

NEW YORK STATE

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

40 NORTH PEARL STREET, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12243-0001

CESAR A. PERALES
Commissioner



INFORMATIONAL LETTER

TRANSMITTAL NO: 89 INF-042

DIVISION: Adult Services

DATE: August 28, 1989

TO: Commissioners of Social Services

SUBJECT: Providing Protective Services for Adults (PSA)
to members of the Christian Science Church

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Director of Services
Adult Services Staff
County and Agency Attorneys
Staff Development Coordinators

CONTACT PERSON: Any questions about this release should be directed to your district's adult services representative as follows:

- Irvin Abelman - 1-800-342-3715, ext. 432-2980 or (212) 804-1247
- Kathleen Crowe 1-800-342-3715, ext. 432-2996
- Cheryl Flanigan 1-800-342-3715, ext. 432-2997
- Sharon Lane 1-800-342-3715, ext. 432-2985
- Marsha R. Meyers 1-800-342-3715, ext. 432-2864

ATTACHMENTS: There are no attachments to this INF.

FILING REFERENCES

Previous ADMs/INFs	Department Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Bulletin/Chapter Ref.	Misc. Ref.
85 ADM-006 88 ADM-023		457.7 457.10		

The purpose of this release is to clarify Department policy regarding the provision of Protective Services for Adults (PSA) to persons who are members of the Christian Science Church.

Recently, an official of the Christian Science Church contacted us to request their involvement in cases in which a district is providing, or contemplating the provision of PSA to persons who are Christian Scientists. As you know, members of the Christian Science Church rely upon prayer or spiritual means for healing. Care and treatment is provided by healing practitioners or in a Christian Science Sanatorium. To assure access to appropriate care and treatment for its members, the Christian Science Church is asking that they be contacted when a district is providing Protective Services for Adults to a person who claims to be, or otherwise is identified as a bona fide adherent or member of their church.

As stated in Section 457.7 of the Department's regulations, local districts must involve an array of community resources in the delivery of PSA, including advocacy groups and church councils. In addition, Section 457.10 of the Department 's regulations requires the districts to notify the court, as part of a petition for a Short Ten Involuntary Protective Services Order, if there are any inconsistencies between the services requested and the person's religious beliefs. In view of these provisions, then planning services for clients who are members of the Christian Science Church, district staff must make efforts to involve the client's church in determining ha, services can be provided in the least restrictive and most appropriate manner. This is especially important when the district is contemplating a legal intervention on behalf of a Christian Science client pursuant to Section 457.6 of the Department's regulations. Although districts must still pursue legal interventions on behalf of these clients when determined appropriate, information on the persons religious beliefs must be included in the legal documents submitted to the court. Copies of all legal documents related to the pursuit of the legal intervention also must be shared with the Christian Science representative designated to act on behalf of the client.

We have been advised by the Christian Science Committee on Publication for New York that they can be helpful in developing contacts with local church members who may be able to assist caseworkers in appropriately serving these clients. They also can provide the location of all Christian Science care facilities and verify whether a person who clams to be a Christian Scientist is actually a member of this faith.

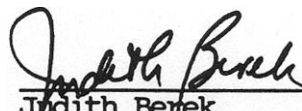
For assistance in identifying local Christian Science resources on behalf of PSA clients of this faith, you may contact church headquarters in New York at:

Christian Science Committee on Publication for New York
310 Madison Avenue - Suite 2022
New York, NY 10017
Telephone 4212-661-3838
Fax #212-986-8876

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Although this release focuses specifically on members of the Christian Science Church, districts are reminded of the need to be sensitive to the religious beliefs of other PSA clients when developing and implementing service plans.



Judith Berek
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Adult Services