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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 92 LCM-173

Date: November 6, 1992

Division: Commissioner's
Office

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Increased Security in Local Departments of Social Services

ATTACHMENTS: I. New York State Crime Prevention
Units (Available On-Line)
II. Available Training Courses (Available On-Line)

In response to requests from numerous local districts, we have evaluated various means to help local districts improve security and deal more effectively with difficult clients. We believe that there are a number of actions which local districts can take to provide local staff with a greater sense of security and control over their difficult working environment. Our specific suggestions are listed below.

Security and Crime Prevention

We have received a generous offer of assistance from the New York State Police to help local districts on a variety of security-related matters. Their Crime Prevention Units in each of the nine Troops stationed across New York State have available a number of services which they can provide to you upon request. Their staff can evaluate existing arrangements for security in your facility and provide suggestions for whatever improvements are feasible and consistent with our mission of providing service to clients. They can also provide some training on worker safety and crime prevention arranged in accordance with the needs of your local district. They have assured me that they will be able to handle such requests promptly and welcome the opportunity to be of service in this regard. Attached to this LCM is a list of the local Troops, with the counties served by each, and the contact person in each Troop who handles crime prevention. Please feel free to contact that individual directly to request assistance. As a courtesy, we request that you let your current regional liaison know when you make such a request.

Training Support

We currently have available a number of courses designed to help staff deal effectively with difficult clients and to improve worker safety and interactions with clients troubled by mental illness, drug abuse or emotional instability. The specific courses are listed in an attachment to this memorandum.

The Office of Human Resource Development has made arrangements to expand the availability of these courses so that any local district which needs one or more of these programs can have them presented directly on-site. Our experience with the programs indicates that the "Caseworker Safety Issues" is particularly useful for any staff who deal directly with clients. We recommend it highly. "Dealing with Difficult Client Behavior" is well-suited to helping Income Maintenance workers but is somewhat less comprehensive than the other course. The third program provides in-depth information for shelter workers and is particularly effective in dealing with clients in that difficult environment. In order to make arrangements for any programs, please call Peter Miraglia in the Office of Human Resource Development at 518-474-5956.

If you have any questions or concerns about this memorandum, please contact Robert Donahue, Office of Field Operations, at (518) 474-9059.

Gregory M. Kaladjian
Executive Deputy Commissioner

NEW YORK STATE POLICE CRIME PREVENTION UNITS

Troop A
Tpr. Charlene Mahony
(716)343-2200
Allegany
Cattaraugus
Chautauqua
Erie
Genesee
Niagara
Orleans
Wyoming

Troop B
Tpr. Dick Garcia
(518)897-2000
Clinton
Essex
Franklin
Hamilton
St. Lawrence

Troop C
Tpr. Mike O'Connell
(607)563-9011
Broome
Chenango
Cortland
Delaware
Otsego
Tioga
Tompkins

Troop D
Tpr. Jim Simpson
(315)363-4400
Herkimer
Jefferson
Lewis
Madison
Oneida
Onondaga
Oswego

Troop E
Tpr. Gene Chisholm
(716)398-3200
Cayuga
Chemung
Livingston
Monroe
Ontario
Schuyler
Seneca
Steuben

Troop F
Tpr. Bob Gillespie
(914)344-5383
Greene
Orange
Rockland
Sullivan
Ulster

Troop G
Tpr. Peter Rodriguez
(518)783-3284
Albany
Fulton
Hamilton
Montgomery
Rensselaer
Saratoga
Schenectady
Schoharie
Warren
Washington

Troop K
Tpr. Ed. Omuleski
(914)677-6321
Columbia
Dutchess
Putnam
Westchester

Troop L
Tpr. Tom Collins
(516)756-1170
Nassau
Suffolk

Troop N
(Being established - currently covered
by Troops K and L)
Bronx
Kings
New York
Queens
Richmond

AVAILABLE TRAINING COURSES

The following training programs are available statewide:

Safe and Sound: Caseworker Safety Issues in the Delivery of Social Services

Provided by: The Institute for Families and Children

In the course of providing services to children and their families, caseworkers often encounter unknown situations and persons. Workers may interact with clients troubled by mental illness, substance abuse or emotional instability. This one-day training provides caseworkers with effective methods of dealing with potentially dangerous situations. Topics include: assessing environmental and human factors, understanding anger, effective communication and diffusing techniques, and developing safety plans for caseworkers.

Dealing with Difficult Client Behavior

Provided by: SUNY - Albany

This half-day training assists Income Maintenance staff develop strategies to deal with difficult, aggressive, and violent clients while maintaining a professional relationship. Trainees learn strategies for managing clients' behavior and their own response to inappropriate behavior. This course explains origins of behavior, highlights danger signals and discusses techniques for diffusing various situations. It outlines an action plan and trainees are encouraged to implement the plan in their work area.

The following course is available statewide for shelter workers and can be modified on request.

Conflict Resolution

Provided by: CUNY Hunter/Brookdale

This two-day course teaches workers to prevent or intervene in conflicts among shelter residents. Participants learn skills for assertive rather than aggressive responses to conflict and for handling violent or potentially violent situations. The trainee group includes adult shelter staff: institutional aides, caseworkers, supervisors and security staff.