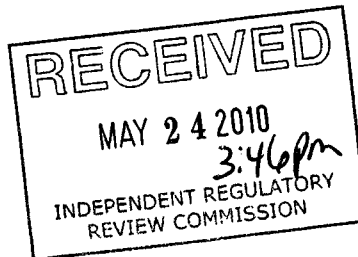


14-578-3

Jenna Mehnert, MSW
Executive Director

2833



Office of Income Maintenance
Bureau of Policy

MAY 18 2010

May 18, 2010

Edward J. Zogby, Director
Bureau of Policy
4th Floor, Health and Welfare Bldg.
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Dear Mr. Zogby:

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-PA) submits this letter in reference to the Department of Public Welfare's (DPW) proposed regulations titled, "Revisions to the Special Allowance for Supportive Services Requirements (# 14-518). Representing over 6,200 professional social workers across the Commonwealth, NASW-PA appreciates the opportunity to present our comments regulations governing Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF).

As a profession, social work is committed to self-determination and empowerment. All too often, our clients face barriers to life success related to economic disadvantage. Poverty is a way of life for many families, and the struggle to move out of poverty a daunting challenge. We recognize that the regulations drafted by DPW are needed to bring greater accountability to this important program while ensuring that these very important supports remain available for those who need them to be able to move from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance (GA), and SNAP into employment.

NASW-PA strongly supports public investments in a safety net and social services. We also support clear accountability and standards. We believe that investments of tax payers' resources should be made in ways that create positive and measurable outcomes. In a time of limited resources it is critical that government increase the accountability of publically funded programs and services. These proposed regulations bring increased integrity to areas where DPW has faced criticism for previously having had accountability deficiencies.

The proposed regulations will ensure that clients who need government assistance will be able to secure that assistance even in times when limited resources are available. While some may be concerned that limits on transportation and work-related expenses will

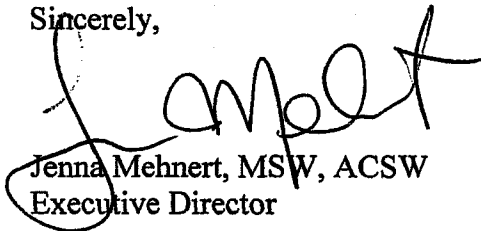
cause hardship in some participants, NASW-PA believes that concerns are outweighed by the opportunity to sustain the program for additional participants.

NASW recognizes that the changes do increase some program benefits for the participants, specifically the mileage rate for a private vehicle and the motor vehicle purchase amount. With the cost of gas significantly increased over the last few years, NASW-PA agrees these increases more accurately reflect the costs to the program participant.

NASW-PA is committed to advocating for all people, and views TANF as a critical social safety net that must continue to serve as many individuals as resources permit. To that end, NASW-PA supports DPW's "Revisions to the Special Allowance for Supportive Service Requirements" proposed regulations. We acknowledge these regulations seek to correct deficiencies in the current program and regulations while promoting appropriate accountability.

Thank you for the consideration given to our comments and the position of the National Association of Social Workers on these draft regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenna Mehnert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jenna Mehnert, MSW, ACSW
Executive Director