
INFORMATIONAL LETTER

TRANSMITTAL: 97 INF-16

TO: Commissioners of
 Social Services

DIVISION: Temporary
 Assistance

DATE: November 13, 1997

SUBJECT: Model Drug and/or Alcohol Assessment Form for Public
 Assistance

SUGGESTED

DISTRIBUTION: Income Maintenance Directors
 Food Stamp Directors
 Medical Assistance Directors
 CAP Coordinators
 Services Coordinators
 Employment Coordinators
 Director of Administrative Services Coordinators
 Staff Development Coordinators

CONTACT PERSON: Region I (518-473-0332); Region II (518-474-9344);
 Region III (518-474-9307); Region IV (518-474-9300);
 Region V (518-473-1469); Region VI (212-383-1658)

ATTACHMENTS: "Pre-Treatment Drug and/or Alcohol Assessment Form
 for Public Assistance Applicants and Recipients"
 (Attachment not available on-line.)

FILING REFERENCES

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
97 ADM-23		351.2(i)			

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to transmit a model "Pre-Treatment Drug and/or Alcohol Assessment Form" which districts may use to conduct the mandated Drug and/or Alcohol assessments of certain public assistance applicants and recipients.

The requirements for drug and/or alcohol abuse screening, assessment and treatment were recently transmitted to you as part of 97 ADM-23 "Public Assistance (Family Assistance/Safety Net Assistance) Changes Resulting from The Welfare Reform Act of 1997". Additionally, Regional Meetings were conducted to provide information for implementation of the new requirements of the Welfare Reform Act, including the requirements for the new drug and/or alcohol provisions.

Basically this information provides that all heads of households and adult household members applying for or in receipt of public assistance must be screened for potential drug and/or alcohol problems using the DSS-4571: "Alcohol/Substance Abuse Screening Instrument". When the screening instrument is completed with two or more "yes" responses, the district otherwise identifies potential drug and/or alcohol problems, or an individual was exempt from screening because they were actively participating in a treatment program, the local district must conduct a drug and alcohol assessment of the individual. The assessment must be conducted by a Drug and Alcohol Counselor credentialed by the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS). The credentialed counselors must be employed by the district or under contract by the district. The purpose of the assessment is to:

1. determine if there is a current drug and/or alcohol problem;
2. determine if the person has a drug and or alcohol problem which results in the person's inability to work; and
3. determine for those unable to work due to drug and/or alcohol problems, the recommended level of treatment.

Neither the Welfare Reform Act, Department regulations, nor 97 ADM-23 mandate that a specific form be used to conduct the assessment. However, in response to district recommendations that a model assessment form be developed to assist the credentialed counselors in completing the assessment, and in recognition of the benefits of a form that would facilitate uniform assessments statewide, we are providing the attached model "Pre-Treatment Assessment Form". This form was developed by OASAS, and we strongly recommend its use. Districts who opt to use the model form must reproduce it locally.

Patricia A. Stevens
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Temporary Assistance