to be sure that she has all the information possible regarding Anne's particular situation, including the nature and extent of her disability and her abilities and skills.

Anne asked her counselor what would happen to her if OVR thought she was “too disabled”? Anne's counselor briefly explained, “A client is presumed eligible, however if a question arises as to whether you can benefit

from vocational rehabilitation services, your counselor should place you in one or more trial work situations consistent with your interests and abilities.” Anne asked, “What if I would disagree with OVR's determination.” The counselor replied, “Then you have a right to appeal.”

The previous question made Anne think, she asked, “What if they think that I do not have any barriers to employment?” The counselor replied, “This is why it is important for every applicant to provide the necessary medical documentation regarding their disability.” If the counselor is unable to establish the nature and extent of your disability through the information provided than he or she may make an appointment for you to see a doctor. You will not have to pay for these evaluations, but it is very important that you go to the appointments. If you do not keep an appointment or if you refuse to take a test, your counselor might decide you are not cooperating and close your case. You should follow up after each appointment to make sure the written report is sent to the counselor as soon as possible. Please remember that this part of the rehabilitation process can be a roadblock if your counselor does not get

the information he or she needs to make an eligibility determination. Any additional information that you provide to the counselor regarding your disability and how it affects your ability to work is extremely important during this process.

Anne's counselor told her that if she does not hear anything about eligibility within sixty days from the time she filled out the application then she should contact the Client Assistance Program. If eligibility is not

determined within the 60 day time period you can appeal it. Remember, your counselor is obligated to notify you of the Client Assistance Program at this time. You may also contact CAP if you are found ineligible for services. It is very important to begin the appeal process as soon as the ineligibility determination is made because there is a 30 day time period to file an appeal.

Anne asked, "What happens after I am determined

eligible for vocational rehabilitation services." The counselor replied, "I will call for a meeting and we will discuss your vocational goals. Afterwards we will begin to develop your Individualized Plan for Employment, which will map out the services you will receive from OVR."

Please stay tuned to find out if Anne and her counselor choose the same goal....



"You may also contact CAP if you are found ineligible for services."

Ten things you should know

1. Eligibility must be determined within 60 days
2. You are not required to sign a waiver of the 60 day eligibility requirement at the time you apply for services
3. If eligibility is not determined within 60 days you can appeal it
4. In PA there is an order of selection, individuals with the most severe disabilities are served first
5. Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection can be provided non-cost services
6. A person with a disability is presumed to be eligible for services unless OVR can demonstrate that the person is incapable of benefiting from an employment outcome due to the severity of the disability.
7. If you are found ineligible you can appeal
8. Any additional information that you provide to your counselor regarding how your disability affects your ability to work is extremely important.
9. OVR may determine that no impediment to employment exists.

Alphabet Soup for the VR Client's Goal....

1. CAP Client Assistance Program
2. OVR Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
3. BVS or BBVS Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services
4. IPE Individualized Plan for Employment
5. O and M Orientation and Mobility Training
6. AT Assistive Technology
7. D and A Drug and Alcohol Counseling
8. FNT Financial Needs Test
9. IAR Informal Administrative Review
10. IHO Impartial Hearing Officer





SEEK & FIND

Seek and find 10 words that were taken from our cover story

CLIENT ASSISTANT PROGRAM

1617 JFK Blvd.
Suite 800
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Phone: 1-888-745-2357 or
215-557-7112
Fax: 215-557-7602

Email: info@equalemployment.org

Mission: To ensure that the rehabilitation system is open and responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities

D	O	W	X	N	H	I	Q	M	C	J	A	Y	P
P	C	E	O	G	E	S	V	T	Y	D	P	N	X
Y	A	M	R	R	I	Q	L	H	W	N	O	E	C
A	P	C	D	F	K	Z	B	A	X	T	O	M	P
J	P	N	E	W	L	B	R	Y	E	L	H	D	S
C	O	Z	R	C	T	W	A	L	M	P	S	X	C
M	I	F	O	Y	R	B	I	R	T	M	P	W	A
Q	N	H	F	T	J	G	S	N	R	U	C	A	S
I	T	A	S	C	I	Q	B	S	I	I	R	Q	S
H	M	P	E	B	P	J	Y	N	A	F	E	D	E
N	E	N	L	B	H	A	I	F	L	J	L	R	S
X	N	E	E	R	D	M	Q	M	W	N	I	K	S
W	T	G	C	Y	I	I	K	A	O	V	G	F	M
O	S	U	T	K	H	E	I	R	R	Q	I	D	E
D	H	X	I	Q	D	V	M	G	K	A	B	I	N
U	I	C	O	S	E	T	P	I	H	N	L	F	T
S	Z	Y	N	R	G	O	Z	E	R	U	E	T	S

Order of Selection

Not Eligible

Work Barriers

Appointments

Assessments

Trial Work

Waiver

Sixty Days

Appeal

Eligible