

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

RSA-IM-00-06

DATE: 11/22/99

TO: STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (GENERAL)
STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (BLIND)
CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
REGIONAL REHABILITATION CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS
RSA SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF GSA DEPOT CLOSURES & ITS IMPACT ON JWOD
EMPLOYMENT

CONTENT: The purpose of this notice is to alert State VR agencies to a recent development affecting the employment of people who are blind and those who have other severe disabilities within the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program. The General Services Administration, one of the primary distributors of products furnished to Federal agencies by JWOD-participating State and local nonprofit agencies associated with National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and NISH (serving people with a range of severe disabilities), recently announced that it will begin closing its warehouse distribution system.

The enclosed News Release outlines how the JWOD Program will continue to supply Federal customers through a number of other current and new distribution channels. Although a number of steps are being taken to safeguard the jobs of people with disabilities served by the JWOD Program, State VR agencies are advised to take note of this development since it could potentially impact upon the employment of a significant number of blind and other severely disabled individuals. In the event that such individuals become displaced as a result of these circumstances, please keep in mind that further training or placement services for these individuals may be required.

You may also refer to TAC 98-02, "Establishing and continuing working relationships between State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Community Rehabilitation Programs", for further information and guidance regarding the JWOD Program.

For further information regarding this matter, contact Mr. Joe Cordova, Director,
Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired at 202-205-9902.

Fredric K. Schroeder, Ph.D.
Commissioner