

Policy Flash

The latest news, views & information on policy issues for Virginia's DD Council members
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In Virginia. . .

The First Annual Report of the Community Integration Oversight Committee...

regarding Virginia's Olmstead Plan was issued on October 19, 2004. The purpose of the report is to present recommendations pursuant to Executive Order 61 (2004) that charged the committee with: overseeing implementation of the Olmstead v. L.C. decision in Virginia; advising the Community Integration Implementation Team (the Team); receiving annual reports from the Team; and preparing a report concerning the committee's activities no later than October 21, 2004. The report outlines the activities of the Team over the past year and contains and builds upon the *Vision and Goals Statement* from the original Virginia Olmstead Task Force Report issued in 2003. Three overarching recommendations are presented to the Governor in this report with full details following in the report text, including: 1) The Commonwealth of Virginia must provide qualified Virginians with Disabilities an opportunity to live in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs if they choose to do so; 2) The Commonwealth of Virginia must provide adequate oversight and monitoring to assure that qualified Virginians with disabilities are able to live in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs, when they choose to do so; and 3) The Commonwealth of Virginia must value, encourage, and provide opportunities for interagency and stakeholder collaboration and learning at all times.

Source: <http://olmsteadva.com/ImplementationTeamReport.htm>

Governor's Housing Conference—"Opening Doors: Building a Better Future"...

Will be held Nov. 15-17, 2004, in Norfolk, VA. At the conference housing advocates, providers and practitioners, funders, lenders, state and local leaders, and others will come together to learn innovative and practical ways to "open the door" to safe and affordable housing for more Virginians. The conference is the state's largest and most comprehensive event dedicated to developing new strategies, programs and initiatives to meet the housing needs of Virginia's citizens. This year's conference will feature workshops, sessions and speakers who will provide insight, guidance and knowledge to help representatives from the private and public sectors come together to develop housing solutions that work. More than 800 dedicated professionals from Virginia are expected to take advantage of the incredible educational, networking and professional development opportunities. Register today at www.dhcd.virginia.gov.

Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services...

has received approval from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to move forward with combining the CDPAS Waiver and the Elderly and Disabled Waiver. The Department is in the process of establishing information and training about the new Waiver for people with disabilities, their families, and providers.

(Source: Handinet listserve)

Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services....

has increased the Personal Assistant Services PAS caregiver pay rates from \$9.25/hr in Northern Virginia to \$10.05/hr, and the rest of the state's PAS caregiver pay rates from \$7.00/hr to \$7.80/hr. The new rates became effective in September.

Source—DAC News, V. 5. No. 19, September 28, 2004

In the Nation. . .



The U.S. Access Board....

has organized an advisory committee to promote access to courthouses, explore new and innovative design solutions, and develop guidance on best practices. The 31 members of the Committee include designers and architects, disability groups, members of the judiciary, the codes community and standard-setting entities, and government agencies. The Committee's first meeting will be held on November 4th and 5th in Washington, D.C. More information on these initiatives can be found at the U.S. Access Board's website.



The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities'...

Public Policy Committee voted in May 2004 to oppose the House and Senate versions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Reauthorization bills that were on the table at that time. Recent indications are that IDEA is moving in the U.S. Senate, much to the surprise of many disability and education advocates. On September 22, the Senate appointed IDEA conferees. NACDD is monitoring the situation along with the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Education Task Force, of which NACDD is a member. Senate Minority Whip Harry Reid (D-Nev) said, "I'm confident that this will be a very, very successful conference. The law (P.L. 105-17), first enacted three decades ago and last rewritten seven years ago, is as much a civil rights law as an education package. It guarantees that special needs children are able to obtain a free public education in the "least restrictive environment." There are 6.6 million students with disabilities in U.S. public schools. The IDEA measure is the vehicle for billions of dollars in federal assistance to states and school districts, with \$10.1 billion allocated in FY 2004 for special education nationally. Source – Legislative Advocacy Weekly, V.1, Issue 10, September 23, 2004



The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)...

released a fact sheet on the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to persons with intellectual disabilities in the workplace. The new publication is available at www.eeoc.gov. The term "intellectual disability" describes the condition once commonly referred to as "mental retardation." Approximately one percent of the United States' population, an estimated 2.5 million people, have an intellectual disability. Estimates indicate that only 31 percent of individuals with intellectual disabilities are employed, although many more want to work.

"More often than not, individuals with intellectual disabilities face barriers in the workplace posed not by mental impairments but by other people's attitudes. With this fact sheet, the EEOC aims to break down myths, fears and misperceptions that stand in the way of employment opportunities and sometimes even lead to harassment on the job. People with intellectual disabilities want to work and have a lot to contribute. Employers who are not tapping into this community are missing out." --Commission Chair Cari M. Dominecz

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