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TO: Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County
FROM: John Cullen, Director, Social Service Department
DATE: February 25, 1997
SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF CHANGES TO THE GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SPECIFIC REQUEST(S) OR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. APPROVE the Social Service Department's plan for a service delivery model which expands the focus on self-sufficiency.
2. ADOPT General Assistance Standards of Assistance to reflect new state law changes and court actions which address the following subjects:
 - ♦ Eligibility to General Assistance time-limited to three months in any twelve month period for able-bodied recipients who are assessed as employable, and who are offered the opportunity to participate in job skills or job training sessions.
 - ♦ Standards of aid for recipients who reside with other non-responsible individuals reduced in accordance with the formula established by the Welfare and Institutions Code section 17001.5.
 - ♦ Standards of aid for recipients reduced by \$40 per month in recognition of the value of health care provided by the county.
 - ♦ Part 9, Immediate Need, of Resolution No. 89/411 rescinded. This section was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1989.
3. Establish an effective date of March 1, 1997 for the standards of assistance, with implementation of the reduction for the value of health care deferred pending development of Department budget.
4. AMEND Resolution No. 92/698, adopting discretionary social welfare programs pursuant to Government Code section 26227, providing for special needs for General Assistance eligibles.
5. DIRECT the Department to conduct a pilot to evaluate the effectiveness of a vendor payment program for food and personal needs.

Signature: 

ACTION OF BOARD ON February 25, 1997 APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED X OTHER X

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

UNANIMOUS (ABSENT _____)
AYES: I, II, V, IV NOES: III
ABSENT: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

The Board APPROVED the recommendations as set forth above; ADOPTED Resolution Nos. 97/212, and 97/213 as attached; and REFERRED to matter to the Family and Human Services Committee for review, with particular focus on the shared housing provision.

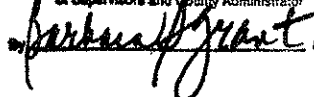
Contact: Jewel Mansapit, Social Service, 313-1601

CAO

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: February 25, 1997

PHIL BATCHELOR, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors and County Administrator

 Deputy

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Adopted this Order on February 25, 1997 by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Rogers, Uilkema, Canciamilla, and DeSaulnier

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Supervisor Gerber

SUBJECT: Standards for Administration of the] RESOLUTION NO. 97/ 212
 General Assistance Program]

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors RESOLVES that:

In accordance with California Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 17000 et seq., the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors hereby ADOPTS the following standards of aid and care for the indigent and dependent poor of the County (General Assistance), effective March 1, 1997. These standards govern the General Assistance Program of Contra Costa County.

Part 1

Standards of Aid

101. Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000.5, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors hereby adopts general assistance standards of aid that are 62 percent of the 1991 federal official poverty guidelines, and which are adjusted in an amount equal to the adjustments provided under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11200) of part 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
 - (a) An amount not to exceed \$40 per month per recipient shall be deducted from the standard of aid in recognition of the value of health care provided by the county.
102. The general assistance standards of aid for applicants or recipients living alone or with responsible relatives are established by budget units consisting of the General Assistance applicant or recipient and all legally responsible relatives (spouse for spouse and parent for minor child) with whom the applicant or recipient lives.
 - (a) The standard of aid for each person in a budget unit exceeding one shall be an amount equal to the multiple person budget unit standard divided by the number of persons in the budget unit. Any budget unit with five or more persons shall be considered as having four persons in the budget unit.
103. The standard of aid for applicants or recipients who share housing with one or more unrelated persons or with one or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption who are not legally responsible for the applicant or recipient (non-family budget unit) pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 17001.5 shall be the standard of aid for the budget unit reduced as follows:
 - (a) by 15% if the applicant/recipient lives with one other person;
 - (b) by 20% if the applicant/recipient lives with two other persons;
 - (c) by 25% if the applicant/recipient lives with three or more other persons.
104. The standard of aid for an applicant/recipient who is eligible for general

assistance but is homeless shall be the standard for a 1 person assistance unit, which shall be administered as follows:

- (a) If the homeless person resides at a county shelter, the grant shall be reduced to 47% of the standard for 1, which is the amount for food, personal needs and basic transportation.
 - (b) If the homeless person resides at a private shelter, the grant shall be reduced to 47% of the standard for 1, which is the amount for food, personal needs and basic transportation.
 - (c) In consideration of the county's right to cooperation in administering its General Assistance Program and to compliance with the reasonable requirements of shelter residence, the grant shall be reduced to 47% of the standard for 1, which is the amount for food, personal needs and transportation, if a homeless person declines to accept available county or private shelter or is disqualified for available shelter on account of his or her willful conduct.
 - (d) If the county is unable to provide shelter, and the person is unable to obtain private shelter, the homeless person shall be entitled to receive the aid payable to a 1 person family unit.
 - (e) There shall be no reduction in aid for a homeless person who is willing to accept available county or private shelter if the only available shelter is in a geographic region of the county other than that in which the person normally resides.
 - (f) No person whose mental or medical condition makes them inappropriate for shelter placement shall have their aid reduced for failure to accept a shelter bed. Persons with flagged mental disabilities shall not be required to accept a shelter bed.
 - (g) Homeless eligible shelter residents who move to a confirmed housing unit shall receive the unused balance of shelter and food payments for that month.
105. General Assistance aid is payable by the calendar month and shall be pro-rated for periods less than a calendar month.
106. The amount of aid payable is determined by subtracting from the applicant or recipient's standard of aid cash resources, net income, and the value of income in kind as determined by the Social Service Department.
107. Method of Payment
- The Social Service Department may substitute in-kind assistance, vendor payments or vouchers for any cash grant or allowance provided hereunder at the discretion of the Social Service Director.
108. Overpayments of aid are subject to liquidation as provided in the Social Service Department Manual of Policies and Procedures.
109. Medical care excepted, the aid and care to which Contra Costa County legal residents are entitled under Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000 is limited to that provided by this Resolution.

Part 2

General Assistance Eligibility

201. An applicant for or recipient of General Assistance must meet all of the following criteria:

- (a) Must be at least 18 years of age or legally married or disqualified for categorical assistance.
 - (b) Must be a legal resident with an address in Contra Costa County which can be given to the Social Service Department as the applicant's place of residence. Other conclusive evidence of residency, as determined by the Department of Social Service, may be substituted for the address requirement if the applicant or recipient does not have an address.
 - (c) Must have been present in, and a resident of, Contra Costa County for fifteen consecutive days.
 - (d) Must be without sufficient income or resources to meet the applicable General Assistance standard of aid.
 - (d) Must not be in receipt of, or eligible to, categorical cash assistance, the standard of aid for which equals or exceeds the applicable General Assistance standard of aid, in the same month, provided that any person who is eligible for aid under Chapter 2 (commencing with section 11200) of Part 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code shall not be eligible for General Assistance if that person's payment level established pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11450 (a) is exceeded by the applicable General Assistance standard of aid. Where an individual fails to take all reasonable steps to establish or maintain his or her eligibility for categorical aid, or refuses to cooperate with GA program requirements, he or she renders himself or herself ineligible for General Assistance.
 - (e) Must not be serving a General Assistance/General Relief period of ineligibility from another California county.
202. Must meet the General Assistance eligibility standards outlined below.

Part 3

Employability

- 301. An applicant or recipient who does not have a medically verified physical or mental disability as determined by the Social Service Department is employable.
- 302. An applicant or recipient who is employable is subject to the following additional conditions of eligibility:
 - (a) Must be available for and actively seeking employment.
 - (b) Must not have failed to continue in employment without good cause within 60 days of application.
 - (c) Must actively participate in the General Assistance employment programs of the Social Service Department.
 - (d) Must actively participate in any manpower program to which the applicant or recipient is referred.
 - (e) Must accept any reasonable job offer.
 - (f) Must agree to participate as assigned in the Workfare Program.
 - (g) An employable individual who has been offered an opportunity to attend job skills or job training sessions may not receive aid for more than three months in a twelve month period, whether or not the months are consecutive. This applies

to aid received as an employable person in any California county. A partial month's aid shall be counted as one month.

303. An applicant or recipient who is unemployable (that is, mentally or physically disabled, as verified by a physician), is subject to the following additional conditions of eligibility:
- (a) Must cooperate in obtaining medical verification and confirmation of unemployability as directed by the Social Service Department.
 - (b) Must, if aged, blind, or disabled, apply for that assistance program provided for under Title XVI of the Social Security Act as implemented by Welfare and Institutions Code Section 12000 et seq, known as "Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Program" (hereafter SSI/SSP), and follow through with appeal processes through the Social Security Administration. In addition, applicants must sign an agreement(GA201A) authorizing the Social Security Administration to make the initial SSI/SSP payment to the County and authorizing the County to deduct from such payment the amount of General Assistance paid to the recipient while SSI/SSP was pending.
 - (c) Must cooperate in the determination of eligibility for benefits from any State, Federal or other source.
 - (d) Must cooperate in obtaining medical, psychological, or psychiatric examinations and medical, psychiatric, or other care or treatment to diagnose, correct or alleviate medical, psychological, or psychiatric conditions which cause unemployability.
 - (e) Must actively participate in any training, re-training, educational or rehabilitation program as required by the Social Service Department.

Part 4

Property

401. Real Property

- (a) Home: The applicant's or recipient's own home in which he or she is living is excluded in determining eligibility.
- (b) Real Property other than the home renders the applicant or recipient ineligible for General Assistance.

402. Personal Property

Insofar as it is possible, an applicant for or recipient of General Assistance shall be required to apply his or her own personal property to his or her support; subject to the provisions set forth below:

- (a) Liquid Assets: Liquid assets are defined as cash, bank accounts, credit union shares, securities, stock or bonds, cash surrender value of insurance policies or other negotiable instruments readily convertible to cash. Liquid assets must be applied towards the applicant's or recipient's support. In determining need and eligibility, such assets shall be budgeted as though they were income. Other liquid assets are subject to the rule governing available property.
- (b) Motor Vehicle: One motor vehicle is excluded in determining eligibility if its value as determined by the Social Service Department does not exceed \$4,500. In determining this value, the Social Service Department shall not reduce the value by any amounts owing on the vehicle.

- (c) Personal effects: tools of the trade, an interment space, crypt or niche, the first \$500 for a burial or funeral trust, are excluded in determining eligibility.
- (d) All other personal property: the value of other personal property may not exceed \$500 in order for the GA applicant or recipient to be eligible.

403. Available Property

Where the applicant or recipient owns and possesses assets that are not immediately available, or other property in excess of the standards set forth above, and is unable to utilize such property for his or her immediate support, he or she may be aided for a period of one month upon the Social Service Director's authorization, to provide him or her with an opportunity to convert the property for use toward his or her support.

404. Income in Kind

Gain or benefit available to or received by the applicant or recipient in the form of goods or commodities, as distinguished from cash, shall be considered an available resource, and will be treated as income in kind.

- (a) In-kind values for housing, food, personal needs and basic transportation shall be determined by the Social Service Director, and provided in the Social Service Department Manual of Policies and Procedures.

405. Transfer of Property

- (a) When property other than excluded property is transferred by an applicant or recipient, within 12 months preceding the date of application, whether by conversion to other property, conversion to cash, or expenditure of liquid assets, the purpose and intent of the transferor must be evaluated. The burden of proof that the transfer was not made to qualify for aid, or for a greater amount of aid, or to avoid utilization, is on the applicant or recipient.
- (b) When the applicant or recipient fails to prove that transfers of property were not made to qualify for aid or for a greater amount of aid, or to avoid utilization, the applicant or recipient is deemed ineligible for aid.
- (c) The applicant or recipient who has transferred property which results in ineligibility remains ineligible for the period not to exceed twelve months during which the proceeds would have supported him at the rate of \$342 per month for one person, plus \$230 per month for each additional person.

- 406. All currently available net income, which shall include liquid assets and aid payments from any source, as determined by the Social Service Department shall be deducted from the basic need allowance in determining the amount of the grant which may be authorized.

Part 5

Assistance Unit Limitations on Eligibility

- 501. The GA budget unit consists of the GA applicant or recipient and those household members who are related to him or her by birth, marriage or adoption, except that minor children who are receiving OASDI survivors benefits are excluded. The assistance unit consists of those persons in the budget unit who are applying for GA, and their legally responsible relatives (spouse for spouse and parent for minor children).
- 502. The GA assistance unit must meet the property and income limits as a group in

order for any member of the assistance unit to be eligible for GA.

503. If legally responsible persons receive categorical cash assistance, they are not included in the assistance unit, and their property and income is excluded in determining eligibility of the GA applicant or recipient.

Part 6

Administrative Eligibility Conditions

601. Review of Eligibility

- (a) A review of eligibility factors will be made at intervals as determined by the Social Service Department but at least once every 12 months.
- (b) Monthly determinations will be made by review of the Monthly Eligibility Report required from all GA recipients. Failure to submit the required report shall result in the discontinuance of aid.

602. Exploration of Resource Potential

GA applicants or recipients must take all actions necessary to obtain any available resources.

603. Responsibility for Support

- (a) A determination of support from all sources shall be made at the time GA is granted.
- (b) Responsible persons include the spouse, and parents of minor children who have a legal responsibility to support, as well as any other persons who have assumed responsibility for the support of the applicant or recipient.
- (c) An applicant or recipient is not eligible unless such person has made reasonable efforts to obtain support from all sources including legally responsible relatives.
- (d) As a condition of eligibility for General Assistance, an applicant or recipient must provide available information as to the identity and whereabouts of persons who are responsible for his or her support as well as information as to the source and amount of support provided from any source during the past 12 months.
- (e) An applicant or recipient who lives with a responsible person(s) is not eligible unless the entire assistance unit meets the property limits and need standard of General Assistance.

604. Verification

- (a) An applicant or recipient must provide all information required for the determination and verification of eligibility and compliance with these standards and the Social Service Department Manual of Policies and Procedures, including, but not limited to, name, address, and personal identification.
- (b) An applicant or recipient is required to consent to the Social Service Department's investigations and inquiries reasonably necessary to verify eligibility at any time.
- (c) An applicant or recipient must consent to reasonable inspection, review, monitoring and audit of his or her household and records by authorized representatives of the Social Service Department.

605. Alcohol/Drug Abuse

Applicants or recipients must be screened for alcohol or drug abuse if there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that the applicant or recipient is dependent upon alcohol or illegal drugs, and, if determined to be chemically dependent, must accept referral to General Assistance Alcohol and Drug Abuse Diversion Services (GAADDs), or other such alcohol or drug abuse programs as the Social Service Department may direct, and actively and cooperatively participate in any treatment program recommended by GAADDs for such persons.

606. Fingerprint Imaging

An applicant or recipient must consent to fingerprint imaging as a condition of eligibility for General Assistance.

Part 7

Program Compliance

701. Initial and continued eligibility is conditioned upon the applicant's and recipient's full cooperation with the Social Service Department and upon compliance with all applicable policies and regulations governing the GA program. Applicant and recipient responsibilities embodied in this resolution include, but are not limited to, those set forth on forms GA 201A, GA 201B and GA 34, which are provided to and shall be executed by all applicants prior to the granting or restoration of aid.
702. Failure to comply with General Assistance program requirements expressed in this Resolution or in the Social Service Department Manual of Policies and Procedures renders an applicant or recipient ineligible for aid. Failure to comply is excused if it was for good cause.
- (a) The Department shall be responsible for showing that a failure or refusal to comply with General Assistance program requirements occurred.
 - (b) The General Assistance recipient who alleges that he or she has good cause for his or her failure or refusal to comply with program requirements shall be responsible for showing that good cause exists.
 - (c) There is no presumption that failure to follow program requirements is willful or non-willful. The Department shall have no obligation to determine willfulness or lack of good cause before sending warning notices, failure to comply notices, or notices of proposed action.
 - (d) Nonwillfulness is good cause for a failure or refusal to comply with a program requirement, subject to rebuttal by the Department.
 - (1) Willful is defined to mean a purpose or willingness to commit the act or make the omission in question, and does not require an intent to violate program requirements. Nonwillful shall be defined to mean an accidental or involuntary violation of a program requirement or an intentional act not reasonably foreseeable to result in violation of a requirement. Conduct which meets the definition of nonwillful shall not be considered to be willful.
 - (e) Twice only, negligence shall be good cause; thereafter negligence shall be subject to evaluation.
 - (1) A negligent act is one that occurs by inadvertence, carelessness, haste, lack of attention, forgetfulness, or failure to use regular care.

- (e) Each case will be determined on its own facts. A determination must be made based on the evidence. Evidence can be direct or it may be inferred from an applicant's or recipient's acts.
 - (f) Failure to cooperate in meeting program requirements or carrying out program duties is a failure to comply with program requirements.
703. An applicant who fails to comply with program requirements shall be denied aid unless the applicant shows that the failure to comply was for good cause.
- (a) Examples of applicants' program requirements include, but are not limited to, keeping appointments; providing verification as requested by the due date; filing application for other sources of income or benefits, including Supplemental Security Income; participating in substance abuse screening; completing applicant job search; appearing for and participating in Work Programs Intake; cooperating with Early Fraud Detection and Prevention.
704. An applicant who has quit without compelling cause, or has been fired for cause from a job within sixty days prior to the date of the General Assistance application is ineligible for General Assistance for sixty days from the last day of his or her employment.
705. An applicant who provides fraudulent information in order to qualify for a General Assistance grant or for a larger grant, or to avoid termination or reduction of aid, shall serve a six month period of ineligibility.
706. Once aid is granted, a recipient who fails or refuses to comply with program requirements shall be discontinued aid, and sanctions will be imposed as follows, unless the recipient shows that the failure to comply was for good cause.
- (a) The first failure or refusal to comply with a program requirement shall result in a warning notice in lieu of a sanction.
 - (1) The warning notice shall advise of the failure to comply and state that future failures to comply without good cause shall be subject to sanction, and that the Department shall clear the warning notice if the recipient contacts the responsible staff person within ten days and shows good cause.
 - (2) Not more than twice, the Department shall clear a warning notice if the recipient arranges for a new opportunity to comply with the program requirement, and complies with the program requirement.
 - (3) If the warning notice is cleared, the recipient shall be entitled to another warning notice in lieu of sanction for the next failure to comply.
 - (b) Once a recipient has a uncleared warning notice, further failures to comply will be subject to sanction, but before a notice of proposed action may be sent, a failure to comply notice will be given, offering the recipient the opportunity within ten days to contact the responsible staff person and clear the noncompliance by showing good cause.
 - (1) The first failure to comply with a program requirement shall be followed by a two-month period of ineligibility; the second failure to comply with a program requirement shall be followed by a four-month period of ineligibility; and a third failure to comply with a program requirement shall be followed by a six-month period of ineligibility. Thereafter, each subsequent discontinuance for any willful failure to comply with a program requirement shall be followed by a six-month period of ineligibility.
 - (2) In unusual circumstances, upon application by the recipient, based upon a

written finding of facts showing that it is justified by

- i) the recipient's case record, or
- ii) the nature of the failure to comply, or
- iii) the reason for failure to comply;

subject to approval by the Appeals Manager, an appeal hearing officer may reduce a sanction from two months to one month or from four months to three months. Such reduction will not affect the length of subsequent sanctions.

- (c) If one year has elapsed since the end of the last discontinuance or period of ineligibility, without the initiation of procedures for a failure to comply with a program requirement which result in sanctions, the process for imposing sanctions shall begin again.
 - (d) Examples of recipients' program requirements include, but are not limited to: appearing for Work Programs Assignment appointment or monthly Job Club meetings; submitting a timely and complete job search report form; performing a monthly workfare assignment; cooperating with GAADDs; cooperating with Quality Control; submitting a timely and complete monthly status report (GA-7); cooperating with and completing the annual redetermination process; providing requested information or verification by the due date; applying for any other resource or benefit, including Supplemental Security Income, and taking all necessary steps to obtain such income.
 - (e) The period of ineligibility shall apply to any member of a General Assistance assistance unit who has failed to comply with program requirements.
707. A recipient who refuses an offer of employment, or who quits without compelling cause, or is fired for cause from a job shall be ineligible for General Assistance for six months from the refusal or the last day of employment.
708. A recipient who provides fraudulent information in order to qualify for a General Assistance grant or for a larger grant, or to avoid termination or reduction of aid, shall serve a six month period of ineligibility.
709. When an applicant for aid is denied, a new application shall be required to establish eligibility; when a recipient is discontinued, a new application shall be required to establish eligibility.
710. Notice and Appeal Procedure
- (a) Actions to deny aid or to terminate eligibility are subject to notice and appeal as provided in Board Resolution Number 95/385.

Part 8

Interim General Assistance Reimbursement Program

801. County's Program

In accordance with P.L. 94-365 and 42 U.S.C. 1383 (g), and with the "Agreement for Reimbursement to State for Interim Assistance Payments Pursuant to Section 1631(g) of the Social Security Act" between the U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and the State of California, as executed on February 11, 1975, which provides for reimbursement to the State, or certain counties thereof, for "interim assistance" paid to eligible applicants for SSI/SSP benefits while such application is pending; and pursuant to the "Contract for the Interim Assistance Program" between the State of California

Department of Social Services and the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, which permits the County to participate in the State's "Interim Assistance Program", the County hereby adopts and establishes a Contra Costa County Interim General Assistance Reimbursement Program.

802. Interim General Assistance

Under the County's Program, General Assistance paid to those persons who are subject to paragraph Section 303 (b) herein, shall be considered "Interim General Assistance" where it is paid during the period beginning with the filing of an application for Federally paid SSI/SSP benefits for which said person is ultimately determined eligible, and ending with the first regular SSI/SSP payment made thereunder.

803. Program Operation

Subject to the recipient's right to State hearing, Interim General Assistance shall be repaid to the County from the recipient's Federally paid SSI/SSP benefits.

Part 9

Additional Provisions

901. Reimbursement

In accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code sections 17109 and 17403, as a condition precedent to the receipt of General Assistance benefits, eligible persons are obligated to repay all benefits received and may be required to execute a repayment agreement and lien upon their property. The County Counsel is authorized to bring a legal action against a General Assistance recipient at the direction of the Social Service Director when the Director determines that the recipient has acquired property.

902. Return to Residence

Persons who are not residents of Contra Costa County, but otherwise would be eligible for General Assistance on the basis of property and income, may be provided County funds by the Social Service Department in order to return such persons to their place of residence. In order to discourage a transient life-style which is a drain on county taxpayers, persons who return to this County after being transported out of County are ineligible to further county funds for twelve months from date of departure. If the place of residence has a source of support which is still available, such persons are not eligible to any further General Assistance.

903. Social Service Department Manual

- (a) Subject to the provisions contained herein, the General Assistance standards and policies of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors are expressed in the Social Service Department Manual of Policies and Procedures.
- (b) The County Welfare Director is empowered to adopt procedures and policies for the operation of the General Assistance program which are consistent with and within the scope of this resolution, and to publish same in the Social Service Department Manual of Policies and Procedures.

904. Hearings


Applicants and recipients are entitled to notice, hearings and appeals as provided in the Social Service Department Manual, this Resolution, and Resolution No 95/385.

- (a) The Department of Social Service shall establish an Administrative Review Panel which shall review and make recommendations to the Director of Social Service regarding evidentiary hearing decisions which are appealed to the Board of Supervisors.
- (b) Any interested person may file a written challenge with the Director of the Social Service Department objecting in whole or in part to regulations of the Department, or of the Board of Supervisors governing the General Assistance Program. The Administrative Review Panel shall review any such challenge. It shall make a recommendation to the Director of the Social Service Department concerning such a challenge within six weeks from the date of its receipt. The Director's determination may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors by written notice of appeal, stating the facts and authorities on which it is based, delivered to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, within two weeks from the date the Director's determination is mailed to appellant.

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of
an action taken and entered on the minutes of the
Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: February 25, 1997

Phil Batchelor, Clerk of the Board
of Supervisors and County Administrator

By:  Deputy

Contact: Jewel Mansapit, Social Service, 313-1601

D.9 B

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Adopted this Order on February 25, 1997 by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Rogers, Uilkema, Canciamilla and DeSaulnier

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Supervisor Gerber

SUBJECT: Discretionary Social Welfare] Resolution No. 97/ 213
 Programs adopted pursuant to]
 Government Code section 26227]

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors RESOLVES that:

Resolution No. 92/698, adopting discretionary social welfare programs for general assistance eligibles, is hereby AMENDED to modify the provisions for employable recipients, as follows:

Program: Special Needs for General Assistance eligibles

Part a. is modified to read:

- a. In order to assist employable recipients to meet the employment program requirements of the General Assistance program, and to assist those recipients to become self-sufficient by obtaining and maintaining employment, allowances for work-related ancillary services may be provided at the discretion of the Social Service Director.

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of
an action taken and entered on the minutes of the
Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: February 25, 1997

Phil Batchelor, Clerk of the Board
of Supervisors and County Administrator

By Barbara H. Grant, Deputy

Contact: Jewel Mansapit, Social Service, 313-1601

GA Standards of Assistance

Executive Summary

Mission: Self-sufficiency

The mission of the Social Service Department: *In partnership with the community, provide services which support and protect families, individuals and children in need, and promote personal responsibility, independence, and self-sufficiency.*

Since 1990, the Board of Supervisors' stated objective for the General Assistance program: **self-sufficiency** for every General Assistance applicant/recipient.

Possible Impacts of Federal and State Welfare Reform

Some of the critical areas which could potentially have a serious impact on local programs -- and in particular on GA -- are the ineligibility of legal immigrants for federal programs and time-limits to aid for families. It is unknown at this time exactly what number of families within our county will be impacted by these changes within the next two years. However, an increase in the number of families with children on GA will drastically change the GA client profile and the type of employment services needed, specifically with regard to child care issues.

Possible Impacts of Changes to State Law and Neighboring Counties' Policies

Of particular importance to Contra Costa County at this time is the issue of what policy changes neighboring counties have taken or plan to take within the next six months. The threat of migration cannot be totally disregarded. While residents of one county might not consider relocating to another county because grants were reduced -- e.g. Alameda and Solano's grants were reduced according to relief granted to those counties by the Commission on State Mandates, and this did not adversely affect our caseload -- they might be more inclined to relocate to an adjacent county if their eligibility in their own county were limited to a specific number of months. Both Alameda and Solano plan to implement time-limits and other program restrictions. There are other, similarly adverse, policy changes pending with several Bay Area counties which could impact Contra Costa.

Recommendations for Changes to Service Delivery System and Standards of Assistance

1. This report proposes that the Board of Supervisors **approve** the Department's plan for a service delivery model which focuses on self-sufficiency:

This is a comprehensive integrated service delivery model to include:

- ◆ Single assessment tool/process
- ◆ Primary case manager who coordinates services for recipient
- ◆ Mutual identification of service needs by recipient and case manager
- ◆ Increased service levels without adding costs by streamlining processes
- ◆ Accountability and tracking for services
- ◆ Emphasis on recipient responsibility to work toward independence

The service continuum will assure:

- ◆ Early and accurate assessment of the client's employability or unemployability, and identification of his/her service needs
- ◆ Entry into the correct service component at the initial point of entry
- ◆ For the employable client, augmented services as needed, to address the individual's barriers to employment, and to provide guidance in the areas of job seeking and retention
- ◆ For the disabled client, augmented services to assist with the development of other resources, primarily SSI benefits
- ◆ For the client who is neither clearly employable nor disabled, augmented services as needed to remove barriers to employment, or to assist with rehabilitation or documenting the disability

2. This report proposes that the Board **adopt** the following policy changes which will align policies with welfare reform; and to recognize federal and state law changes:
 - a. Standards of aid for recipients who reside with other non-responsible individuals to be reduced in accordance with the formula permitted by the Welfare and Institutions Code section 17001.5. Adoption of this policy will replace the current policy of limiting the reduction to recipients who reside with certain related persons.
 - a. Eligibility to General Assistance to be time-limited to three months in any twelve month period for able-bodied recipients who are assessed as employable.

Background

The GA Caseload in Contra Costa County

Since 1990, the stated goal of the General Assistance program in Contra Costa County has been "self-sufficiency" for the recipient. During these six years we have implemented a variety of programs and policies designed to contain caseload growth, and to serve the General Assistance population effectively, according to statute, within the restrictions of the available funds, and keeping in mind this client goal. Our caseload and expenditures have fluctuated dramatically, from an all-time high of 6200 cases in April 1992 to the current low of 2288 in December, 1996. In the twenty-three month period February, 1995 through November, 1996 alone, the caseload decreased almost 50%.

Some of the programs/policies adopted since 1994 included:

- Graduated sanctions for program noncompliance (two, four and six months)
- Job Search for Recipients
- Job Search for Applicants
- Referrals to shelters for homeless applicants and recipients
- Mandatory vendor payments for housing
- Fifteen day county residency
- Automated hearings which result in expedient decisions
- Pegasys, the General Assistance computer system, which provides correct implementation of sanction policies; tracks appointments, job search, workfare and GAADDs activities; schedules and monitors automated hearings, and provides a variety of caseload management activities.

The General Assistance caseload has reached a more manageable level; one where we can --- and should -- be discontinuing as many recipients because they have obtained employment as for program noncompliance. This is certainly not intended to denigrate or diminish in any way the importance of program requirements and the consequences of failure or refusal to comply. On the contrary, the best policies are those which contain incentives for compliance as well as provide motivation and assistance for self-support. This proposal speaks to the services which need to be offered in order to help those who demonstrate their willingness to comply to achieve self-sufficiency.

There are fewer obstacles to redesigning or "reforming" the GA program. For one thing, there are less outside influences. GA is totally funded by county dollars, and policies are set by the Board of Supervisors within the parameters of the state statute. The number of staff involved is smaller. The number of clients is smaller, and has been declining for the past year. Self-sufficiency for the GA recipient

primarily involves him/herself only; generally there are no minor children in the home who must be supported by the client's employment, no child care to worry about. GA is already partially automated. Additionally, the policy changes made over the past two years have streamlined some areas.

Contra Costa routinely has been at the forefront of California counties with regard to establishing innovative service programs for GA recipients, in spite of the fact that these services must be funded 100% by the county.

- In 1981, the workfare program was developed in corroboration with the General Services Agency to provide work experience to applicants and recipients. Subsequently, several vocational training programs were developed by the two agencies and offered to recipients.
- In 1983, Contra Costa County was the second county in the state to implement an SSI advocacy service for GA recipients who need assistance with the SSI application and appeal process.
- In 1989, the department and client advocates recognized the impact of substance abuse on the GA population and the goal of self-sufficiency. We were the first county in the state to implement substance abuse screening, and to offer a high-quality treatment program at no charge to recipients with substance abuse problems. (The GAADDs Program)
- In 1996, the department established the SSI Reapplication Unit (the SRU) , in collaboration with the Health Services Department, to assist as many of the 1400 effected county residents as possible to reestablish their eligibility to SSI based on qualifying disabilities other than addiction or alcoholism.

Welfare Reform

The concept of "welfare reform" is on everyone's mind. The President has signed "The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996." During the next twelve months, a great deal of effort will be spent on all levels developing plans for implementation of the provisions of that act. It is understood that the ultimate goal is integration of all aid programs. However, this should not deter us from looking at the GA program, and making it the best program it can be in the interim. Ultimately, this should make total integration easier.

Federal changes such as ineligibility to SSI for drug addicts and alcoholics; time-limited eligibility to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (replacing AFDC benefits); and ineligibility to federal programs for noncitizens, have already begun to impact local programs. The extent of the impact cannot be gauged accurately,

since it is still not known to what extent the state may pick up some of these categories of individuals. However, as the state begins to develop and implement its responses to the federal law, we can expect a great deal of "trickle-down" from those actions.

Legislative Changes, Current and Future

♦ The changes to the Welfare & Institutions Code section 17000, enacting the provisions of SB 681 (Hurt) became effective January 1, 1997. These changes include the Board of Supervisor's authority to: 1) restrict GA to certain employable persons to as few as three months out of twelve; 2) require "participation in treatment programs for persons screened and professionally evaluated to be in need of treatment", and screening for those applicants/recipients for whom there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that an individual is dependent upon illegal drugs or alcohol; 3) specific percentage reductions to the standards of aid for those recipients who reside with nonresponsible persons; and 4) reduction to the standard of aid in an amount up to \$40 per month in recognition of health care provided by the county.

Most other counties have begun adopting policies to implement all or some of these provisions.

♦ It is anticipated that numerous bills will be introduced by the new Legislature which will make additional significant modifications to the GA section of the W & I Code. Governor Wilson has already indicated his support for legislation which would simply eliminate the 17000 section of the W & I Code. It is likely that a variety of bills will be introduced in both houses of the legislature which will fall into three categories: 1) eliminate the mandate altogether; 2) provide for GA to become a state program, with counties providing maintenance of effort funding; or 3) include childless adults in the CalTAP continuum (a state/federal funded program).

♦ The potential impact on GA of Federal Welfare Reform, and subsequently, the State Welfare Reform packages, cannot be overestimated. Without legislative protection, individuals and families who are disqualified from Federal and State programs will likely become the responsibility of the county GA program.

Client-identified Needs

In 1995, Contra Costa dedicated time and money to participate in a demographics study of GA applicants/recipients conducted by the University of California in conjunction with the Bay Area Social Service Consortium (BASSC). A very important side benefit of this study was the information gathered from client

responses to needs assessment questions. **The most critical need from social service -- as stated by the applicants themselves -- is employment services.**

Service Delivery Redesign

Focus on Employment and Self-sufficiency

While self-sufficiency has been the goal for Contra Costa's GA recipients for several years, the primary emphases have been: 1) advocating for the receipt of SSI benefits for those persons who are permanently disabled; 2) self-directed employment services, such as job search, work experience (workfare), and some limited vocational training; and 3) substance abuse treatment services. Other than the substance abuse treatment program, help has not been available for those who are temporarily unable to work, and for those who have no disability but who may be unable to locate and maintain employment without assistance and support services.

The GA eligibility and employment services (Work Programs) functions currently do not share a common goal of helping clients to obtain and maintain economic self-sufficiency. Both -- but particularly the eligibility worker -- are involved in activities which seem intended to assist the client to maintain his/her eligibility for GA. To paraphrase the Department's IM/GAIN Bureau Redesign Plan:

The functions are not aligned, which results in mixed messages to recipients and hinders efforts to increase client employment. The role of the Eligibility Worker is to provide accurate and timely benefits to recipients, as opposed to ensuring that clients secure employment and achieve self-sufficiency. Aside from referrals, there has been little interaction between the functions. In order to ensure that as many recipients as possible obtain and maintain employment, the eligibility and employment services must be consolidated into a streamlined system aimed at meeting this goal.

Just as the state CalTAP proposal emphasizes that, under the new program which will replace AFDC, eligibility workers will function more like employment counselors rather than benefits workers, so will GA eligibility workers. All GA staff members will be focused on a single goal: ***self-sufficiency for each recipient.*** Substance abuse treatment and SSI advocacy services will continue to be provided. Employment services will be enhanced, and will include assistance for those who are temporarily unable to work, or who have no disability but who are unable to locate and maintain employment without assistance and support services.

Particular attention will be paid to job-keeping skills, as well as to job-getting skills.

It has been our experience that while most GA recipients can obtain employment, most lack the necessary skills to maintain that employment. Over time they ricochet on and off GA repeatedly.

Early assessment of the client's employability/classification

A viable client assessment, conducted early in the application/granting process using standardized assessment tools, is necessary to screen individuals for better classification, to identify barriers to self-sufficiency, and to identify the services needed to remove those barriers.

The Brief Symptom Inventory will continue to be administered to all applicants, under the terms of the Williams v CCC lawsuit settlement, in order to identify mentally disabled applicants who are unable to understand and/or comply with program requirements. This screening process, which includes an individual mental status examination by a mental health professional for those whose BSI scores indicate a need for further evaluation, also serves to identify applicants who may be disabled and appropriate for referral to SSI.

Identification of substance abuse will be an important part of the assessment process, since it is widely acknowledged that substance abuse adversely impacts an individual's ability to obtain and maintain employment. Where there is reasonable suspicion that an applicant is a possible substance abuser, s/he will be screened and assessed by a substance abuse counselor. Those who are found to be chemically dependent will be referred to participate in the GAADDs program as part of their service plan, regardless of their level of employability.

Medical verification of disabilities will continue to be required as part of the assessment process, in order to determine the appropriate level of service for the person who is not immediately job ready, as well.

GA applicants/recipients will be classified at one of three levels:

1. Level 1 -- Employable. Client has no verified disability which precludes employment; may or may not have job skills and work history; barriers to employment are minimal; client is job ready.
2. Level 2 -- Pre-Employable. Client has either a) a verified physical or mental disability which is temporary, i.e. is expected to last no more than twelve months; or b) is "vocationally unemployable/ socially incapacitated". Under previous policies, the "unemployable" recipient who was not considered to be permanently disabled, had few program requirements, and was considered to be incapable of self-sufficiency. Keeping in mind the

Americans with Disabilities Act, it is likely that many recipients who have been considered "unemployable" in the past will actually be classified as "pre-employable". We know now that the provisions of the ADA make the possibility of self-sufficiency a reality for these individuals.

3. Level 3 -- Permanently disabled. Verified physical or mental disability has lasted or is expected to last more than one year. Client must apply for SSI; intervention services will be provided.

The comprehensive assessment process will result in proper classification of each client, and development of his/her initial service plan. Each service plan will detail the desired outcomes and the specific steps necessary for achievement of those outcomes.

Service Delivery Tracks/Components

Following the assessment, the client will be routed to the appropriate service component immediately. (*See Flow Chart, attachment A.*)

1. Level 1 -- Employable. Client will be assigned to JobQuest, which will include:
 - ♦ job seeking skills workshop
 - ♦ job developer and placement counselor services
 - ♦ counseling and assistance with barrier removal for clients with barriers to immediate employment
 - ♦ workfare assignment
 - ♦ job search assignment; may be directed or self-directed, and may include use of telephone banks.
 - ♦ substance abuse treatment, if appropriate
 - ♦ other assignments, including activities necessary for barrier removal, as appropriate

The expectation of Level 1 clients is that all assignments -- workshops, workfare, job search, etc. -- will equal 40 hours per week for the total time (six months maximum) in which the client receives General Assistance.

Employment Services staff will provide JobQuest services, including counseling clients with regard to assuming responsibility for removal of barriers, and providing guidance and assistance as needed; conducting job seeking skills workshops (possibly using the Dean Curtis model or the model currently in place in the GAIN program); and acting as job developers and employment placement specialists.

Eligibility/Employment staff will be responsible for making and monitoring on-going workfare and self-directed job search assignments via Pegasys, and for seeing the employable client monthly to make these on-going assignments. Clerical staff will be responsible for receiving and logging into Pegasys completed workfare time sheets and job search report forms.

Failure to comply with any assignment without good cause will result in the discontinuance of General Assistance and sanction of two/four/six months

2. Level 2 -- Pre-Employable.

If the client has a verified temporary disability which prevents all employment, the disability will be monitored, and reverified at intervals identified by the doctor, but no less often than every three months. The reverification process will be initiated and controlled by Pegasys.

As soon as the client's disability ceases, s/he will be assessed and moved into level 1. At any point where verification indicates that the disability will last for at least 12 months, or at the point that it has lasted that long, the client will be reclassified as level 3, and will be referred to the Disability Services staff for further assistance.

If the client has a verifiable temporary disability which does not preclude all employment, or is assessed as "vocationally unemployable", services may include training, work experience (workfare) at either a regular or a "restricted/limited duty" assignment, directed or self-directed job search, placement in a sheltered workshop, or other services identified as appropriate during the assessment process.

Recipients with physical or mental disabilities must pursue available treatment to alleviate the condition when such treatment is available at no charge or the department provides a special need allowance to obtain the treatment.

Recipients must participate in appropriate rehabilitation programs, including, but not limited to, substance abuse treatment, when such treatment is available at no charge or the department provides a special need allowance to obtain the treatment.

Eligibility staff will be responsible for making and monitoring on-going workfare and job search assignments via Pegasys, for seeing the client monthly to make these on-going assignments, and for monitoring the client's participation in training or sheltered workshops. Clerical staff will be

responsible for receiving and logging into Pegasys completed workfare time sheets and Job Search report forms. These clients may be assigned to participate in motivational workshops, e.g. "Why should I go to work?"

Level 2 clients must be reevaluated at least every three months, and a new service plan developed. At that time, if goals are met, the client may be reclassified as level 1. If client is unable to meet the goals of his or her service plan, s/he will be assessed by the assessment specialist and evaluated for eligibility as level 3. If still inappropriate for levels 1 or 3, a new service plan will be developed for the next three months. The new plan will take into account why the previous outcomes were not met, and may include some of the same goals with new action steps.

Failure to comply with any assignment without good cause will result in the discontinuance of General Assistance and sanction of two/four/six months

3. Level 3 --Permanently Disabled: The Disability Service staff will assist these individuals with making application for SSI, and will manage the case through the first level of appeal (reconsideration). If the claim is denied at that point, the client will be referred to an attorney for assistance with the second level of appeal (hearing).

Failure to comply with any assignment without good cause will result in the discontinuance of General Assistance and sanction of two/four/six months

One-Stop Concept

The Department IM/GAIN Bureau Redesign plan calls for the establishment of "one-stop" REACH Centers, where multiple services will be coordinated and available to each client. This type of service integration eliminates the need for the client to see various service providers at multiple locations, and reduces the duplication of services.

Just as it is possible that GA will become part of the "assistance continuum" with CalTap on the state level, we propose that services to GA recipients ultimately become part of the REACH Center operation in Contra Costa. It will not be necessary to await state action before attaining this goal.

Supportive Services

1. Shelters will continue to provide lodging for those GA applicants and recipients who are without housing, thereby eliminating the need for the client to worry about immediate shelter. Self-sufficiency services, such as

substance abuse treatment, employment assistance, and SSI advocacy, will be provided by GA staff.

2. Substance Abuse Treatment (GAADDs) participation will continue to be required of clients who are identified by screening and confirmation as being chemically dependent. Treatment will continue to be provided by an independent contractor.
3. Other resources. To the extent possible, other resources will be utilized to meet service needs, particularly for levels 1 and 2 clients. The development of partnerships with other agencies and organizations will be critical to the success of this proposal.

For level 1 clients: In addition to services provided by in-house staff, employable clients will be connected to other such services as may be available. EDD can provide job referrals; unions can provide apprenticeships, particularly for women seeking nontraditional employment. The General Services Administration can reactivate the short-term training programs (Custodian, Painting, and Landscaping/Grounds Maintenance) that were developed for GA recipients. Development of these and other resources will be critical to the success of this program.

For level 2 clients: Community based organizations, such as Rubicon and Phoenix Programs, have training programs, sheltered workshops, etc. Clients will be assisted with referrals to rehabilitation or retraining services, as appropriate. GSA can expand the number and nature of "limited duty" or "modified" workfare slots to accommodate the limitations of this group of clients. Some of our existing workfare slots with other public or private non-profit agencies can be utilized for these clients as well.

For level 3 clients: The Hawkins Center for Law and Services to the Disabled, which has a contract to provide assistance to certain GA recipients who are applying for SSI benefits will be expanded to serve a greater number of individuals. Additionally, there are many private attorneys in the community who are willing to serve interim assistance clients.

4. Ancillary services, including allowances for certain items such as clothing, transportation, union dues, fees, licenses, and so forth, will be provided in accordance with the individual's service plan. All Level 1 recipients will receive a monthly bus pass to enable them to conduct job search and meet participation requirements.

General Assistance Standards of Assistance

Maximum Standards of Aid

The Board of Supervisors has adopted policies establishing the General Assistance standards of aid. In accordance with Resolution No. 92/671, the methodology for establishing those standards is as follows:

"Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000.5, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors hereby adopts general assistance standards of aid that are 62 percent of the 1991 federal official poverty guidelines, and which are adjusted in an amount equal to the adjustments provided under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11200) of part 3."

The adjustments referred to in that section are those made annually by the legislature for AFDC and SSP programs. Note that the issue of annual adjustments was litigated at the state level in the Beno and Welch lawsuits, and the state prevailed. The most recent adjustments result in a two-tier standard: one for those who are employable, and one for those who are unemployable. Effective January 1, 1997, we have implemented both the Beno changes and the 4.9% across the board reductions in AFDC.

Since Board policy requires that the standards of aid be set according to this methodology, we are obliged to keep our grant level in line with that policy.

Effective April 1, 1997, the Department will implement the following standards of aid:

Employable recipient, living alone or with nonrelated persons
Standard of assistance \$279¹ vs \$300

Unemployable recipient, living alone or with nonrelated persons
Standard of assistance \$311² vs \$300

Corresponding adjustments will be made to the standards of aid for couples,

¹ Determined by applying a 2.3% reduction permitted by earlier legislative action, which was upheld by the court in the Beno & Welch lawsuits, and applying an additional 4.9% reduction required by 1996 legislative action effective January 1, 1997.

² Determined by restoring the grant to the 1992 level, in accordance with the Beno & Welch lawsuits (an increase of 9%), and applying a 4.9 reduction required by 1996 legislative action effective January 1, 1997.

as well as for the 37% of the caseload who share housing with certain related persons.

Time-Limited Eligibility

The Welfare and Institutions Code as changed by SB 681 (Hurt) provides that effective January 1, 1997:

The Board of Supervisors may adopt policies which prohibit an employable recipient from receiving aid for more than three months in any twelve month period, if the individual has been offered the opportunity to attend job skills or job training sessions.

In accordance with this section, the department recommends that the Board adopt policies limiting eligibility to General Assistance to **"three months in any twelve month period"** for able-bodied recipients who are assessed as employable.

Currently, 46% of the caseload is identified as employable. This includes all recipients who do not have a verifiable physical or mental disability. The percentages of "job ready" vs "pre-employable" are unknown at this time. The time limits would apply to those recipients who are job ready.

Shared Housing

The Welfare and Institutions Code as changed by SB 681 (Hurt) provides that effective January 1, 1997:

The Board of Supervisors may adopt policies which reduce the standard of aid for recipients who live in shared housing with other non-legally responsible persons. Standards of aid may be reduced by 15%, 20%, and 25% depending upon the number of others with whom the recipient resides.

Sixty-six percent of the current caseload live with other people. (37% live with non-responsible relatives; 29% live with non-related persons.) Current regulations (Taylor v CCC) provide grant reductions for those who live with relatives. The proposed change would more equitably distribute reductions across the caseload, and grant reductions would not be as severe as under the Taylor decision.

In 1995, the Board of Supervisors indicated its support for restoration of the broader percentage reductions if the W&I Code was changed to permit it.

In-Kind Recognition of the Value of Health Care

The Welfare and Institutions Code as changed by SB 681 (Hurtt) provides that effective January 1, 1997:

The Board of Supervisors may adopt policies which reduce the standard of aid by no more than \$40 per month in recognition of the value of health care provided by the county to GA recipients.

While this approach would more equitably distribute benefit reductions across the caseload, the department does not recommend that it be adopted at this time, since it does not contribute to our employment promotion goals. However, should budgetary needs arise, this is a legal mean of reducing GA costs.

Staffing

Service Delivery Sites

Currently, General Assistance eligibility staff is located in three district offices: Antioch, Martinez, and the "Weber Building" in Richmond. Work Programs staff is located in Antioch (serving east and central county) and 1305 Macdonald Ave, Richmond.

Under this proposal, it is expected that the Eligibility and Employment Technician staff and the Assessment Specialists will be located in three district offices; the Employment Services Specialists will be co-located with GAIN staff in four district offices (adding Hercules). The Disability Case Specialist staff will be centrally located, serving clients throughout the county.

Memoranda of Understanding will be developed with other organizations to provide space for other activities. For example, meeting room space is at a premium in the district offices. Space belonging to organizations such as St Vincent de Paul and other agencies/organizations will be utilized to provide workshops, telephone banks, and other group meetings as necessary.

Staff Functions/Duties

Following are descriptions of functions and duties to be performed by each staff classification. Note that the titles are working titles only, used to emphasize the focus on employment and self-sufficiency, and do not involve personnel reclassification at this time.

- ♦ *Eligibility Workers* will be referred to as "*Eligibility and Employment*

Technicians". This does not involve personnel reclassification.

The *EET* will perform screening, orientation, intake and continuing functions. Each will conduct at least 24 intake interviews per month, and carry 100 or more continuing cases (45 employable, 31 disabled, and 24 pre-employable).

Duties will include screening applicants; conducting Orientation groups; determination of eligibility and grant amount at application and continuing; grant maintenance activities; monitoring training participation for employable recipients attending authorized training programs; counseling and barrier removal activities for pre-employable recipients; conducting monthly assignment appointments with pre-employable recipients, including issuing workfare and job search assignments.

♦ *Social Service Program Assistants* in Employment Services will be referred to as "*Employment Services Specialists*". This does not involve personnel reclassification.

The *ESS* will perform continuing employment services functions for level 1 clients. Each will serve an as yet undetermined number of Level 1 employable recipients involved in JobQuest per month.

Duties will include conducting JobQuest Orientation groups; assisting with JobQuest skills workshops; supervising directed job search activities; counseling recipients in the areas of job attainment and maintenance; providing post-employment services to recipients.

♦ *Social Service Program Assistants* working with Permanently Disabled clients will be referred to as "*Disability Case Specialists*". This does not involve personnel reclassification. There will be no social workers involved in the advocacy function.

The *DCS* will receive referrals from the Assessment Specialist when an applicant has been referred to apply for SSI. S/he may also receive referrals from the Eligibility and Employment Technician when a recipient who formerly had no SSI application requirement has been determined to be potentially eligible for SSI after granting. The DCS will provide assistance with the SSI application and reconsideration steps. Each DCS will serve an as yet undetermined number of disabled recipients per month.

Duties will include providing assistance with SSA forms completion; collection of documentation and verification; completion of the Interviewer's Observations report; assistance with scheduling and keeping appointments, including providing transportation; assistance with the reconsideration process, including filing timely, forms completion and submission, gathering additional documentation. and

appearing at reconsideration hearings, if held.

Upon denial of a claim at reconsideration, the DCM will prepare the file for referral to an attorney, specifically to the Hawkins Center, unless the client has selected his or her own attorney.

♦ *Social Workers* performing the Assessment function will be referred to as *Assessment Specialists*. This does not involve personnel reclassification, but it is expected that this function will require individuals who have experience in the field of comprehensive assessment, testing, service plan development, and so forth.

The AS will conduct approximately 30 assessment interviews weekly. This will include intake assessments, as well as reassessments as needed for preemployable recipients.

The duties of the AS include: 1) Interviewing applicants, using an established format, to determine: gross employability; reasonable suspicion of substance abuse; short-term and long-term barriers to immediate employment; initiate documentation of employability (applicant job search) or unemployability (medical verification); develop initial service plan, including establishing eligibility time-limits for job-ready applicants; referring job-ready individuals to JobQuest; referring disabled applicants to apply for SSI, and to the DCM for assistance. 2) Interviewing recipients who were granted aid as pre-employable, and who now require reassessment, using the same established format.

♦ *Senior Clerks* will be referred to as "*Eligibility and Employment Clerks*." This does not involve personnel reclassification. This group of clerks is currently referred to as the "ABS Clerks" because they perform the AFIRM, BSI and SASSI duties.

The EEC will assist with the orientation group meetings, administer the BSI, fingerprint all applicants, and administer the SASSI as required by the AS.

Duties will include assisting with the orientation group meetings, including the administration of the BSI, and other duties as requested by the EET; scoring the BSI and scheduling appointments for mental status examinations, using Pegasys; recording each applicant's fingerprints in the AFIRM system; and administering and scoring the SASSI to individuals, as requested by the AS.

♦ Supervision of EETs and 3 EECs will be provided by 4 Eligibility Work Supervisors. Supervision of 8 ESSs, 8 DCSs and 3 Assessment Specialists will be provided by 2 Social Work Supervisors.

3. Training

Staff Development will ensure that staff is trained prior to implementation. Most of the training will be provided by department staff development workers, and some of the training will be done by outside sources at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.

We note that the state CalTAP proposal recognizes the need for staff training "*to change from an eligibility determination function to case management.*" While the state will, in fact, fund such training in the future, we will need to proceed immediately for GA staff, and will have to fund this initial effort. We will be able to take advantage of state funded training in the future. In the meantime, however, it is critical that staff be prepared for these changes in role and function, in order to make such a drastic operational change work.

Suggested training modules include:

GA Program Changes

Case management (short-term, "task centered"; not long-term)

Managing change

Interviewing skills (workers will no longer just be on a "fact-finding mission" to obtain eligibility data, but will need to gather other types of information and develop service plans)

Conflict Resolution

Employment Services (How to help clients find and keep employment: where to look for jobs; completing the job application and resumes; the job interview; job developing; job placement; post-employment counseling, etc.)

Automation

The General Assistance automation system, **Pegasys**, has played an important role in the management of the GA caseload. Pegasys was designed to be implemented in a modular fashion, so that we can add enhancements as needed, and build on the original base system. Pegasys is a real-time, on-line system which interfaces with the Case Data System for the production of checks and the maintenance of the client index.

The first modules of Pegasys, implemented in September, 1994, have enabled us to do the following:

- ◆ apply policies accurately and with consistency
- ◆ take automatic actions for noncompliance
- ◆ track a very complicated court-ordered sanction policy
- ◆ assign and track GAADDs appointments and assignments
- ◆ schedule and track workfare and job search assignments

- ◆ schedule and track hearings automatically for all cases being discontinued and sanctioned for program noncompliance

With the enhancements currently being developed:

- ◆ each client's status and service plan will be monitored to ensure compliance and appropriate action;
- ◆ time-limits for employables will be tracked and action automatically taken to discontinue aid timely.
- ◆ GAADDs assignments will continue to be made and monitored through the system.
- ◆ Employment Services assignments will be made and monitored through the system.
- ◆ workload management tools, such as initiating and monitoring various types of required verification, will be provided.
- ◆ various management reports will be produced to provide demographic information which is unavailable through CDS, and enable the department to track the effectiveness of policy changes.