

**ADVOCACY AND TRAINING CENTER  
1116 BEDFORD ST.  
CUMBERLAND, MD 21502  
301-777-7987 (PHONE AND FAX)**

## **STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FACETS OF SSI PROJECT WITHOUT FUNDING:**

### SSA:

\*Meet with SSA district or local primary office managers to:

--discuss work of outreach staff involved in assisting homeless adults with SSI/SSDI claims  
--determine methods of collaboration to make these claims move more smoothly, e.g., (1) possible use of address of outreach staff's agency for claimant to use if needed; (2) submission of 1696 Appointment of Representative form with each homeless person's claim; (3) setting appointments so that outreach agency staff don't have to wait with a person to submit claim; (4) ask SSA to consider assigning particular claims representatives to serve this population. This would facilitate communication for agencies' staffs and claimants alike, and (5) if DDS agrees, have cases flagged for claims examiners there to know claimant is homeless.

### DDS:

\*Meet with DDS medical relations officer to: (1) determine how to facilitate provision of medical evidence; (2) work to ensure that contact between claims examiners and outreach agency staff is optimal; (3) ask DDS to consider having claims examiners contact claimant's representative for additional information before a claim is denied; and (4) ask DDS to consider assigning particular claims examiners to flagged cases.

### PRESUMPTIVE ELIGIBILITY:

\*In meeting with SSA, ask SSA for clear guidelines re: current presumptive eligibility rules.

\*Ask SSA/DDS to consider a pilot project in which SSA and DDS train community staff re: SSI/SSDI eligibility and authorize presumptive eligibility similar to the SSI Outreach Project process to determine if this could assist more effectively. Alternatively, SSA and DDS can train outreach staff to complete application forms with homeless people who are unable/unwilling to come to the SSA office or to do a phone interview.

### STAFF RESOURCES:

\*Arrange collaboration with mental health providers re: consultative evaluations, psychiatric evaluations to determine if psychiatrists/psychologists would be willing to do such evaluations on a limited number of individuals.

\*Form coalition of outreach/agency staff who are serving this population so as to ensure that all services that individuals need are provided.

\*Form agreements among agencies that a certain percentage of existing staff's time will be devoted to SSI/SSDI claims.

\*Provide means for staff to conduct outreach, even if it means vehicle sharing.

TRAINING:

MANY WORKERS MISUNDERSTAND THE DISABILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS. CLEAR, COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING OF STAFF IS CRITICAL. SSA AND DDS CAN PROVIDE TRAINING. IN ADDITION, CLINICIANS WHO HAVE EXPERTISE IN PROVIDING/DEVELOPING MEDICAL EVIDENCE AND WHO HAVE FAMILIARITY WITH COMMUNITY WORKERS' CONSTRAINTS, SHOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED TO PROVIDE TRAINING. WHILE THIS IS A COST, IT IS MINIMAL COMPARED TO THE IMPACT SUCH TRAINING CAN HAVE.

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