

TO: Local District Commissioners, Medicaid Directors

FROM: Judith Arnold
Director, Division of Coverage and Enrollment

SUBJECT: Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPA&O) for SSA
Beneficiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Local District Liaison
Upstate: 518-474-8887 NYC: 212-417-4500

The purpose of this GIS message is to inform local Departments of Social Services of a name change for the Social Security Administration (SSA) Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPA&O) projects. As described in 03 OMM/ADM-4 dated June 9, 2003, the BPA&O projects provide SSA beneficiaries with disabilities, including working age youth, access to benefits planning and assistance services. A BPA&O Cooperative Agreement Awards List was attached to the ADM so that local district staff could provide referrals to the appropriate BPA&O in their area. On October 1, 2006, the SSA awarded a new round of cooperative agreements to seven community organizations in New York State and with the new awards came a new name. These projects are now called Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA). Each WIPA project has Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs), formerly known as Benefits Counselors.

The CWICs will:

- conduct outreach efforts to beneficiaries with disabilities and their families, who are potentially eligible to participate in Federal or State work incentives programs;
- work in cooperation with Federal, State, private agencies and nonprofit organizations that serve beneficiaries with disabilities;
- screen and refer beneficiaries with disabilities to appropriate Employment Networks based on the beneficiary's expressed needs and type of impairment(s);
- provide general information on the adequacy of health benefits coverage that may be offered by an employer of a beneficiary with a disability and the extent to which other health benefits coverage may be available to that beneficiary in coordination with Medicare and/or Medicaid; and
- provide information on the availability of protection and advocacy services for beneficiaries with disabilities and how to access such services.

Attached is a list of WIPAs and their locations. Local districts are encouraged to refer SSA beneficiaries to the WIPA assigned to their area if the individual may benefit from the services offered.

Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Cooperative Agreement Awards in New York State

<u>WIPA's</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Service Area</u>
Abilities, Inc.	201 I.U. Willets Road Albertson, NY 11507	(516) 465-1480/1405	Nassau & Suffolk Counties of Long Island NY
City University of NY (CUNY) Research Foundation	101 West 31 st Street, 14 th Fl New York, NY 10001	(646) 344-7315	Bronx County
Goodwill of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey, Inc.	4-21 27 th Avenue, Astoria, NY 11102	(718) 777-6338	Kings and Queens Counties
Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.	295 Main Street, Room 495 Buffalo, NY 14203	(716) 847-0655 x 262	Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates Counties
Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene. Subcontractor; Institute for Community Living, Inc (ICL)	8620 18 th Avenue, Rm 105 Brooklyn, NY 11214 40 Rector Street, 11 th Fl New York, NY 10006	(718) 256-5631 (212) 385-3030 x3139	New York and Richmond Counties (Staten Island)
Resource Center for Independent Living	401-409 Columbia Street, PO Box 210 Utica, New York 13503	(315) 797-4642	Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Montgomery, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Sullivan, Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, and Washington Counties
Transitional WIPA	Imagine Enterprises	Toll free 1-866-426-1132 9am to 7pm Eastern Time	Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Ulster and Westchester Counties

For more information, individuals can;
Call their local SSA office or call the Statewide Technical Assistance Line
toll free at 1-888-224-3272 TDD (716)847-1322.
They can also visit the SSA website at
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ServiceProviders/WIPADirectory.html>
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/WIPA.doc>