

NOTICE ABOUT SIGNING THE REQUIRED CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF MEDICAL AND NON-MEDICAL RECORDS FROM ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS

The following requirement applies, as a condition of eligibility for government benefits, to persons who have been determined by a local department of social services to need alcohol or drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation or who are in the process of being evaluated for such need.

Requirement to Sign and the Consent Form

In order for you to get or continue to get Public Assistance or Medical Assistance benefits, the local department of social services needs to obtain information from the alcohol and drug treatment program. Since federal regulations forbid treatment programs from giving any information without your written permission, a consent form has been prepared for you.

This consent form, called the DSS-4525: Consent for Disclosure of Medical and Non-Medical Records from Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Programs, allows the treatment program to give the necessary information to the local department of social services. If you want to receive Public Assistance and Medical Assistance benefits, you must sign this form. If you decide not to sign this form, you:

- ❖ will not be able to receive Home Relief (HR) benefits;
- ❖ will not be able to receive Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) unless you are exempt from the ADC work requirements;
- ❖ may lose Medicaid (MA) benefits.

Notification to Applicants/Recipients of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Requirements For Public Assistance

All adult and head of household applicants and recipients must complete the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Screening Questionnaire. After completing the Questionnaire, you may be required to go to a certified substance abuse counselor for a formal assessment whether or not you have an alcohol or substance abuse problem. After completing the assessment, the counselor will decide what treatment you may require. If it is determined that a treatment program is required, you must sign a consent form for disclosure of treatment information and provide periodic proof of your treatment progress to your local department of social services.

If you fail to participate in the screening or assessment process, or fail to sign the consent form to release information from the treatment program, you will be ineligible for public assistance. The Safety Net Non-Cash Assistance Program will provide benefits to all otherwise eligible household members.

If you fail to participate or complete the required treatment or fail to document treatment compliance, or fail to attend the treatment program the social services district determines appropriate for you, you may be sanctioned from receiving public assistance. Additionally, if you leave a residential treatment program prior to completion, you may not get any accumulated personal need allowance (PNA).