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DIVISION 5. COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES [5000 - 5987] (*Division 5 repealed and added by Stats. 1967, Ch. 1667.*)

PART 2. THE BRONZAN-MCCORQUODALE ACT [5600 - 5772] (*Heading of Part 2 amended by Stats. 1992, Ch. 1374, Sec. 14.*)

CHAPTER 2.5. Program Initiatives [5670 - 5698] (*Chapter 2.5 repealed and added by Stats. 1991, Ch. 89, Sec. 134.*)

ARTICLE 3. Community Vocational Rehabilitation System [5690 - 5693.5] (*Heading of Article 3 renamed from Chapter 2.7 (and placed in Chapter 2.5) by Stats. 1991, Ch. 89, Sec. 156.*)

5690. It is the intent of the Legislature to, encourage the establishment in each county of a system of community vocational rehabilitation and employment services, for persons with serious psychiatric disabilities. It is further the intent of the Legislature that there be a range of available services whenever possible in each county based on the principle that work is an essential element in the local mental health treatment and support system.

(Amended by Stats. 1991, Ch. 89, Sec. 157. Effective June 30, 1991.)

5691. (a) A county may implement the community vocational rehabilitation system described in this chapter with existing county allocations, funds available from the Department of Rehabilitation and other state and federal agencies.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that on an annual basis five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000), or 17 percent, whichever is less, of the total federal funds available to the State of California pursuant to Section 611 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, Public Law 100-77 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 290aa) shall be used to fund services pursuant to this chapter for persons who are homeless with a mental disability and those at risk of becoming homeless who have been identified pursuant to Chapter 2.6 (commencing with Section 5680).

Counties may not use these funds to provide services, including, but not limited to, vocational services, which could be funded by the Department of Rehabilitation.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 948, Sec. 30. (AB 2119) Effective January 1, 2025.)

5692. The State Department of Health Care Services shall, to the extent resources are available, have responsibility for the provision of technical assistance, maximizing federal revenue, and ensuring coordination with other state agencies including implementing and coordinating interagency agreements between the Department of Rehabilitation and the State Department of Health Care Services.

(Amended by Stats. 2012, Ch. 34, Sec. 138. (SB 1009) Effective June 27, 2012.)

5692.5. Programs that constitute the community vocational rehabilitation system are of the following types:

(a) Prevocational programs should be, but are not limited to, components of day treatment programs, socialization and activity centers, board-and-care facilities, and skilled nursing-special treatment programs. Prevocational programs may use individual and group counseling, educational groups, volunteer service programs, and other modalities to emphasize to individuals the value of work and their right to employment.

(b) Vocational programs providing linkage and coordination for the system and which provide the following:

(1) Information, outreach, and referral services which provide ongoing liaison with assessment prevocational programs.

(2) Intake and evaluation services which may use vocational testing and analysis of work history to identify vocational strengths, weaknesses, and needs. The assessment findings should be used by the client and the program to negotiate the goals and objectives of an individual vocational plan.

(3) Work experience programs which consist of time-limited work opportunities that enable participants to develop work skills and establish a work history. These programs may include, but not be limited to, agency-operated businesses, work placements in the community, or other activities that provide a realistic work environment.

(4) Individual and group counseling services which are separated from the work experience component; individual counseling to assist clients in resolving problems related to the work situation, to update and renegotiate the individual vocational plan, and to assist clients with nonwork-related problems that affect their participation in the program; group counseling to address Social Security Administration rules and regulations: the effects of medication on work performance, the relationship between work and mental health, attributes and attitudes necessary for successful employment, job-seeking skills, and other related topics.

(5) Job development, placement, and referral services which assist clients in the following areas: obtaining competitive employment; admission to job training or education programs; referral to the Department of Rehabilitation; agency operated competitive employment programs; governmental and private sector affirmative action hiring programs for the disabled; or other specialized employment programs. If employment, training, or education programs are not suitable for a client, the client should be actively referred back to a prevocational program or other mental health program that best meets his or her current needs.

(6) Support services which may include peer support groups and job clubs to assist clients in obtaining and maintaining employment; ongoing client counseling and placement followup; employer training, consultation, and placement followup services; and consultation services to prevocational programs.

(7) The preferred method to deliver the vocational rehabilitation services described in this section is supported employment.

(Added by renumbering Section 5693 by Stats. 1991, Ch. 89, Sec. 161. Effective June 30, 1991.)

5693. The following principles should guide development of community vocational rehabilitation systems:

(a) Work:

(1) Work should be meaningful, necessary, and have value to the individual performing it.

(2) For individuals participating in vocational programs every effort should be made to pay them the minimum wage. However, in all cases, wages paid shall be in compliance with all relevant state and federal labor laws.

(3) That work will result in the development of attributes that will enhance further employability.

(b) Staff:

(1) Staffing patterns at all levels should reflect the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, racial, disability, sexual, and other social characteristics of the community the program serves.

(2) All participating programs should take affirmative action to encourage the application and employment of consumers and former consumers of the mental health system at all program levels.

(3) Programs should be designed to use multidisciplinary professional consultation and staff to meet the specific needs of clients.

(4) When operating a business enterprise, programs should employ individuals with the business, management, supervisorial, trade, and occupational skills necessary for successful operation.

(5) Programs should, where appropriate, employ paraprofessionals.

(6) Programs should develop and implement staff training and development plans for personnel at all levels.

(c) Facilities:

(1) The individual elements of the system should, where possible, be in separate facilities.

(2) Facilities housing vocational and employment programs should be modeled on competitive businesses operating in the community.

(3) Facilities shall be in compliance with all relevant state and federal safety, health, and accessibility regulations.

(d) System:

(1) Counties developing a community vocational rehabilitation system should utilize existing program resources to develop prevocational programs and a referral base for vocational programs.

(2) Individual programs operate most effectively within the context of a complete system. Counties undertaking development of a community vocational rehabilitation system should commit themselves to the implementation of regionally integrated prevocational and vocational programs.

(3) Rural counties, where appropriate, should be encouraged to develop intercounty systems, or to integrate their programs with programs serving other target populations.

(4) The system should have the capacity to deliver services tailored to individual needs. If a program is found to be unsuitable for a client at a specific time, an explanation will be provided to the client and he or she shall be referred to a more suitable program and encouraged to reapply. The system should have policies designed to meet changing client needs and to work with individuals over time to develop their vocational potential.

(Added by renumbering Section 5694 by Stats. 1991, Ch. 89, Sec. 162. Effective June 30, 1991.)

5693.2. Counties undertaking development of a community vocational rehabilitation system are encouraged to establish an advisory group consisting of primary consumers, parents, representatives from the business community, and other individuals who may provide assistance in developing the system.

(Added by renumbering Section 5695 (as added by Stats. 1985, Ch. 1286) by Stats. 1992, Ch. 1374, Sec. 33. Effective October 28, 1992.)

5693.5. The director shall provide technical assistance to those counties developing a community vocational rehabilitation system. In the event that the department lacks sufficient resources to provide technical assistance, it may be provided by contract.

(Added by renumbering Section 5696 by Stats. 1991, Ch. 89, Sec. 163. Effective June 30, 1991.)