

Assistance to the aged, blind, and disabled should be placed at once on a certified application basis. Mandated periodic verification of the eligibility of these recipients would be eliminated, since by definition their condition is not likely to change in the rest of their lives.

Social service should be separated from the function of determining eligibility and granting financial assistance. This separation would result in more effective use of trained social workers, and would undoubtedly reduce staff turnover.

It should be the policy of the State that every preschool and young school-age child who needs day-care services should have such services available to him. The board has recommended that public capital funding be made available—as is the case in other areas of special need, such as housing and nursing homes—for construction and rehabilitation of needed day care facilities.

Incidentally, this is the one major block to the extension of day-care facilities, the fact that the physical day-care facilities are difficult to rent and rehabilitate and maintain in a way that will be healthy and safe for the children who need such care.

An incentive allowance should be established for welfare recipients who obtain employment. At present, a welfare recipient has no practical motivation to seek a job, since a dollar is deducted from his grant for every dollar he earns, except as effective July 1 with the change in the Federal act.

Family planning is an essential service which should be available regardless of a person's economic status. The State board has already required that the availability of family planning services and facilities be made known to welfare recipients. The board is now considering an extension of this rule so as to include not only recipients of public assistance but also recipients of care or services who are married or heads of families.

It should be the public policy of our State and our Nation to provide job opportunities for all people and to adjust our economic planning, our laws, and our attitudes to attain that end.

There should be more research in social welfare, and modern technology should be utilized where possible in the delivery of social services to the needy.

A number of important recommendations made by the State board in its report to the Governor can be implemented only through action by the Congress or administrative branches of the Federal Government. Following is a summary of these proposals.

1. UNIFORM NATIONAL STANDARDS

The board urges the Congress of the United States to establish realistic national standards for public assistance which would provide a floor below which no person in the land would be expected to live.

One of the principal weaknesses of the present welfare system is that it does not assure every needy American that he will be protected in his essential right to food, clothing, and shelter. The lack of federally mandated standards causes a wide variation in public assistance benefits in the 50 States. Such variations range from granting a small percentage of a minimum subsistence standard in some of the poorest States to meeting 100 percent of basic needs on a more liberal standard in States like New York.