

January 11, 2013

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NO. 12-23
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ROBERT W. PITULEJ
Acting National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Job Corps Health and Wellness Program Cost-Saving Strategies

1. Purpose. To inform the Job Corps Community of the Health-Care Cost Efficiency Workgroup’s cost-saving strategies for the Health and Wellness Program, and forthcoming policy changes.
2. Background. Recognizing the need to institute health-care cost savings in the Job Corps program, a cost-efficiency workgroup convened to review Job Corps’ current array of health-care services and staffing levels, and to develop recommendations on cost-saving strategies. The workgroup consisted of Office of Job Corps staff members, Job Corps Regional Office staff members, representatives from Job Corps centers, managing corporate offices, and the United States Forest Service.

The workgroup’s primary goal was to identify cost savings that Job Corps can implement immediately with as little impact on delivery of direct student health services as possible. The recommendations of this workgroup are critical to ensuring Job Corps can serve as many students as possible, as effectively as possible, and within the budget constraints of the program.

Health and Wellness Program Background

The Job Corps program is authorized by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). According to 20 CFR Part 652, WIA Final Rules, Section 670.525(d), Job Corps must offer “medical services, through provision or coordination of a wellness program which includes access to basic medical, dental and mental health services, as described in the Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH), for all students from the date of enrollment until separation from the Job Corps program.” Additionally, all enrollees must be drug tested for controlled substances per WIA Chapter 6, Subtitle C, Section 152.

The primary objective of the Job Corps Health and Wellness Program is to increase students' employability by helping each student reach his or her optimal health level. Basic health services are provided to students through coordinated medical, oral health, mental health, and substance use prevention (e.g., Trainee Employee Assistance Program [TEAP]) services. Centers provide case management of chronic illness, treatment of acute illnesses, promotion of self-management of health care, and health education and prevention activities.

Job Corps Center Operators are responsible for the management, coordination, and provision of services at the centers, including their wellness programs, in accordance with requirements and guidelines outlined by the PRH sections 6.10-6.12.

Overview of Health and Wellness Program Changes

To ensure an efficient and cost effective program, Job Corps is making the following changes to health and wellness services:

- 1) Alter current health staffing requirements to ensure basic medical, oral health, and substance-abuse needs are met, and that unmet mental-health needs are addressed through additional, targeted resources. Health staffing hours are based on the center's On-board Strength (OBS), the center's capacity for number of students. Staffing changes include:
 - a) Center physician hours are reduced from 4 hours per 100 students per week to 2 hours per 100 students per week, and a mid-level practitioner (nurse practitioner or physician's assistant) will be added at 2 hours per 100 students per week.

Many health-care organizations use mid-level practitioners for prevention and primary-care services. Mid-level practitioners are professionally trained to conduct physical examinations, diagnose illnesses, and can prescribe medications in most states. Mid-level practitioners, who most often earn less than physicians, are qualified to deliver the basic-health services offered by Job Corps.

- b) Center dentist hours are reduced from 4 hours per 100 students per week to 3 hours per 100 students per week; dental hygienist hours from 4 hours per 100 students per week to 3 hours per 100 students per week; and dental assistant hours from 6 hours per 100 students per week to 4 hours per 100 students per week.

Changes in oral-health staffing were based on two factors. First, a review of dental productivity indicators maintained on centers shows there is often a high broken appointment and no-show rate. Second, there will be changes to the mandatory dental services provided in Job Corps, as outlined below. At present, all students receive (1) a cursory oral examination within 48 hours of admission, and (2) a mandatory oral-health examination, including bitewing x-rays, within 75 days of admission. The cursory examination will be eliminated. In lieu of the cursory examination, each student will be provided a dental readiness inspection, similar to what the military requires, and be classified as to potential oral health

needs during their enrollment in Job Corps. Additionally, the oral examination will be elective upon student request as a follow-up to the dental readiness inspection. This revised approach will require less oral-health staffing resources, and ensure that services are provided to those on a prioritized and requested basis.

- c) Currently, the TEAP Specialist position is, at a minimum, a full-time equivalent (FTE); and the number of hours is based on the center's OBS. Centers with fewer than 500 OBS must provide a minimum of 40 hours. Larger centers must provide 60, 80, or 120 hours, depending upon center size. Moving forward, TEAP Specialist hours will be 6 hours per 100 students per week. This ensures that the TEAP Specialist position is consistent with staffing patterns for other Job Corps center health professionals.

Changes in TEAP staffing were based on two factors. First, TEAP Specialist hours will now correlate with expected caseloads, based on OBS, instead of allowing for the same staffing level across centers of various sizes. Second, newly defined program requirements with a greater focus on prevention and education, rather than detection and intervention, will streamline the delivery of services and increase efficiency.

- d) Mental health hours will increase from 5 hours per 100 students per week to 6 hours per 100 students per week.

This augmentation offsets the reduction in TEAP staffing, while simultaneously allowing Job Corps to reorient the system toward prevention and education. Moreover, the additional hour allows us to meet the increased needs of students with mental-health disorders on our centers.

- 2) Require applicants to provide current record of immunizations.

All Job Corps enrollees receive the following vaccines within 14 days of arrival on center unless they provide the center with a current immunization record: TD (tetanus-diphtheria); IPV (inactivated polio vaccine); MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella); Hepatitis B, and TB test result. Because the majority of enrollees must have updated immunizations to enter the educational system or to obtain alien status, it is highly probable that Job Corps is unnecessarily administering vaccinations. Stopping unnecessary vaccination will allow for cost savings.

Henceforth, all applicants will be required to provide Admissions Counselors with current immunization records at the time of application. Records will be reviewed by center staff upon entry to determine currency of immunizations and, center health staff will administer boosters for outdated immunizations (e.g., tetanus) as indicated, perform a TB test, and provide an influenza vaccine. If current immunization records are not produced, the enrollee will be fully immunized on center. Centers providing immunizations under the Vaccines for Children program should continue to provide those services and update student immunization records.

Next Steps

The Job Corps Health and Wellness Program changes in this document are the result of recommendations from the health-care cost efficiency workgroup. We accepted short-term recommendations from the workgroup that would impact our PY 2012 cost-savings effort, and they are included in this Program Instruction. We will be evaluating further the long-term recommendations of the workgroup. Because changes will impact staffing levels, select Health and Wellness requirements have been restructured accordingly. A PRH Change Notice reflecting these changes is being simultaneously released.

3. Action. Addressees are to ensure this Program Instruction is distributed to all appropriate staff.
4. Effective Date. January 14, 2013.
5. Contractual Implementation. Contracts affected by this notice will implement these programmatic changes as of the effective date of this notice. In addition, contractors will receive guidance from their Contracting Officers regarding a modification to their contracts, which will reduce the total estimated cost of the contract as a result of these Health and Wellness Program savings.
6. Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to Carol Abnathy at (202) 693-3283 or via e-mail at abnathy.carol@dol.gov or Johnetta Davis at (202) 693-8010 or via e-mail at davis.johnetta@dol.gov.