

October 11, 2001

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 01-10
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE SENIOR STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS

FROM: RICHARD C. TRIGG
National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Medical Separations - PY 2000

1. Purpose. To report on medical separations for PY 2000.
2. Findings. The number of medical separations for PY 2000 totaled 2,253, a figure close to the 2,196 separations in PY 1999. Attachment A illustrates the following findings for medical separations in PY 2000:
 - Medical separations accounted for 3.2 percent of all Job Corps separations.
 - Pregnancy-related separations totaled 442, accounting for 20 percent of medical separations.
 - Physical disease and injury separations totaled 492, accounting for 22 percent of medical separations.
 - Mental health separations totaled 902, accounting for 40 percent of medical separations.
 - Substance abuse separations totaled 95, accounting for 4 percent of medical separations.
 - The remaining 14 percent of the medical separations involved 321 coded 999.99 (“other, sent written explanations to the national office”) and 1 coded 000.00 (“no medical code given”).

Attachment B presents overall trends from PY 1998 through PY 2000.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations.

a. Mental Health Separations. Mental health separations have decreased slightly, accounting for 40 percent of medical separations in PY 2000 compared to 44 percent in PY 1999. While mental health problems continue to be common among Job Corps students, the slight decrease in separations may be a result of the implementation of Job Corps' reasonable accommodation guidelines for students with disabilities.

As a result of the implementation of the reasonable accommodation guidelines, students with mental health disabilities are afforded the opportunity of using a reasonable accommodation to assist them in participating in and benefiting from the program. Prior to the implementation of the reasonable accommodation guidelines, centers frequently only had the option of medically separating a student with a mental health disability because he/she was unable to participate. While Job Corps may not be appropriate for students with severe mental health disabilities, all students are assessed to determine whether a reasonable accommodation is available to assist these students. We must continue to be aware of warning signs that may indicate a possible mental health problem and continue to provide a center-wide case management approach for students who have documented mental health problems.

Many adolescents and young adults are affected by mental health problems. Studies show that, at any given time, at least 1 in 5 children and adolescents may have a mental health problem. Mental health problems represent 4 out of the 10 leading causes of disability for persons age 5 and older.¹ At least 1 in 10, or as many as 6 million, young people may have a serious emotional disturbance.²

Mental health problems in adolescents and young adults can be caused by genetics, family disposition, environment, or a combination of all three. Environmental factors that can put young people at risk of developing mental health problems include:

- Exposure to violence, such as witnessing or being the victim of physical or sexual abuse, drive-by shootings, muggings, or other disasters.
- Stress related to chronic poverty, discrimination, or other serious hardships.
- Loss of important people in the lives of young people through death, divorce, or broken relationships.

¹ From the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, 1999.

² From National Mental Health Services Knowledge Exchange Network (KEN), 1999. KEN has publications and other materials designed to help providers serve children and families more effectively. KEN also identifies other resources. For more information, call 1-800-789-2647 or visit KEN's Web site (<http://www.mentalhealth.org/>).

We know that Job Corps students may be at a higher risk for developing mental health difficulties because they generally come from environments that may include one or more of the factors listed above.

Mental health separations tend to be higher than the other categories of separation. A closer review of mental health separations reveals that the majority of separations are for psychosis and affective disorders. These are two psychiatric categories that can require intensive treatment beyond the scope of Job Corps.

b. Trainee Employee Assistance Program (TEAP). As students attempt to stop their use of alcohol and other drugs, psychological problems that were masked are likely to be exposed, particularly depression. Center staff must be aware that withdrawal from use of alcohol and other drugs often precipitates other behavioral and personality problems. This may also be a contributing factor to the overall number of mental health separations.

c. Pregnancy. The decreased number of pregnancy separations (23 percent in PY 1999 to 20 percent in PY 2000) suggests that center staff have met the challenge to reduce the number of pregnant students on center. Despite the reduction in pregnancies, pregnancy remains a challenge for center staff. It interferes with students' successful completion of the Job Corps program and affects the center's onboard strength.

Under the guidance of the health and wellness center, the family planning programs should identify areas that may need to be developed or improved to continue the recent reduction in student pregnancies. A quality family planning program should consist of a dynamic educational component that is introduced to all students during orientation and discussed at regular intervals throughout the year. Family planning coordinators have successfully implemented various ongoing activities and interventions designed to address pregnancy and family planning issues for male and female students. Community resources should also be used to provide educational presentations and support to the center's family planning program. In the past, planned parenthood organizations have been very supportive in providing educational presentations that specifically address the needs of youth.

d. Codes. The use of code 999.99 ("other, sent written explanations to the National Office") remains a problem. In PY 1998, 241 separations were coded 999.99; in PY 1999, 161; in PY 2000, 321. Only a few of the 321 separations coded 999.99 were accompanied by the required written explanation. The high number in this program year may be attributed to a period of time during which the codes were being updated by the Job Corps Data Center and were unavailable to centers. During this period, only code 999.99 ("other") was available and functional. Health and wellness center staff should be reminded, however, that this code should not be used as a catchall code instead of making a definitive, or at least a tentative, diagnosis/assessment.

4. Action. Center directors should distribute copies of this Notice to senior management and health and wellness staff.

5. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

6. Inquiries. Direct any inquiries to Barbara Grove, RN, at (202) 693-3116, or email to BGrove@doleta.gov.

Attachments

A – PY 00 Summary of Job Corps Medical Separation Data

B – Summary of Medical Separation Data for (PY 1998 – 2000)

PY 00 SUMMARY OF JOB CORPS MEDICAL SEPARATION DATA			
MEDICAL SEPARATIONS AND CORRESPONDING SPAMIS CODES	NO.	PERCENTAGE OF MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	ALOS
PREGNANCY			
Normal Pregnancy (V22.0, V22.2)	338	10	214
Complications of Pregnancy (630-679)	104	5	103
Subtotal Pregnancy/Average ALOS	442	20	158.5
PHYSICAL			
Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (001-139)	34	2	79
Neoplasms (140-239)	3	<1	112
Endocrine Disorders (240-269)	28	1	74
Other Metabolic and Immunity Disorders (280-279)	8	<1	49
Diseases of the Blood and Blood- Forming Organs (280-289)	12	<1	39
Nervous System and Sense Organs (320-389)	13	<1	62
Circulatory System (390-459)	16	<1	137
Respiratory System (460-519)	11	<1	40
Digestive System (520-579)	34	2	109
Genitourinary System (580-629)	27	1	105
Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue (680-709)	30	1	275
Musculoskeletal System and Connective Tissue (710-739)	82	4	159
Congenital Anomalies (740-759)	6	<1	125
Symptoms, Signs, and Ill-Defined Conditions (780-799)	71	3	65
Injury and Poisoning (800-999)	117	5	168
Subtotal Physical/Average ALOS	492	22	106

PY 00 SUMMARY OF JOB CORPS MEDICAL SEPARATION DATA			
MEDICAL SEPARATIONS AND CORRESPONDING SPAMIS CODES	NO.	PERCENTAGE OF MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	ALOS
MENTAL HEALTH			
Personality Disorders and Behavior Problems (301.00-302.85; 307.10-309.90; 312.00-315.31)	269	12	74
Psychosis/Affective Disorders (295.10-298.90; 300.40; 311.00)	488	22	82
Anxiety (300.00-300.30; 300.60-300.81)	43	2	85
Unspecified Mental Disease (300.9)	9	<1	71.2
Learning Disorder NO	1	<1	80
Noncompliance with Medical Treatment (V15.81)	82	3	90
Parent-Child Problem (V61.20)	1	<1	186
Borderline Intellect (V62.89)	5	<1	34
Malingering (V65.20)	1	<1	59
Adult Antisocial Behavior (V71.01)	1	<1	33
No Diagnosis on Axis (V71.09)	2	<1	28.5
Subtotal Mental Health/Average ALOS	902	40	75
SUBSTANCE ABUSE			
Substance Abuse (291-292.90; 303.00-305.9)	95	4	66
Subtotal Substance Abuse/Average ALOS	95	4	66

PY 00 SUMMARY OF JOB CORPS MEDICAL SEPARATION DATA			
MEDICAL SEPARATIONS AND CORRESPONDING SPAMIS CODES	NO.	PERCENTAGE OF MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	ALOS
MISCELLANEOUS			
No Medical Code (000.00)	1	<1	75
Other (999.99)	321	14	140
Subtotal Miscellaneous/Average ALOS	322	14	107.5
TOTAL JOB CORPS (JC) SEPARATIONS	69,391		
TOTAL MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	2,253		
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL JC SEPARATIONS	3.2		
ALOS ALL MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	105.5		
ALOS TOTAL JOB CORPS	200.6		

Attachment B

SUMMARY OF MEDICAL SEPARATION DATA (PY 98-00)			
	PY 98	PY 99	PY 00
PREGNANCY	23%	23%	20%
PHYSICAL	26%	26%	22%
MENTAL HEALTH	39%	44%	40%
MISCELLANEOUS	12%	7%	14%
SUBSTANCE ABUSE*	-	-	4%
TOTAL MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	2,118	2,196	2,253
PERCENT OF TOTAL JC SEPARATIONS	3.1	3.2	3.2
ALOS (DAYS) ALL MEDICAL SEPARATIONS	128	122	105.5
ALOS (DAYS) TOTAL JOB CORPS	204	201	200.6

* Note: Statistics for were not collected for medical terminations resulting from substance abuse issues in PY 1998-1999.