



# MENTAL RETARDATION BULLETIN

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

DATE OF ISSUE  
**April 7, 1998**

EFFECTIVE DATE  
**April 7, 1998**

NUMBER  
**00-98-04**

SUBJECT:

Waiver Funding for Prevocational, Supported  
Employment and Educational Services

BY:

**Nancy R. Thaler**  
**Deputy Secretary for Mental Retardation**

## SCOPE

County Mental Health\Mental Retardation Administrators  
Base Service Unit Directors  
Vocational Facility Directors  
Adult Day Training Facility Directors  
Community Residential Facility Directors

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this bulletin is to report changes to the approved Medicaid Waiver for individuals with mental retardation regarding Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for prevocational, supported employment and educational services.

## BACKGROUND

The passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (§4347, HR 2015) allows states to claim FFP for prevocational, supported employment and educational services provided for Medicaid waiver recipients who are not prior residents of a nursing home or an intermediate care facility for individuals with mental retardation (ICF/MR). This provision of the Act became effective October 1, 1997

The Department submitted an amendment to its waiver for individuals with mental retardation to be able to claim FFP for prevocational, supported employment and educational services and has received notice of Federal approval. In accordance with the amendment, the Federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) approved the Department's request to permit FFP in the provision of prevocational, supported employment and educational services to individuals who have had no prior residency in an ICF/MR or nursing facility. The amendment is effective beginning October 1, 1997.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

**Appropriate Regional Mental Retardation Program Manager.**

## **APPLICATION:**

Effective October 1, 1997, County Mental health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) Programs are authorized to apply FFP to the provision of waiver funded prevocational, supported employment and educational services, regardless of an individual's prior residency in an ICF/MR or nursing facility. Counties should apply FFP for these services as close as possible to October 1, 1997, the effective date of the amendment. For services provided prior to October 1, 1997, FFP will be limited to individuals who have been prior residents of an ICF/MR or nursing facility.

This change in FFP does not alter the process of coordination with the local Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), as indicated in MR Bulletin #00-95-23, titled: "Coordination of Vocational Training and Supported Employment Under the 2176 Waiver," issued November 28, 1995. County MH/MR Programs must continue to follow the referral and determination guidelines contained in MR Bulletin #00-95-23. This includes written OVR determination that services are not available through a program funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as a condition of FFP under the waiver.

The only aspects of MR Bulletin #00-95-23 which are superseded by this bulletin relate to the County MH/MR Program's responsibility to exclude FFP based on a waiver recipient's prior residency in an ICF/MR or nursing facility. In this limited respect, this bulletin also supersedes conditions of service in the county's supplemental grant agreement, (MR Bulletin #00-96-08, titled: "2176 Waiver Supplemental Grant Agreement for 1996-2000"), and the approved waiver application.

Departmental adjustments to a county's waiver allocation resulting from this amendment will be made, beginning in fiscal year 1997-98. This action is expected to occur near the end of the fiscal year based on reports of county cost and utilization requested by the Office of Mental Retardation.

We expect that the resources made possible by this amendment will promote opportunities for individuals to realize career goals through education, on the job support, and vocational training. County MH/MR Programs are encouraged to continue their work in partnership with other human service agencies, education centers, business and industry to assure that individuals are able to realize their work and career goals.