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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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Transmittal No: 91 LCM-139

Date: August 8, 1991

Division: Family and Children
Services

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Preventive Housing Grants

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment A - Initial and Continued Client Eligibility
Attachment B - Implementation Procedures
Attachment C - Model - Letter of Intent
Attachment D - District Allocations (all are on-line)

The purpose of this LCM is to inform you about a new statewide demonstration project involving the provision of housing grants for the purpose of preventing foster care and to invite you to submit letters of intent if you wish to participate in this demonstration project. Chapter 165 of the Laws of 1991 establishes this Department demonstration project, the purpose of which is to assess the effectiveness of housing grants in obviating the need for foster care. The legislature appropriated up to \$5 million of the Department's foster care budget for this demonstration project for the current State fiscal year (1991-92). Any social services district submitting a letter of intent will be included in the demonstration, pursuant to Chapter 165.

Chapter 165 amends section 409-a of the Social Services Law, Preventive Services; provision by a social services official. It requires the Department to establish the demonstration project, effective August 1, 1991, for the purpose of "providing special cash grants in the form of rent subsidies, payments for rent arrears, or any other assistance sufficient to obtain adequate housing." The grants may be provided to up to 1,000 families statewide, in an amount of up to \$300 per month per family. Chapter 165 is silent as to the duration of the subsidy for each individual family and as to the duration of the demonstration project. Continuation of the demonstration beyond the current state fiscal year is contingent on a budget appropriation.

Chapter 165 sets forth requirements as to the information which you must submit if you wish to participate in the demonstration project. A letter of intent is required. The due date for submission of letters of intent to the

Date August 8, 1991

Trans. No. 91 LCM-139

Page No. 2

Department is August 23, 1991. The effective date of the demonstration project is August 1, 1991. You may begin to authorize and provide the housing grants immediately, within the allocation in Attachment D, provided that you submit the required letter and information by the due date. A model letter of intent is attached (Attachment C).

Along with the letter of intent, you must submit a description of the procedures you will use in implementing the demonstration project (we will require an assurance that you will comply with the implementation procedures set forth in Attachment B), an estimate of the number of families to be served during the remainder of the current state fiscal year (i.e from start up through March 31, 1992), and an assurance that you will comply with the eligibility standards developed by the Department (Attachment A).

Chapter 165 calls upon the Department to establish client eligibility standards, including the following: "...a family with more than one child and a family receiving or eligible to receive emergency housing will have preference...; the family is otherwise eligible for mandated preventive services to prevent the placement or re-placement of a child into foster care, the family has at least one service need other than the lack of housing; and it is reasonable to believe that the provision of services, including housing services, would enable a child to remain with his or her family." A full description of eligibility standards is attached (Attachment A).

Reimbursement for the costs you incur in providing the housing grants pursuant to the demonstration project will be subject to 75% state reimbursement as are all mandated preventive services expenditures. However, the housing grants will be reimbursed only to the extent that state funding is available and only up to the maximum 1000 families statewide. Therefore, we have developed preliminary allocations of the each district's share of the 1000 families to be served (Attachment D). If you do not submit a letter of intent, your allocation will be distributed among the participating districts. Systems/claiming procedures are in Attachment B.

The Department will be monitoring this demonstration project for evaluation purposes, pursuant to Chapter 165. The evaluation will assess the impact of the housing grants in obviating the need for foster care and the fiscal impact in terms of reduced foster care costs.

Questions should be directed as follows:

Program standards/ procedures: Nancy Martinez, 1-800 342-3715, ext. 4-9581.

Systems procedures: Jerry Seeley, 1-800 342-3715, ext. 432-2932.

Claiming procedures: Roland Levie, 1-800 342-3715, ext. 4-7549 or Marvin Gold at 212 804-1108.

Joseph Semidei
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Family and
Children Services

Attachment A

Initial and Continued Client Eligibility

1. The family must be eligible for mandated preventive services to prevent placement or re-placement in foster care:
 - o family must satisfy the eligibility standards for mandated preventive services set forth in Department Regulation 18NYCRR 423.3, 430.9(c) or 430.9(d);
 - o child(ren) must be residing with parent(s), i.e. goal must be to prevent placement or return to placement in foster care (Chapter 165 requires you to give preference to families having more than one child).
2. The family must have at least one service need other than the lack of housing:
 - o family must have an identified service need for one of the preventive services defined in Department regulation 18NYCRR 423.2(b)(4)-(14): day care, homemaker, housekeeper/chore, family planning, home management, parent training, parent aide, transportation, clinical services, day services and emergency cash or goods.
3. It must be reasonable to believe that the provision of housing grants in combination with other preventive service(s) will avoid the need for foster care:
 - o the Uniform Case Record must include documentation of the specific eligibility standard under which preventive services are mandated, the service(s) needed in addition to the housing grant and the service plan to provide such service(s) toward the goal of preventing placement/re-placement;
 - o each subsequent UCR completed while a housing grant is being provided must document compliance with the standards for recertification for mandated preventive services in 18NYCRR 423.4.
4. The family's housing situation must meet one or more of the following criteria, as documented in the UCR, and the UCR must document the purpose of the housing grant:
 - o the family is homeless or is residing in an emergency shelter, hotel/motel or other temporary housing (Chapter 165 gives priority to families eligible for emergency housing),
 - o the family is residing in its own home, in a room and board situation, or in the home of friends or relatives that exceeds the capacity of such a residence as specified in local laws, ordinances, rules or regulations or the family is threatened with eviction or there is an unreasonable and unsafe degree of overcrowding as determined by the case manager,

- o the family has a home but rent or mortgage arrears place the family at imminent risk of losing the home,
 - o the family is residing in a home which is the subject of a vacate order, and/or
 - o the condition of the home poses a health and safety risk which places the children at imminent risk of harm.
6. The child on whose behalf the housing grant is being provided must continue to live with the parent(s); the grant must be terminated upon the placement into foster care of the child(ren) on whose behalf the housing grant is being provided, unless the anticipated date of discharge from foster care is within 90 days or less of the placement date:
- o the Uniform Case Record (UCR) must indicate the date of placement/re-placement, the anticipated date of discharge, the reason discharge is anticipated to occur within 90 days or less and the actual date of discharge;
 - o if the child(ren) is not discharged within 90 days, the housing grant must be terminated on the 91st day of placement.
7. The family must continue to reside in the housing unit for which the grant is being provided; the grant must be terminated if the family moves out of the housing unit unless the district determines that the grant must continue due to new housing needs and that the grant, along with the other preventive service(s) will avoid the need for placement or re-placement.

Attachment B

Implementation Procedures

1. Priority status must be given to eligible families having more than one child and to families eligible for or receiving emergency housing.
2. Housing grants may be provided for the following purposes:
 - o rent subsidies;
 - o rent or mortgage arrears;
 - o security deposits;
 - o finder's or broker's fees;
 - o household moving expenses;
 - o essential repairs of conditions in rental or client owned property which create a substantial health or safety risk.
3. Housing grants may be provided directly by the social services district or by a local public agency or private not-for-profit agency or organization through a purchase of service agreement and must be paid to the landlord, mortgage holder, exterminator or contractor for repairs.
4. Where a rent subsidy is being provided, the provisions of Department regulation 18NYCRR 423.2(b)(16)(iv) will apply.
5. Where payment of rent or mortgage arrears is being provided, the provision of Department regulation 18NYCRR 423.4(b)(2)(ii) will apply; this allows for a lump sum payment of up to \$1800, however no family may receive more than a total of \$2400 (the total available at \$300 per month for the remainder of the state fiscal year).
6. Where payment for any of the remaining items listed in item 2. above is being made, the district may provide a lump sum payment of up to \$1800, however no family may receive more than a total of \$2400 (the total available at \$300 per month for the remainder of the state fiscal year).
7. The provisions of Department regulation 18NYCRR 423.4(1)(1) and (2) will apply to all housing grants provided pursuant to this demonstration; these requirements relate to exploring the availability of public assistance to pay for the needed housing assistance and to notifying the district's public assistance, food stamp and medical assistance unit of a family's receipt of the housing grant.
8. Systems procedures: Open a WMS services case and authorize direct service type 25 (mandated preventive). The POS must be 27V (the V suffix is to be used only for this demonstration project and only with POS 27). The POS line is to be written in the routine manner.

The vendor should be entered into the BICS Vendor File with a Commodity Code of 06 (shelter).

9. Claiming procedures: Expenditures made for housing grants provided pursuant to this demonstration project are to be claimed on the Schedule G, Services for Recipients (DSS-1372), line 8 - Housing Improvements, column 4 - Mandated Preventive (these housing grants may not be provided as Non-Mandated Preventive). Administrative costs are to be claimed on the Schedule D-2, allocation for Claiming of General Services Expenditures (DSS-2347 -B) under column 15.

For BICS districts, these payments will be identified on the BICS Composite; Claim RF-2A, Schedule G, Item: Housing Improvement Services.

Attachment C

Model
Letter of Intent

Dear Deputy Commissioner Semidei:

The (county) Department of Social Services intends to participate in the demonstration project for the purpose of providing housing grants to prevent foster care placement, pursuant to Chapter 165 of the Laws of 1991.

In carrying out this demonstration project the district will comply with the eligibility standards set forth in Attachment A and with the implementation procedures/guidelines set forth in Attachment B.

An estimated _____ families will be served in this demonstration project during state fiscal year 1991-92.

Commissioner
(county) Department of Social Services

Attachment D
 Interim District Allocations:
 Maximum Number of Families to be Served per Month

	Children Served 1990	% of Statewide Caseload	Maximum # of Families Per Month *
1 Albany	842	.011	12
2 Allegany	141	.002	4
3 Broome	1121	.015	15
4 Cattaraugus	289	.004	5
5 Cayuga	98	.001	3
6 Chautauqua	303	.004	6
7 Chemung	174	.002	4
8 Chenango	54	.001	3
9 Clinton	162	.002	4
10 Columbia	103	.001	3
11 Cortland	506	.007	8
12 Delaware	570	.008	9
13 Dutchess	574	.008	9
14 Erie	1677	.023	22
15 Essex	109	.001	3
16 Franklin	308	.004	6
17 Fulton	286	.004	5
18 Genesee	147	.002	4
19 Greene	52	.001	3
20 Hamilton	0	.000	2
21 Herkimer	144	.002	4
22 Jefferson	190	.003	4
23 Lewis	102	.001	3
24 Livingston	147	.002	4
25 Madison	107	.001	3
26 Monroe	4130	.056	51
27 Montgomery	98	.001	3
28 Nassau	628	.008	9
29 Niagara	534	.007	8
30 Oneida	264	.004	5
31 Onondaga	2669	.036	34
32 Ontario	234	.003	5
33 Orange	1205	.016	16
34 Orleans	170	.002	4
35 Oswego	509	.007	8
36 Otsego	363	.005	6
37 Putnam	117	.002	3
38 Rensselaer	481	.006	8
39 Rockland	978	.013	14
40 St. Lawrence	328	.004	6
41 Saratoga	166	.002	4
42 Schenectady	903	.012	13
43 Schoharie	175	.002	4
44 Schuyler	62	.001	3
45 Seneca	162	.002	4

46	Steuben	497	.007	8
47	Suffolk	920	.012	13
48	Sullivan	519	.007	8
49	Tioga	336	.005	6
50	Tompkins	330	.004	6
51	Ulster	946	.013	13
52	Warren	194	.003	4
53	Washington	338	.005	6
54	Wayne	264	.004	5
55	Westchester	2164	.029	28
56	Wyoming	103	.001	3
57	Yates	67	.001	3
66	New York City	45040	.608	539
	Total:	74100	100%	1,000

* Each district was given a base allocation of 2 families; the remainder of the families to be served were allocated based on each district's percentage of the total statewide caseload served during 1990.