

APD SUNCOAST AREA NEWS

VOLUME II ISSUE 3

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2008

Agency Prepares to Implement Waiver Tiers

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*"...we understand this may
be a difficult time..."*

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities will implement the legislatively mandated Medicaid Waiver tiers effective October 15. The original effective date was July; however, a challenge to APD's authority resulted in the postponement of the implementation date. Last month, Administrative Law Judge Eleanor Hunter ruled in APD's favor.

Currently, the agency is in the process of notifying customers and their waiver support coordinator of their tier assignment.

The new four-tiered waiver system and its criteria as mandated by the Florida Legislature are as follows:

- Tier One No cap
- Tier Two Cap of \$55,000
- Tier Three Cap of \$35,000
- Tier Four Cap of \$14,792

"Most people will not see any service reductions when the new tiers begin on October 15," said APD Director Jim DeBeaugrine, "However, for those who will need to reduce services, we understand this may be a difficult time. "

Customers are encouraged to review their tier assignment thoroughly and contact their waiver support coordinator for further direction.

For additional information regarding the tiers and the implementation process, please review "Understanding the Waiver Tiers," "Procedures for Enrolling in the Tier Waivers" and "Agency Revises Waiver Tier Implementation Date" available at <http://apd.myflorida.com>.



Unit 360

Front row left: Barbara Heindel
(supervisor), Victoria Perry, Michael
Breen, Rosalie Castillo, Arinda Perez &
Jennie Majerick

2009 Florida State Benefits Statements

The 2009 Florida State Benefits guide details the health care coverage options available to Florida state employees for the 2009 enrollment period. The benefits guide will answer many of your questions regarding coverage and enrollment. Important changes for 2009:

One –The pre-tax vision option is back with more choices to fit your individual needs

Two –You now have the option to cover certain eligible dependents up to age 30. They can be covered under their own individual plan using post-tax payroll deductions.

Three – A new “grace period” feature to your Flexible Spending Account (FSA) benefits for 2008.

Four – Increased Health Savings Account contribution limits.

Five – HMO options are now available in Bay and St. Lucie Counties

Six –Relaxed requirements for medical underwriting for accident and disability supplemental coverage.

The Florida State Benefits guide also includes a list of the scheduled dates and locations for the upcoming benefit fairs.

All insurance changes made during the open enrollment period will be effective **January 1, 2009**.



IT Corner

The Office of Information Technology Services works diligently to improve services to department employees. During the next few weeks, our IT team will begin the move to the new Microsoft Active Directory system.

This new system will change the way information is stored and accessed while standardizing network and desktop services.

Your role in this process is to evaluate and prepare your computer for the conversion process. All nonessential files (personal pictures, wave files, etc.) should be removed and all necessary files stored on the server. This will allow for the continual and automatic back up of your files. It will also help to create a smooth transition process to the new server and immediate access to your files after the conversion process is complete.

As always, Deborah Decker is available for assistance and guidance throughout the process. Please feel free to contact her at (813) 233-4315 or deborah_decker@apd.state.fl.us.

ADA Amendments Act Passes

On September 11, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. The bill will provide additional protection for people with disabilities. "After many months of negotiation, the legislation represents a sound compromise between the Senate, the House, the business community, and the disability community," said Randel K. Johnson, vice president of labor, immigration, and employee benefits of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

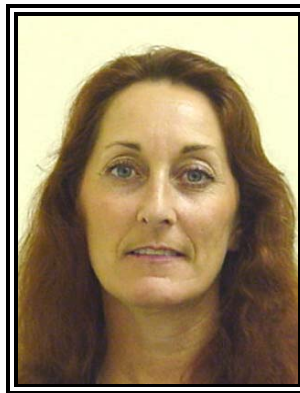
New Employee Evaluation Procedure

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities will evaluate all employees' performance annually each March, beginning March 2009. The Department of Management Services (DMS) has revised the performance rule effective January 1, 2009. The rating scale and definitions have changed. The revised forms, Frequently Asked Questions and 60L-35 rule can be viewed at <http://dms.myflorida.com>.

Congratulations on Your Promotion!



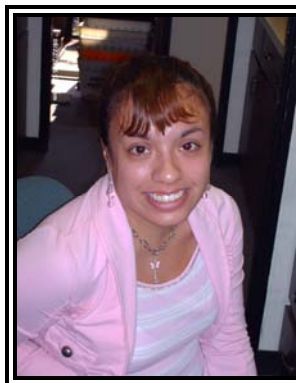
Denise Oetinger
Waitlist & Waiver Services



Judith Redding
Provider Development



Helene Coutu
Specialized Services



Catherine Maffei
Fiscal Assistant

September Birthdays

Diane Gellar	5
Sandy Mistretta	12
Dave LePere	13
Marcie DiGrazia	25



Gold Star Award



I would like to commend our QSI team for their outstanding efforts in completing their monthly goals. They have worked very hard to ensure that all assessments have been completed accurately and on time.

Cheryl Blackwell-Cox, QSI Special Projects Coordinator



Gold Star Award



Hilda Robinson received a wonderful note of appreciation for her assistance and dedication to those we serve...

"...No matter what the issue, Hilda always provides prompt assistance by making herself available to me and has been helpful to me in a way that I very rarely see anymore. If everyone approached their job as Hilda does, I truly believe we could eliminate much of the problems that we as Providers go through. In a day and age where we only seem to hear about all the bad in our society, I would like to personally thank Hilda Robinson for making a difference in my life, my agency, and for helping me better serve the consumers that we work for."

Sincerely,

Tallulah Held
President/CEO
Achieving Dreams Corp.



Michelle Tolini has gone beyond her original job duties, which involved assigning cases and tracking submissions. Michelle handles many day-to-day phone calls and emails for technical assistance from the other assessors. Her knowledge of APD, the QSI and the community are an invaluable asset for this position. In addition, she has volunteered to help organize an art show at the St. Petersburg DD Center to display student artwork from local ADT's. Aside from all of these accomplishments, she has managed to submit the required number of assessments every month. Michelle has completed everything asked of her with speed, accuracy and a smile. Thank you, Michelle, for a job well done!

Cheryl Blackwell-Cox,
QSI/Special Projects Coordinator



Jesse Gayton (intern) & Debra Decker (APD)

Please welcome Jesse Gaytan. Jesse is our new IT intern. He is a student at the University of Phoenix working on a degree in Information Technology. He joins us one day a week (Tuesday).



Please issue a warm welcome to Gary Gershowitz. Gary is the agency's contract manager and an employee of the APD Central Office team.

Announcements

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

October 2

Florida State Employee Charitable Campaign Kick-Off

Please join the fun as we kick-off our Florida State Employee Charitable Campaign drive – “A Ray of Hope”

Two Locations:

9:00AM~ 10:00AM ~ 1313 N. Tampa Street, Suite 516

1:30PM ~ 2:30PM ~ 1201 102nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL

October 3

APD SunCoast Area & FCC Disability Employment Awareness Month Kick-Off Event: “Paving the Way to Work, Live, and Succeed”

Breakout Session Topics:

- *APD *Supported Employment Program *Family Care Council
- *Abilities - WIPA *Disability Program Navigator *IRS
- * Med-waiver *Transitioning Students *Employers *Vocational Rehabilitation *SSA Benefits *Secondary Education
- *Work Incentives *Self-Employment & *Micro-Enterprise*Asset Development

October 16

16th Annual United Way Day of Caring

The United Way of Tampa Bay is hosting its annual United Way Day of Caring event. This is a wonderful event, which allows us to assist individuals in our community. If you are interested in joining our APD SunCoast Area United Way Day of Caring Team, please contact Glorie Singleton at (813) 233-4318 or glorie_singleton@apd.state.fl.us.

October 17

APD SunCoast Area Art Show & Reception

11:30AM ~ 1:30PM

1201 102nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL

Please join us as we celebrate and honor our local artists and their wonderful works of art.

Artwork will be available for your viewing pleasure and purchase throughout the month of October.

October 21

Disability Mentoring Day

Disability Mentoring Day promotes career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration. If you are interested in signing up as a mentor on the APD team, please contact Glorie Singleton at (813)233-4318 or glorie_singleton@apd.state.fl.us