

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
RSA-IM-00-29
DATE: June 9, 2000

ADDRESSEES: STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (GENERAL)
STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (BLIND)
STATE REHABILITATION COUNCILS
CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
PROTECTION & ADVOCACY OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS
PROGRAMS
REGIONAL REHABILITATION CONTINUING EDUCATION
PROGRAMS
AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE
PROGRAMS
CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
RSA SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

SUBJECT: Availability of Competitive Grants and Cooperative Agreements to
Enhance the Employability, Employment and Career Advancement of
People with Disabilities

CONTENT: The purpose of this Information Memorandum (IM) is to inform you of
recent issuances by the Department of Labor, Employment and Training
Administration (DOLETA), The Health Care Financing Administration
(HCFA), and The Social Security Administration (SSA).

The Work Incentive Grants Program: DOLETA has announced the
availability of \$20 million to award competitive grants designed to
enhance the employability, employment and career advancement of people
with disabilities through enhanced service delivery in the new One-Stop
delivery system established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

The Work Incentive Grant program will provide grant funds to consortia
and/or partnerships of public and private non-profit entities working in
coordination with a state and/or local One-Stop delivery system to
augment the existing programs and services and to ensure programmatic
access and streamlined, seamless service delivery for people with
disabilities.

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is Tuesday, August 1, 2000. Eligible applicants may be a State and/or Local Workforce Investment Board(s) established under the Workforce Investment Act, or other State/local public entities including, Vocational Rehabilitation, Mental Health, Mental Retardation/Developmental Disability, TANF, and/or private non-profit organizations including, but not limited to, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), disability advocacy and provider organizations, federally-funded disability grant entities, and other non-profit organizations which provide services and/or advocacy for people with disabilities, or a consortium thereof.

Medicaid Infrastructure Grants: The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) Is soliciting proposals from States to develop infrastructures to support the competitive employment of people with disabilities by facilitating targeted improvements to State Medicaid programs. Section 203 of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA) directed the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to establish a grant program to support State efforts to enhance employment options for people with disabilities. HCFA is the designated DHHS agency with administrative responsibility for this grant program.

The grant program is authorized for 11 years, and \$150 million in funding has been appropriated for the first five years of the program. The minimum grant award to an eligible State is \$500,000 per fiscal year. All States are eligible to apply for funding, and funds will be allocated to any State that successfully competes for the program.

Two types of State agencies may apply: (a) the Single State Medicaid Agency, or (b) any other State agency in partnership, agreement and active participation with the Single State Medicaid Agency.

Please note the following:

Notice of Intent to Apply Due Date:	June 12, 2000
Applicants Conference:	June 20-21, 2000
Application Due Date:	July 31, 2000
Award Announcements:	October 2000

Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach Program: The Social Security Administration (SSA) announces its intention to competitively award cooperative agreements to establish community-based benefits planning, assistance, and outreach projects in every State, the District of

Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The purpose of these projects is to disseminate accurate information to beneficiaries with disabilities (including transition-to-work aged youth) about work incentives programs and issues related to such programs to enable them to make informed choices about work. The deadline for receipt of applications is July 31, 2000.

A cooperative agreement may be awarded to any State or local government, public or private organization, or nonprofit or for-profit organization that the Commissioner determines is qualified to provide benefits planning, assistance, and outreach to all SSDI and SSI beneficiaries with disabilities, within the targeted geographic area. These may include: Centers for Independent Living, established under title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998; protection and advocacy organizations; Native American tribal entities; Client Assistance Programs, established in accordance with section 112 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998; State Developmental Disabilities Councils, established in accordance with section 124 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act; and, State agencies administering the State program, funded under part A of title IV of the Act. The Commissioner may also award a cooperative agreement to a State or local Workforce Investment Board, a Department of Labor (DOL) One-Stop Career Center System established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, or a State Vocational Rehabilitation agency.

The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (PTFEAD), established under Executive Order 13078, is facilitating interagency collaboration among SSA's cooperative agreement program, the Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and training Administration's grant program, and the Department of Health and Human Services' Health Care Financing Administration's (HCFA) grant program. Each of the three programs is being administered separately by the respective agencies. The Task Force will provide guidance to this multi-agency process as part of their charge to design a coordinated and aggressive national policy that will bring working-age individuals with disabilities into gainful employment at a rate approaching that of the general population.

Additional Information: Applicants may obtain additional information including grant application kits by accessing the following e-mail addresses:

SSA's cooperative agreements: <http://www.ssa.gov/oag/grants>

DOL's grant program on the grant and contracts page at:
http://www.wdsc.org/sga/sga/work_incentives_sga.html

and HCFA's grant programs at:
<http://www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/twwiia/twwiiahp.htm>

Applicants may also access the PTFEAD link accessible from DOL's home page at: <http://www.dol.gov> for additional information about the Task Force.

If you have any questions regarding the DOL's solicitation for grant applications, please contact Mr. Charles Sadler at (202) 205-9286, or via email at: charles_sadler@ed.gov. For information about SSA's cooperative agreements or HCFA's infrastructure grant program, please contact Ms. Mary Davis at (202) 205-8790, or by e-mail at: mary_s_davis@ed.gov. If you need to contact any of the individuals listed above and you use a TTY, you may call through the Federal Information Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

Fredric K. Schroeder (signed)

Fredric K. Schroeder, Ph.D.
Commissioner

cc: NCIL
CSAVR
NAPAS
NRFC