

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 493 Session of
2003

INTRODUCED BY CRUZ, YOUNGBLOOD, THOMAS, BUNT, HENNESSEY, CAWLEY,
SURRA, HUTCHINSON, LEACH, PRESTON, BEBKO-JONES, SCRIMENTI,
LAUGHLIN, MELIO, HARHAI, WATERS, TIGUE, PALLONE AND JAMES,
FEBRUARY 26, 2003

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
FEBRUARY 26, 2003

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), entitled "An
2 act to consolidate, editorially revise, and codify the public
3 welfare laws of the Commonwealth," further providing for
4 administration of assistance and for additional services for
5 medically needy recipients; and abrogating a regulation.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Section 403 of the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31,
9 No.21), known as the Public Welfare Code, amended May 16, 1996
10 (P.L.175, No.35), is amended to read:

11 Section 403. Uniformity in Administration of Assistance;
12 Regulations as to Assistance.--(a) The department is
13 responsible for maintaining uniformity in the administration of
14 public welfare, including general assistance, throughout the
15 Commonwealth.

16 (b) The department shall establish rules, regulations and
17 standards, consistent with the law, as to eligibility for
18 assistance and as to its nature and extent. The department is

1 authorized to seek waivers from the Federal Government to
2 enhance consistency between Federal program standards,
3 requirements or procedures. This shall not be interpreted to
4 require the department to seek waivers to achieve consistency
5 among standards, requirements or procedures in Federal programs,
6 except as specifically required under other provisions in this
7 article. Whenever possible, except for residency requirements
8 for general assistance, and consistent with State law, the
9 department shall establish rules, regulations and standards for
10 general assistance consistent with those established for aid to
11 families with dependent children. In no instance shall the
12 rules, regulations and standards established for general
13 assistance provide for assistance greater than that provided for
14 aid to families with dependent children. If three or more
15 general assistance recipients reside together in the same
16 household, their income eligibility and cash assistance shall be
17 no greater than income eligibility and cash assistance from aid
18 to families with dependent children for a household of the same
19 size. Regulations under this subsection shall provide for a
20 personal needs allowance deduction of fifty dollars (\$50) from
21 the gross income of an individual eligible for medical
22 assistance. The secretary or a written designee is the only
23 person authorized to adopt regulations, orders, or standards of
24 general application to implement, interpret, or make specific
25 the law administered by the department. The secretary shall
26 issue interim regulations whenever changes in Federal laws and
27 regulations supersede existing statutes. In adopting
28 regulations, orders, or standards of general application, the
29 secretary shall strive for clarity of language which may be
30 readily understood by those administering assistance and by

1 those who apply for or receive assistance. For the purpose of
2 this subsection, the term "household" does not include single-
3 room occupancy residences, rooming houses, nonprofit residential
4 programs or personal care facilities receiving charitable
5 funding or Federal, State or local government funding.

6 (c) Whenever a recipient of public assistance, as a
7 prerequisite to receiving assistance or otherwise, has been
8 required to encumber in favor of the Commonwealth any property,
9 or to give any bond, note or other obligation in any sum to
10 secure the repayment of moneys received as assistance or for any
11 other purposes, and such bonds, notes, judgments, mortgages, or
12 other obligations are thereafter assigned by the Commonwealth to
13 any third party, the assignee shall not be entitled to collect,
14 and the person liable for the payment of the lien or obligation
15 shall not be liable for the payment of, any amount greater than
16 the amount the assignee paid for the assignment, notwithstanding
17 the face amount of such lien or obligation. This provision shall
18 not be effective as to the collection of interest accruing after
19 the date of the assignment or costs of collection.

20 (d) No general assistance shall be paid to any full-time
21 student at a college or university who has not participated in a
22 Federally subsidized program for dependent children within the
23 previous five years.

24 (e) Beginning no later than December 31, 1982, the
25 department shall conduct annual quality control reviews of the
26 general assistance caseload in accordance with a methodology and
27 scope determined by the department.

28 (f) No general assistance shall be paid to initial
29 applicants who voluntarily terminate their employment until
30 thirty days after the date of termination.

1 (g) Regulations which authorize payment for purchase of an
2 automobile, for parts for an automobile or for repair of an
3 automobile for a recipient of public assistance shall provide
4 that the payment shall be made jointly to the seller of the
5 automobile or parts or the garage or mechanic which made the
6 repairs and the recipient.

7 Section 2. Section 442.2 of the act, added June 16, 1994
8 (P.L.319, No.49), is amended to read:

9 Section 442.2. Additional Services for Certain Medically
10 Needy Recipients.--In addition to other services provided to the
11 medically needy:

12 (1) Persons who receive or are eligible for chronically
13 needy general assistance pursuant to section 432(3)(i) shall
14 receive coverage for prescribed medications.

15 (2) Recipients in general assistance-related categories
16 whose benefits are funded at least in part by the Federal
17 Government may receive such additional medical benefits as are
18 federally funded. The department shall publish notice of such
19 additional services in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

20 (3) All persons who are eligible for public assistance shall
21 be eligible for a hearing aid sold in accordance with section
22 403 of the act of November 24, 1976 (P.L.1182, No.262), known as
23 the "Hearing Aid Sales Registration Law."

24 Section 3. The provisions of 55 Pa. Code § 181.452(d)(1)(i)
25 are abrogated.

26 Section 4. This act shall take effect in 60 days.