

PROGRAM 15 – SHORT TERM ASSISTANCE AND REFERRAL (STAR) PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Short Term Assistance and Referral is a Community Developmental Disabilities Program administered by the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. Through this program, services may be provided to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. STAR services are intended to respond immediately to a variety of needs related to averting or ameliorating a crisis situation. STAR Programs are designed to maximize the individual's ability to function independently in a difficult situation by providing immediate but limited relief.

STAR services may include, but are not limited to, case management to secure developmental disabilities services or other public benefits, transportation or travel assistance, utility assistance, or emergency respite care for the un-paid caregiver.

II. PROGRAM PROCEDURES

STAR Programs are administered as a separately identifiable program within an administering agency to provide assistance to people with developmental disabilities and their families. The STAR Program may assist those who have not completed the formal Eligibility Determination Application, or provide crisis funding to those who have been determined eligible by the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services staff.

Before a request for STAR funding is approved, all other available resources must be pursued. These resources may include private insurance, Medicaid, Indian Health Services, military support services, or other state or federal benefits programs.

There are twelve STAR Programs which are awarded to nonprofit organizations statewide. Persons receiving STAR Services must reside in the geographical area related to Census Areas specified in the Grant Agreement with the exception of one program that is designed to serve families from outlying areas who are accompanying children who are receiving medical care in Anchorage.

STAR Programs are expected to work closely with the DD Health Program Manager and utilize a local advisory board to assist in developing guidelines and monitoring the use of funds. STAR Programs must conduct customer satisfaction surveys and participate in DSDS Quality Assurance activities. Grantees that are awarded funds for STAR Programs must comply with DHSS requirements for the expenditure and reporting of the use of grant funds.

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III. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS AND SUGGESTED AUDIT PROCEDURES

A. TYPES OF SERVICES ALLOWED OR UNALLOWED

1. **Compliance Requirement:** Grant funds under this program are used to provide assistance with applications for developmental disabilities and other services, referral to community resources and response to a variety of needs related to averting or ameliorating a crisis situation. These funds may be used to support personnel, travel, supplies, equipment, facility expense and other cost categories necessary to sustain services as identified in the approved grant budget, special conditions, and program services specifications.

Although there are no requirements for matching funds, STAR Programs must use a portion of the grants funds specified in the Grant Award to provide services such as transportation or travel assistance, utility assistance, emergency respite care, or case management. These funds may be referred to as discretionary funds by the grantees.

Suggested Audit Procedures: Test financial and related records and determine that funds expended were for purposes specified in the grant. Review the following:

- a) Final Grant Award (GA) including all conditions;
 - b) Grant revisions and related transmittal letters;
 - c) Licenses, certification, approvals, status of private nonprofit corporation if applicable;
 - d) Budget documents including final revised budget and budget narrative;
 - e) A copy of the most recent Request for Proposal(s); and
 - f) The STAR Discretionary Funds P&P
2. **Compliance Requirement:** Costs allowed or disallowed under this program are determined by grant regulations 7 AAC 78 and approved budget documents and special conditions of the grants.
Suggested Audit Procedures:
 - a) Review Department of Health and Social Services' grant regulations 7 AAC 78 and budget documents;
 - b) Test financial and related records to determine the appropriateness of costs per 7 AAC 78; and
 - c) Determine whether expenditures are within the budget limits prescribed by 7 AAC 78.260(f)(1).

B. ELIGIBILITY -

1. **Compliance Requirement:** The grantee must be a nonprofit agency or political subdivision or Alaska Native Entity meeting the requirements of 7

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AAC 78.030. The auditor is not expected to make tests to verify the eligibility of clients served.

Suggested Audit Procedures: Review articles of incorporation or other appropriate documentation, licenses, certifications and approvals to determine status of agency.

C. MATCHING, LEVEL OF EFFORT AND/OR EARMARKING REQUIREMENTS -

There is no level of effort requirements. Any match requirements will appear in the budget on page one of the grant award.

D. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS -

1. **Compliance Requirement:** The grantee must submit for approval a quarterly expenditure report in order to be advanced funds for the succeeding quarter.

Suggested Audit Procedures: Confirm if such reports are being filed timely; that reported revenues and expenditures agree with the agency's general ledger; and that expenditures are within the budget limits or grant provisions.

2. **Compliance Requirement:** The agency's audit report must present a statement of revenue and expenses, budget and actual, for each state grant. Such statements must show, for each state fiscal year grant, the final approved budget by line item category, actual revenues and expenditures and variance between budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures. Disallowed or questioned costs must be clearly disclosed.

Suggested Audit Procedures:

- a) Review grant regulation 7 AAC 78.230.
- b) Review audit report for compliance with the above.

3. **Compliance Requirement:** The agency must clearly show on their audit report any outstanding liability to the state as payable to the state. This includes unspent grant funds and disallowed costs.

Suggested Audit Procedures:

- a) Determine whether or not the agency has any outstanding liability to the state.
- b) Review grant regulation 7 AAC 78.230.
- c) Review audit report to ensure proper presentation.

E. SPECIAL TESTS AND PROVISIONS -

1. **Compliance Requirement:** The agency must act upon any recommendations made by program site review.

Suggested Audit Procedures: Obtain copy of program site review; and determine if recommendations in the site review are being implemented.