

Adams-Moore, Denise 3160

14-540 #415

From: Jill Long <jlong@visionforequality.org>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 2:16 PM
To: Mochon, Julie; PW, ODPComment
Cc: Audrey Coccia; Maureen Devaney
Subject: Southeast Rates
Attachments: Rates-Southeast PA.dotx

Dear Ms. Mochon,

Please see attached letter.

Thank you,

Jill Long
Administrator



Vision for Equality
Serving People with Disabilities and Their Families

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Vision for Equality

Serving People with Disabilities and Their Families

September 18, 2017

Ms. Julie Mochon
Human Service Program Specialist Supervisor
Office of Developmental Programs
Department of Human Services
Room 502, Health and Welfare Building
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120
RA-odpcomment@pa.gov

Regarding: Rates in the Southeast Region of Pennsylvania,
Advance Notice of Final Rulemaking Fee Schedule Rates

Dear Ms. Mochon,

We are writing in regards to rules that govern how services are paid in Pennsylvania. The issue that the Southeast Region is now being paid the same rates as other areas of the state when they previously received a higher rate due to providing services in a higher cost area of the state is very concerning to us. We also understand that the rates will remain the same for a three year period. That could be devastating for agencies and many staff.

Southeast Pennsylvania is an area of the state that typically has higher costs of living expenses, wage taxes, insurance costs and Philadelphia also has a higher minimum wage than other areas of the state. Agencies and staff have to deal with these imperatives. The state needs to recognize that.

Staff in agencies in Philadelphia are dedicated to the people they work with, however, they have families, rent or mortgages, day care and tuition costs that impact on their lives every day. This decision will force many of them to leave jobs they love because they cannot financially afford to remain at a low paying job. This will affect their lives and also the lives of the people they serve. This will also affect agencies and the quality of care they can give.

Turnover in staff due to poor wages will cause people in the programs unnecessary stress because staff will leave. People typically need a stable environment and assurance that their staff members aren't leaving their employment. Many of the staff have two or three jobs now just to be able to support their own families. They do a wonderful job and should be adequately compensated with assurances of decent salaries and raises so they can remain. They deserve that respect for the jobs they do.

Our Agencies are taking care of some of the most vulnerable population in Pennsylvania and these agencies should be compensated accordingly and in a manner that allows them to provide full, quality services to our love ones.



Vision for Equality

Serving People with Disabilities and Their Families

We are doing a grave disservice to the people we serve if we do not provide the necessary rates and funding it takes to do the job!

We request that the Office of Developmental Programs, Department of Human Services reconsiders its decision and looks at the costs of doing business in Southeast Pennsylvania so that the agencies can carry out their missions and staff in those agencies don't go elsewhere looking for employment.

We owe people with disabilities that!

We respectfully request your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Audrey Coccia

Maureen A. Devaney

Co-Executive Directors