



GCDP REPORT

Austin, Texas

August, 1987

Client-Managed Attendant Services

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 ”

Donna Hardigree of
 San Antonio enjoys the
 company of her
 parakeet, Pretty Baby.



Photo by Don Kerr, Texas Department of Human Services

The 69th Texas legislature passed a rider permitting the Department of Human Services (DHS) to pilot test an attendant care delivery system. The system lets individuals with disabilities supervise their own attendant care. This program began January 1, 1986 and runs through August, 1987. "The future of the program rests with the 70th legislature," said Stephanie Thomas, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities. "This is a model program which can easily be duplicated around the State. Right now the program is at level funding."

This program allows persons with disabilities to hire, train, supervise, and terminate their attendants. By meeting basic personal needs through attendant services, a disabled person has the freedom to participate in training, education, employment or volunteer activities.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Friday, October 2, 1987 has been slated for the GCDP Employment Awards Conference. The Conference, which is open to the public, will be held at the Wyndham Southpark in Austin. A registration fee of \$12.50 will be charged for the Conference. This fee includes the employment awards luncheon and several exciting workshops. For program or registration information contact GCDP.

Entry forms for the 1987 Barbara Jordan media awards were distributed to media professionals in June and July. The awards recognize outstanding contributions by media professionals concerning persons with disabilities. If you would like to enter a media professional from your area, contact GCDP at 512-445-8275 for an entry form. Deadline is September 15, 1987.

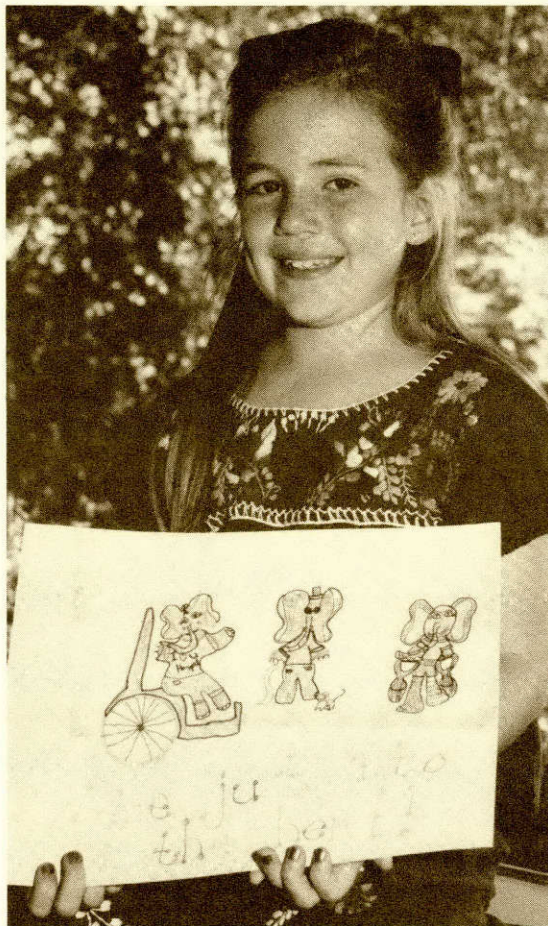
This spring marked 10 years since the release of the regulations for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This section of the Act prohibits discrimination in programs and services financed with federal funds.

While the supply lasts two new employer brochures are available through GCDP. They are "Employers are Asking. . . About Making the Workplace Accessible to Workers with Disabilities" and "Employers are Asking. . . About Accommodating Workers with Disabilities."

The Eleventh Annual Texas Volunteer Conference will be held September 15-16, 1987 at the Austin Hyatt Regency, 208 Barton Springs Road. Everyone involved in Texas' outstanding volunteer movement is invited to attend this important event. For information contact the Governor's Office of Community Leadership/Volunteer Services at 512-463-1782.

“We’re just part of the herd!”

Eight year old Cherie Carter of Austin took first place in “A Poster Contest for Kids” sponsored by Healthcare International as part of National Barrier Awareness Day on May 7. Cherie, a very creative child, enjoys art, painting and drawing. The clever poster, “We’re Just Part of the Herd!”, won Cherie \$60 which she deposited in her college fund. When asked what made her think of this theme, she replied, “Because I couldn’t draw hippopotamuses.”



How does the Tax Reform Act affect you?

People with disabilities, organizations that serve them and employers are affected by the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

Medical Expenses — The act increases from 5 percent to 7.5 percent the amount of adjusted gross income that a taxpayer’s medical expenses must exceed before such expenses may be deducted.

Adoption Expenses — The law repeals the current deduction for up to \$1,500 of expenses related to the adoption of children with disabilities and other children with special needs. The legislation modifies the adoption assistance program of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to provide assistance through that program for such adoption expenses.

Elderly or Blind Taxpayer — H.R. 3838 repeals the additional exemption for the individual who is blind or elderly and replaces it with an additional standard deduction. The additional standard deduction is \$750 for single taxpayers and \$600 for each married taxpayer on a joint return. For taxpayers who are both elderly and blind, the standard deduction is \$1,500 for a single or \$1,200 for each married taxpayer on a joint return.

Business-Related Expenses for People with Disabilities — The act permits an employee who is disabled to deduct the full cost of attendant care and other services necessary to enable the employee to work.

Medical Expense Deduction for Barrier Removal — The law provides that certain capital expenditures to accommodate a personal residence to the needs of individuals with disabilities, such as construction of entrance ramps or widening of doorways to allow use of wheelchairs, constitute medical expenses

eligible for the deduction. In this respect, the act simply clarifies current law.

Charitable Donations — The act eliminates the charitable deduction for non-itemizers effective December 31, 1986, as scheduled under present law. Itemizers will continue to be allowed to deduct contributions. Gifts of appreciated property made subsequent to December 31, 1986 will be included in the alternative minimum tax.

Mailing Lists — The law will exempt from the unrelated-business income tax the exchanges and rentals of membership lists by certain tax exempt organizations.

Barrier Removal — H.R. 3838 extends permanently the \$35,000 deduction for businesses for the removal of architectural and transportation barriers.

Targeted Jobs Tax Credit — This credit, which is available to businesses which hire economically disadvantaged youth, people with disabilities, welfare recipients and others, was extended for three years.

The credit will be reduced from the existing level of 50 percent of the first \$6,000 of wages in the first year and 25 percent in the second year to 40 percent in the first year only. The first-year credit cannot be taken unless the worker is employed for at least 90 days or 120 hours.

Tax-Sheltered Annuities — A \$9,500 annual limit will be imposed on employee contributions to tax-sheltered annuities permitted for employees of tax-exempt organizations. Employees of non-profits will continue to use the same formula that is used under current law, but the maximum annual contribution by employees will be \$9,500.

The \$9,500 cap will be adjusted for inflation once the \$7,000 cap under qualified cash or deferred arrangements reaches \$9,500. A 10 percent penalty tax will be imposed on early withdrawals (before age 59.5), with exceptions for death, disability and medical expenses to the extent they exceed 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income.

The act will allow employees of health and welfare organizations to make catch-up payments to compensate for earlier, lower salary years.

Information obtained from the National Easter Seal Society.

Houston's Job Search Network gears up

The Houston economy has forced many employers to focus more and more on cost effective and productive decisions. There is no area more important than hiring the right person for a job. The Harris County Committee for the Employment of Disabled Persons chaired by Judy Comfort of Southwestern Bell Telephone has developed the Job Search Network which incorporates handicapped applicant identification and pre-screening with employer awareness campaigns.

Waco Mayor's Committee identifies community needs

The first organizational meeting of the Waco Mayor's Committee for Disabled Persons was held on June 24 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Albans Episcopal Church in Waco. Governor's Committee member Sandy Bailey from Waco initiated contact with the Mayor to rally support for a mayor's committee.

David Sibley, Mayor of Waco, welcomed the group of more than 100 people and expressed his support of awareness activities for persons with disabilities. "As Mayor I would like to encourage the citizens of Waco to be aware that through the appointment of the Mayor's Committee for Disabled Persons we support programs which educate our society about special needs of individuals with disabilities and recognize that with education and training many disabled persons have the potential to be productive individuals within our community," said Mayor David Sibley. He hopes to have members of the Mayor's Committee attack the problem through education.

Mayor Sibley appointed Melinda McKee, director of deaf student services at Texas State Technical Institute, as chairperson of the Waco Mayor's Committee. Impressed by the number of people who volunteered to serve on the bylaws committee and the nominating committee McKee said the committee is in good shape and ready to meet the needs of the community. "We had a great turnout," said McKee. "We are off to a good start."

A brainstorming session followed on issues and needs of individuals with disabilities in the Waco area. Ideas generated for possible mayor's committee activities include having interpreters at all public meetings, increasing transportation available to persons with disabilities and promoting the creation of a center for independent living.

The Committee's second meeting was held on July 22, 1987 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Albans Episcopal Church.

Corpus Christi employers meet affirmative action requirements

Through an initiative by the employment subcommittee of the Corpus Christi Mayor's Committee for Disabled Persons, supervisors training for utilizing disabled workers was provided at three naval air training command bases.

More than 150 managers and first line supervisors received the training to meet annual affirmative action requirements at Chase Field in Beeville, Corpus Christi Naval Air Station and Kingsville Naval Station.

Appropriate for the private sector as well as public employees, information about this employer training is available from your local mayor's committee. Training materials and instructional assistance are available at no charge from the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons.

"Today's economic condition makes it extremely important for employers to recognize the tangible benefits that they have in hiring the disabled worker," says Johnni Horn, chairperson of the Job Search Network and a volunteer from the IBM Corporation. The Job Search Network is a series of projects using subcommittees that interact to achieve specific goals. The subcommittees are inclusive of the agency liaison committee, the applicant review/job skills committee, and the job search development committee. These committees are staffed by volunteers from the Houston business community, the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, and the Texas Employment Commission (TEC).

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Johnni Horn

"With the help of the TEC and SER Advancement Business Training Center we will be mailing 35,000 bulletins to businesses in the Houston area during the summer. Following the mailing we will establish a response line to take job orders and help employers understand the advantages available such as Targeted Jobs Tax Credit and possible assistance with wages during training," said Angie Chesnut, head of the Job Search Development Committee and a volunteer from the IBM Corporation.

Judy Comfort states that the committee's goal for this year is to place 20 qualified applicants with various companies throughout the Houston area.

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This is a non-traditional approach to attendant services that offers great flexibility. Clients select attendants who can meet their daily routines in terms of the hours worked and the location where services are to be performed whether the location is home, work, school or the doctor's office.

Three contracts were awarded well over a year ago to the City of San Antonio; Americare Professionals, Inc., a home-health agency in Orange; and Concepts of Care, a home-health agency in Corpus Christi. From January through November 1986, 708 applications were received by these three contract agencies. During that period 310 applicants actually had services initiated.

One applicant from the San Antonio area, Donna Hardigree, enjoys directing her own attendant care. She has been a client of the City of San Antonio shared attendant care program for more than a year. Donna loves the project.

"I'm much happier now," says Donna. "I know I am mentally competent and I can easily express my needs to an attendant." Donna finds the program more flexible than most. "It's just not so rigid. More importantly, instead of dictating when you must use particular services, I'm able to work

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Donna Hardigree

with my attendant to develop a schedule to suit my needs," said Donna.

Donna, who is legally blind and has 8-9 epileptic seizures a month, feels she has come a long way. "I now live in an accessible apartment complex. I'm more independent than ever and I've made many new friends."

Just two years ago Donna was in a San Antonio nursing home where attendants helped her with medication and cared for her during her frequent grand mal epileptic seizures. The seizures are much more controlled and Donna no longer needs around-the-clock care.

October 4-10, 1987

National Employ the Handicapped Week
"making employment a reality"

Serafina Limon is Donna's attendant. The two of them have their routine down pat and enjoy each other's company. Serafina works for Donna between 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. each day. She helps Donna with activities such as bathing, preparing meals, transferring, house cleaning, and shopping.

"This program is a great thing for me," said Donna, "I hope the funding continues."

For more information about this DHS pilot attendant care program contact German Valtierra, Program Specialist, TDHS, P. O. Box 2960, Mail Code 543-W, Austin, Texas, 78769, 512-450-3136.

GCDP Report

The GCDP Report promotes employment and public awareness of the abilities and special needs of persons with disabilities. This quarterly GCDP Report is published by the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons.

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Taped copies of the GCDP Report will be provided upon request.

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