
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH'S TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (TEP)
DATE 6/13/00
CC: BOYD

Dr. Hendrix recently sent you a letter regarding the Department of Mental Health's Transitional Employment Program (TEP). Mental Health has piloted the TEP program in the Department of Transportation and the Gaming Commission and would now like to expand the program to other state agencies. The Department of Mental Health has requested a letter of support from you to aid them in this expansion.

The TEP program provides employment opportunities for individuals diagnosed with a mental illness and is operated through the state's Community Mental Health Centers. The program places clients in entry-level positions. TEP train the employees in their positions and employees work part-time. The TEP program insures the quality of work by training clients in advance until all parties involved agree that the employee is ready to "fly solo."

Larry Gregory, Deputy Director of the Gaming Commission, and Brad Martin, MDOT Personnel Division, both stated that they would recommend that this program be expanded to other state agencies. Mr. Gregory reported one of the program's greatest benefits being the relationships formed between Gaming Commission employees and Gaming's two TEP employees. He said that there was some initial hesitation, due to TEP employees being mental health clients, but that this soon faded and that both employees were extremely hard working and productive individuals. Mr. Martin reported that MDOT has requested an extension on the TEP employee's contract with the department and that MDOT would probably hire the TEP employee into a permanent position were one available. Mr. Martin stated that MDOT's TEP employee filled a genuine need and that it was not a "make work" situation.

Based upon the positive experiences of the pilot program participants and the fact that program participants are trained prior to being placed in the position, I recommend that you provide the requested letter of supported (attached).

June 13, 2000

Dr. Randy Hendrix
Department of Mental Health
239 North Lamar Street
Jackson, MS 39201

Dear Dr. Hendrix:

I am pleased to provide you this letter of support for the Department of Mental Health's Transitional Employment Program (TEP). I support your efforts to provide employment opportunities to all citizens.

We must all work together to overcome the barriers that individuals with mental illness face in joining the job market. It is very encouraging that private industry has been supportive of the TEP program. I am certain that our state agencies will find the program just as beneficial to their operations.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr