

FYI

TAFDC 60-Day Job Search Reminder

TAFDC applicants and recipients who must meet the work program requirement receive only one 60-day job search period in a continuous 60-month period. Once this "one time only" 60-day job search period begins, it does not end. Even if the individual requests an exemption or finds a job, the 60-day job search period continues. The individual is not entitled to another 60-day job search period until he or she receives another 60-month period of eligibility.

FYI

DMA MBR Forms

Please recycle all DMA MBR forms dated prior to April 3, 2003. The DMA MBR forms dated April 3, 2003 or later contain important information about HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). All earlier versions are not compliant with HIPAA requirements and should be recycled.

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved."

Helen Keller

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tasks include reviewing and making recommendations to better manage and coordinate the activities of the current shelter system, recommending longer-term actions to end homelessness as it is currently known and devising ways for families and individuals to increase access to decent, safe and affordable housing. These are ambitious goals but they are achievable. As a member of the Commission, I am pleased to see individuals of such varied backgrounds sitting at the same table, committed to the same issue. The Commission is recognition that there is not one simple solution, not one cause, not one quick-fix. The Commission is also recognition that homelessness is not just a DTA problem. It is a problem shared with a number of sister agencies, just as we frequently share clients with sister agencies. I am optimistic that the work of the Commission will provide a framework for the Commonwealth to follow in resolving this critical issue.

In addition to the Commission, DTA staff was selected to participate, along with staff from ten other states, in a "Policy Academy" titled *Improving Access to Mainstream Services for People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness*. The academy was sponsored by the federal Departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development and the Veterans' Administration. The academy focused on issues related to homeless individuals and the ways delivery systems may be modified to better serve them. In addition to being a valuable source of information, I was very pleased that DTA was invited to participate. I see this invitation as recognition that, despite many problems, we are still a leader in providing services to the homeless.

Homelessness is not easily solved and it is not just going to go away. But the work of the Commission and groups like the Policy Academy are cause for optimism. They are recognition that this is a shared issue and that it can not be solved in a vacuum. I believe that this work will go a long way towards improving the approach to homelessness that we take in the Commonwealth. If you wish more information on the Commission you may visit their website at mass.gov/homelesscommission.

Sincerely,



John Wagner
Commissioner