

WELFARE REFORM IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

MEETING

June 2, 2006

MINUTES

Meeting was called to order by Linda Katz, Chair at 9:07 a.m. Minutes of previous meeting were approved.

Because Randy Rosati had to attend a mid morning meeting, Linda announced a change in the order of the agenda to allow Mr. Rosati to provide his data report on Food Stamps and Child Care as the first order of business.

Copies of Data Reports for State Fiscal Year 2006 were distributed for each program. Mr. Rosati reviewed monthly data on the use of child care by income eligible families and children versus FIP families and children and identified DCYF supported child care. He pointed out that data reflects a total number of child care slots approximately 13,500 per 4-week payroll. The most recent payroll had 13,254 of which 10,253 were children of working parents, 2,228 were children of FIP parents, and 773 were children involved with DCYF. He pointed

out that the highest number of children are school with preschoolers very close in number.

He pointed out that in January, 155 case openings were for FIP families; 231 were for income eligible families for a total of 386 case openings in January.

There was brief discussion about child care denials and the reasons for denials. Mr. Rosati shared a report which broke down the various reasons a child care case may be denied.

The next presentation was on the Food Stamp Caseload. There was discussion about the total number of food stamp cases and the somewhat noticeable decrease in these cases. Randy pointed to the fact that as FIP caseload goes down due to earnings, the eligibility for food stamps may also be affected; again contributing to more families closing due to higher incomes but that there is a small increment in the use in the Non Public Assistance elderly population. Again, there was some discussion of closures and the reasons a case closed. Mr. Rosati provided a breakdown in his report. The Committee thanked him for his report.

CENTRALIZATION OF CHILD CARE UNIT AND NEW IVES UNIT:

Tina Janik provided a brief history of the staffing of the child care program and how it has evolved in level of need by families and how the staffing has undergone change overtime. She described that the Department had maintained two locations to process applications but that the demand was such that the Department had to adjust to a

different model. Ms. Janik stated that centralization in the Providence Regional Center offered much greater capacity and timeliness and was less vulnerable to backup in processing applications if staff changes occurred. She noted that all families had been notified of the central location and that the forms were changed to reflect the single address and phone number. There was a question about updating the staff locations and phone numbers for community providers. Donalda Carlson stated she would forward new names and address information on FIP and child care staff as this was received from the field.

Tina then described the creation of a new Income Eligibility Verification Systems (IEVS) Unit and that the Department was in the process of hiring individuals who had broad knowledge of all programs and that their main function would be to keep in touch with information on employment of families receiving FIP and other benefit programs. She said they would begin their focus on SWICA matches but would move into the National Directory of New Hires matches as well. The purpose of this unit is to better assure case and payment information is accurate and that income from earnings in FIP/FS and possibly MA are up to date with the earnings of beneficiaries. She stressed that it is very important for those who work with our clients to understand why they need to inform DHS of changes to their income. Again, the committee thanked Tina for her report.

TANF UPDATE

Donalda Carlson stated that until the Interim Rules on TANF are issued, that there was little to report at this time. Joy Tinker, Federal Representative from HHS agreed and stated that once her office had received information she would be happy to provide updates to this Task Force.

REVIEW OF CHILD CARE CO-PAYMENT CHART

Donalda reviewed the new co-payment amounts and described the new levels affected by the recent changes. She explained that the Governor had originally proposed a 2% increase in the families in levels 5, 6, and 7 but that the General Assembly changed the percentage to only 1%. Charts with specific amounts were distributed and further explained.

There was another handout of FIP Expenditures Pie Chart which reflected the amount of dollars allocated to FIP E & T for FY 2007.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was closed and Linda Katz suggested that the next meeting be held on July 14, 2006.