

WOODBRIIDGE STATE SCHOOL

MANUAL OF OPERATION

FOR THE

SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

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PREFACE

This manual has been designed to explain the responsibilities and functions of a Social Service Department in an institution which services the severely and profoundly retarded.

The Institutional Social Worker will have the responsibility to assist the resident, his family and to perform any duties which will ease their adjustment to the institution and make a better life for the resident within the institution.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

It is the philosophy of the Social Service Department that a close relationship should be maintained between the institutionalized person and his family. This Department also feels the importance of maintaining open lines of communication with community agencies so as to obtain all the services available for the benefit of the residents.

In order to implement the above, the Social Service Department has established the following objectives:

1. Act as the direct liaison between the Institution, the family, and all community resources for the Mentally Retarded.
2. Maintain and establish, where necessary, good relations between parents, relatives and residents.
3. Act as a liaison between various departments and parents, relatives or other outside interested individuals concerning the resident's status.
4. Work in conjunction with other departments regarding resident or parent problems that affect the resident's adjustment to the Institution.
5. Make resident referrals to all community agencies which can offer assistance.
6. Maintain communications with all Central Office units of the Division of Mental Retardation regarding admissions, change of status, and release of residents.

HISTORY

In November 1964, the first Social Worker for the Woodbridge State School was hired to make preliminary arrangements for admissions. The Woodbridge State School Social Service Department became a reality when the Institution opened in January 1965.

From November 1964, to June 1965, this Department consisted of one (1) Social Worker who alone handled admissions, vacations, tours, correspondence and limited parent conferences. In June a secretary was added to the staff.

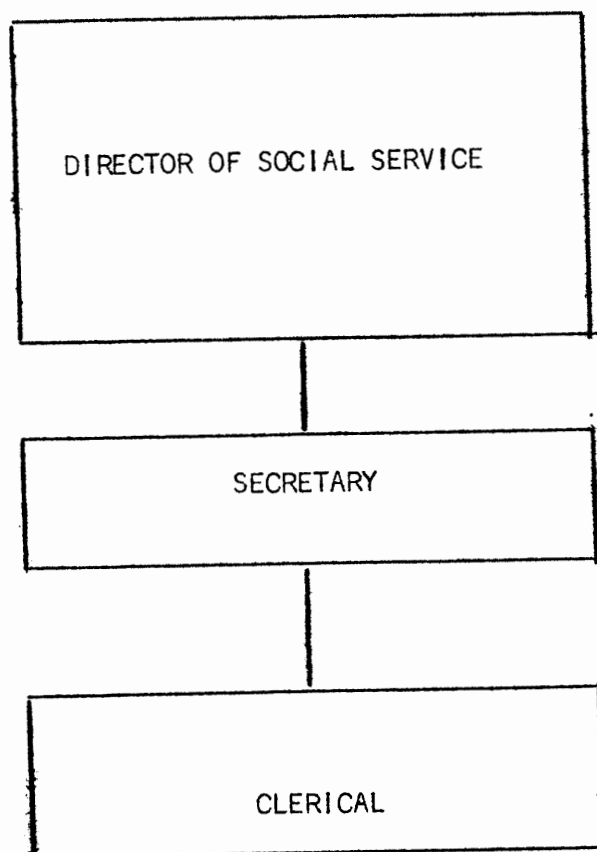
During the period of October 1966, to July 1967, maintenance and control of the Resident files were added to the duties of this Department and a second (2) clerical position was added to assume this responsibility. Also, during this period of time, the Social Worker became a prominent member of both the Classification Committee and the Procedure Committee.

In January 1968, it was decided by the Social Worker and the Superintendent that the entire Department would be moved from the Administration Building to the Hospital so as to assume the responsibilities of Medical Inquiries regarding residents. It was also at this time that the concept referring all parent inquiries thru this Department came into effect.

In May 1968, a second (2) Social Worker in a borrowed position from the Chief Bureau of Field Services was added. The Department was then divided according to the present Cottage Life Department division with a Social Worker being assigned to the Non-Ambulatory Unit and a Social Worker for the Ambulatory Unit.

In November 1968 this borrowed position was returned to Bureau of Field Services and the Department is now functioning with one (1) Social Worker.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR SOCIAL SERVICE



DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICE

The Director of Social Service shall be responsible for:

1. The implementation of all resident movement including admission, discharge, internal and external transfer, home visits and vacations.
2. The necessary social casework for each resident and the family including a social study of the past and current situation and the formation of community plans with appropriate referrals to local agencies where applicable.
3. The establishment of a comprehensive information center geared to service all parent inquiries pertaining to residents; a system of communication with parents with regard to quarantine, unusual incident, institutional affairs and other matters of interest and/or concern.
4. The supervision of the Central Records Unit which will contain the total master files and medical records of the resident population.
5. Processing and maintaining the Daily Population Movement Records and other related statistical data.
6. Staff development through attendance of courses, seminars and social welfare conferences; a continuing affiliation with graduate and undergraduate students for field placement at the School.

ORGANIZATION

The following are the duties and responsibilities of the Clerical Staff of the Social Service Department:

SENIOR CLERK

Will be directly responsible to the Social Service Director.

1. Routine Parental Inquiries
2. All Aspects of Correspondence
3. All Aspects of the Clerical Process of Guardianship
4. Department Filing
5. Admissions
6. All other Secretarial Duties
7. Delegation of Duties and Responsibilities to the Clerk Transcriber

CLERK TRANSCRIBER—Will be directly responsible to the Senior Clerk.

1. Daily Population Movement
2. Hospital Admission and Discharge Correspondence
3. Resident Vacations
4. Resident Filing
5. Monthly Report Statistics
6. Categorization and Security of Resident Master and Medical Files

GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

PARENT INQUIRIES

The Social Service Department of the Woodbridge State School has been set up to function as a Central Information Center. All parent inquiries, regarding the resident's institutional life are referred through this department.

Parents are requested to contact the Worker concerning any problems or questions that they may have. The Social Worker is then responsible for gathering the information from the appropriate department, compiling and summarizing it, and finally relaying a concise report to the parents.

This system has proved to be most effective as it pinpoints the responsibility to one (1) specific department for giving accurate information to parents and alleviates all other department heads from taking their time to perform this service.

It also enables the parents to have one (1) contact person at the School with whom they can develop a good rapport and who will always be available to answer their inquiries.

PARENT AND RESIDENT COUNSELING

Parent Counseling is available to all parents of residents in the Institution.

If parents are having problems in adjusting to the institutionalization of their child, they are seen by the Social Worker. Referrals for this service are made by other departments of the School, through the Classification Committee, or by the parents themselves. Parents are seen for as many sessions as needed to alleviate the problem and then as requested by them. At this time, parent counselling is done on an informal basis; however, when the group counselling sessions begin, the whole program will be formalized.

Recently, the Worker has been counseling residents who wish to talk about the institution, their jobs or their parents. Due to the type of residents at Woodbridge, this contact is minimal; however, the Worker still makes herself available to the residents by touring the cottages as often as possible.

NEW ADMISSIONS

Though all new admissions to the Institution are formally scheduled through Central Office in Trenton, the Worker makes herself available to the parents on the specific date of admission.

The Worker tries to assist the parent's and the child's adjustment to the Institution by explaining the rules and regulations of the school, introducing the staff, and listening to the parent's questions. At this time it is also necessary to request certain admission information, various medical and photographic consents and general information concerning the parent's and resident.

When the interview has ended and the admitting physician is introduced, the Worker explains to the parents that she is here to assist them and to be contacted whenever they have any questions regarding the resident's institutional life. For those parents who show particular concern over the institutionalization of their child, appointments for counseling are set up at this time for future dates.

After the person has been in the School for one (1) month and has been evaluated by the Classification Committee, the Worker is responsible for contacting the family to give them information on the child's adjustment and future programming.

A new program established between the Director of Social Service and the Woodbridge State School Parent Association regarding new admissions is soon to be put into effect. By this program families of new admissions will be offered the opportunity to speak with a School parent who has already been thru the adjustment period and can act as a supportive person and a "good-will ambassador" to the School.

CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

The Classification Committee provides assessment to the problems, needs and progress of the individual resident and recommends a suitable program designed to meet these needs. There are eight (8) permanent members of the committee composed of the program staff members. The Social Worker is an integral part of this committee.

Two (2) weeks prior to classification of a resident, a current summary is forwarded to the Classification Committee. The summary is composed of statistical information, such as birthdate, address, admission date, and religion, pertinent historical information; such as past institutional admissions, birth history and reason for admission; and finally current institutional information, such as parental visits and vacation and adjustment to the institution. It is the Social Worker's responsibility to prepare this summary and to list any recommendations she feels will benefit the resident. This summary and those of all other programming departments are discussed fully in the evaluation of the total resident.

After the resident's case has been reviewed, the Social Worker is responsible for carrying out those recommendations which apply to her specialty.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The Procedure Committee was established to create, catalogue, index and have available a complete set of formal procedures covering the operation of the Woodbridge State School and affecting all employees of the Woodbridge State School.

The Social Worker is a permanent member of this committee and as such, must review and revise all procedures coming to the committee. The Worker must also write procedures covering functions of the Social Service Department.

To date Social Service procedures include:

1. Admissions
2. Visiting Regulations
3. Vacations for Residents
4. Folder Notes
5. Central Records Room
6. Filing of Telegrams
7. Two-Way Transfers for Psychiatric Services
8. Resident Burial Information
9. Parental Notification of Resident's Receiving Sutures

RESIDENT VISITS AND VACATIONS

The Woodbridge State School has devised a most liberal visiting and vacation policy.

Visiting hours are every day of the week from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Parents are also allowed to take their children off-grounds for day visits without any prior permission and keep them out until 7:00 p.m. of that same day.

Resident vacations are also unlimited. However, they must be scheduled and approved thru the Social Service Department. Cancellation of a vacation must also be made thru this Department.

A resident may be granted a vacation after he has been at the institution for one (1) month. A written request is required by parents or legal guardian for all vacations one (1) week in advance of the date of the vacation. The request must list the date of departure and the date of return to the institution. These dates are required to schedule the resident for a physical examination before leaving the institution.

Vacation approval is granted after consultation with cottage supervisor and cottage physician. Parents are then notified by a letter of approval or disapproval of the vacation.

Request for an extension of a vacation is required prior to the end of the approved vacation. Before approval is given the Social Worker must consult with the resident's physician. Parents are then notified as to the approval or disapproval of the vacation.

DAILY POPULATION MOVEMENT

The Training Schools for the Mentally Retarded Statistical Reporting Program of the New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies is designed to maintain between individual schools and the Bureau of Social Research a constant uniform flow of statistical information dealing with the movement of population and the characteristics of the resident's served.

The Daily Population Movement, as the name implies, is a daily form and must be submitted daily to the Bureau of Social Research on working days. The Daily Population maintains a constant record of the movement of each resident in or out of the school and the type of such movement. This duty is assigned to a clerk transcriber within the Social Service Department, but is reviewed periodically by the Social Worker in charge.

MONTHLY REPORT

A report concerning the activities of the Social Worker. is forwarded every month to the Superintendent's office. The report includes all parent and resident conferences, tours, admissions and a statistical summary.

RESIDENT TRANSFERS

Resident rosters are kept up to date in the Social Service Department and cottage vacancies are determined in this manner. When a department or parent requests a cottage transfer, the Social Worker reports this as a special case to the Classification Committee. The Committee then discusses the advantages and disadvantages concerning the transfer. If the Committee agrees to the transfer and there is a vacancy, the Social Service Department contacts the parents and the involved departments and notifies them of the date of the transfer.

In the event of an external transfer recommended by the Classification Committee, the Social Worker makes the necessary arrangements with the outside agencies including Central Office and the institution department heads. Before any type of external transfer occurs, the parent or legal guardian of the resident is notified and the advantages of the transfer discussed.

The external transfers encompass both one-way transfers to other institutions for the retarded and two-way transfers to psychiatric facilities for evaluations.

GUARDIANSHIP

The Social Service Department handles all aspects of guardianship except the "determination" process. Once a resident has reached the age of twenty-one (21), he is determined by a psychologist to be either mentally retarded or mentally deficient. If he is mentally deficient, the Worker contacts the parents and explains to them that the resident needs someone to either make decisions for them or otherwise help them to manage their affairs.

One way to do this is through legal guardianship. Some parents feel that they automatically become legal guardians when their retarded child becomes twenty-one (21), since in many ways the retarded person is still a child. This is not true. Guardianship for an adult person (21 years or older) requires court action.

If the parents do decide to seek legal guardianship, the Social Worker will make available to the courts a summary of the material which indicates that the person could be considered incompetent and in need of a guardian. The Social Worker will also be able to help the parents to get any additional material which the courts might require before deciding whether the person needs a legal guardian.

If the parents cannot or do not wish to obtain legal guardianship, the Division of Mental Retardation will provide what are called "guardianship services" through the Bureau of Field Services. These "guardianship services" by the Division provide a responsible adult person to make sure that proper care and training is made available, but do not include control of money matters. It is the Social Worker's responsibility to contact Field Services and acquaint them with the resident.

RESIDENT MASTER FILES

All pertinent information concerning a resident must be forwarded to the Social Service Department to be included in the resident's master file. Case records or any material in the records will not be released to/or duplicated by any individual, group or agency outside the Institution without the written authorization of the Superintendent or his representative.

This department is responsible for keeping these records up to date and for maintaining a comprehensive study on each resident. The department is also responsible for security of the files, and since they are considered confidential, rules have been established to uphold this security.

ORIENTATION AND TOURS

It is the duty of the Social Service Department of an institution to assume the responsibility for tours of prospective parents who are interested in possible placement of their children. A tour of the facility is given and any questions that these parents might have are answered.

The purpose of a tour is to show the parents exactly where their child will live and to acquaint them with the program in which the child will be enrolled.

At the Woodbridge State School, a tour of this type is handled bi-annually with both the Superintendent and a Social Worker in attendance. If any prospective parent does not wish to wait for one of these general tours, an individual appointment can be set up for the last Wednesday of any month and will be conducted by one of the Workers.

CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

The Crippled Children's Program is responsible for:

1. Stimulating case finding and assisting in restorative services for handicapped children until they are twenty-one (21) years of age.
2. Promoting and assisting in the developemnt and use of community resources.

When the Physical Therapy program at the Woodbridge State School prescribes orthopedic devices for a resident, it is the Social Worker's duty to contact the parents for funds.

If the parents cannot meet this obligation, the Social Worker will fill out the appropriate form and contacts the Crippled Children's Committee which will provide funds for orthopedic devices for organizations such as state institutions.

FAMILY CARE PROGRAM

The Family Care Program was established for the release of those residents over twenty-one (21) who can profit from community life. Such residents are placed in foster homes approved by the State, given a daily allowance, and are then free to participate in community activities.

It is the Social Worker's duty to confer with the Classification Committee on those residents whose ability indicates this release. The Worker will then contact the parents or legal guardian to explain the program and to obtain their consent. She will make all contact with Field Services who will act as the liaison between the foster home and the institution. Finally, the Worker will counsel the resident as to his new home and the life that he will henceforth lead.

GROUP COUNSELING SESSIONS

This is a proposed plan to assist groups of parents with adjustment problems.

The counseling sessions will contain a maximum of five (5) couples with a worker as the group leader. It will be the responsibility of the Worker to direct the sessions and assist the parents in verbalizing their problems. The Worker's role will be to listen and direct the conversation toward constructive areas.

Parents for these counseling sessions will be obtained from departments in the institution; however, requests from parents to join the sessions will not be overlooked. When a full-time Psychologist is available, it is suggested that he attend that counseling sessions and perhaps become the Chairman.

The sessions will be held on a one hour/per week basis every other week. In this way, two (2) groups can begin at the same time. The groups will continue in this order until the Worker feels that her services are no longer needed or a group member is able to become a group leader. When the groups begin to interact without the Worker, new groups can be formed. The Worker will make spot checks on any groups which are working with a parent group leader.

If during the course of these sessions, the Worker discovers a parent who cannot be counselled in a group setting, she will suggest that they meet with the Worker for Individual Sessions. In the event that the Worker is still unable to communicate with these parents, a recommendation for guidance counseling with the Psychologist will be made.

