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**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
*Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  
**Department of Transitional Assistance**  
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Secretary

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Commissioner

**October 26, 2006**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff

**From:**  Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

**Re:** New Initiative: TAFDC – ESP Human Services Vocational Education and Training Program (HS-VET)

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**Overview**

The Department and the Community College System (Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office) have partnered with Tewksbury State Hospital and Western Mass State Hospital in Westfield as well as with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) Health Cluster-Human Resource Division to develop a new ESP training program.

The training program is called the Human Services Vocational Education and Training Program (HS-VET). The program will give TAFDC recipients the opportunity to train and apply as qualified candidates for employment opportunities in the Health Care and Mental Health fields as Mental Health Worker I or Nursing Assistant I. These positions are entry level opportunities situated in state-run facilities and will offer full-time jobs with career ladder possibilities; good salaries with benefits and union participation. In FY'07 there will be two training sites. One in Westfield at Western Mass State Hospital operated by Holyoke Community College and one in Tewksbury operated by Middlesex Community College at Tewksbury State Hospital.

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**Purpose of Memo**

This New Initiatives Memo informs TAO Staff about this new program: where it is being offered, the minimum entrance requirements and a description of what certification the recipient will have at the end of the program.

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**ESP Human  
Services  
Vocational  
Education and  
Training  
Program (HS-  
VET)**

The program overviews are as follows:

**Tewksbury State Hospital/Middlesex Community College**

Mental Health Worker I or Nursing Assistant I classes including two orientation sessions which will include a tour of the hospital; clinical training and internship where students will apply their skills learned through classroom and laboratory training in a clinical setting one day per week; job “shadowing” at the hospital; life skills; (problem solving, communication, organization, budget management & business etiquette); ABE where needed; computer skills; and job search and job readiness activities (resume, cover letters, interviewing techniques, networking), (10 slots per program). Referrals will be accepted beginning 11/1/2006. Training starts on or before 11/13/2006.

Entrance Requirements:

The TAFDC recipient must have received a HS Diploma or GED, must be able to pass a CORI check (conducted by the school), and must pass a physical, including an immunization and TB test.

Course Offered:

1 cycle each, up to 7 months, 35 hours per week.

Certification:

Certificate of Completion as a Mental Health Worker (includes 3 college credits for Mental Health Worker) or as a Nursing Assistant I.

**Western Mass State Hospital, Westfield/Holyoke Community College**

Nursing Assistant I/CNA training only which will include two orientation sessions including a tour of the hospital, classroom, laboratory, and clinical/ internship where students apply skills learned through classroom and laboratory training in a clinical setting 1 day per week; job “shadowing” at the hospital; ABE (reading, math, writing, locating information); life skills; job search and job readiness activities; and introduction to Computers for Health Care. (20 slots per program). Referrals will be accepted beginning 11/1/2006. Training starts on or before 11/13/2006.

Entrance Requirements:

The TAFDC recipient must have received a HS Diploma or GED, must be able to pass a CORI/SORI (Sexual Offender) check (conducted by the school), and must pass a physical, including an immunization and TB test.

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<b>ESP Human Services Vocational Education and Training Program (HS-VET) (continued)</b>	<p><u>Course Offered:</u> 1 cycle, up to 7 months, 30 hours per week.</p> <p><u>Certification:</u> Certificate of Completion, Career Readiness Certificate (based on exit scores), CNA Certification (upon passing the state exam).</p>
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<b>Final Instructions</b>	<p>Training curriculums were developed by the collaboration of the Community Colleges and individual Hospitals based on job openings. Training will take place in approved space in the hospitals. Jobs at both locations are entry level and will require some weekend and late shift work.</p>
<i>Transportation</i>	<p>Round-trip transportation to Tewksbury State Hospital will be provided by a Van operated by Middlesex Community College. Students can board the Van in front of Middlesex Community College at 33 Kearney Square, Lowell. Students can also take public transportation directly to the hospital.</p> <p>Transportation to Western Mass State Hospital in Westfield can be accessed through the Springfield Bus Terminal where buses will take students directly to the hospital. Holyoke Community College will make arrangements with the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) to take students directly to the hospital. The Springfield Bus Terminal can be accessed through public transportation throughout the Springfield area. All public transportation buses go through the terminal.</p>
<i>Child Care</i>	<p>Child Care is available (depending on age of the child and slot availability) at the Tewksbury State Hospital Campus at “Patti-Kakes Day Care” which is certified by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).</p> <p>Representatives from the Springfield Department of Early Education and Care confirm availability of EEC certified care in the Westfield, Holyoke and Springfield areas (depending on age of the child and slot availability).</p> <p>Referrals to these activities should be made by selecting the component of “Skills Training” and the resources of either: “Mental Health/Nurse’s Assistant Middlesex Community College” or “CNA/Nurse’s Assistant Holyoke Community College.” Referrals can then be made following current procedures.</p>
<b>Questions</b>	<p>If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.</p>

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