

**TO:** Local District Commissioners, Medicaid Directors

**FROM:** Judith Arnold  
Director, Division of Coverage and Enrollment

**SUBJECT:** Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPA&O) for SSA  
Beneficiaries

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately

**CONTACT PERSON:** Local District Liaison  
Upstate: 518-474-8887 NYC: 212-417-4500

The purpose of this GIS message is to inform local Departments of Social Services of a name change for the Social Security Administration (SSA) Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPA&O) projects. As described in 03 OMM/ADM-4 dated June 9, 2003, the BPA&O projects provide SSA beneficiaries with disabilities, including working age youth, access to benefits planning and assistance services. A BPA&O Cooperative Agreement Awards List was attached to the ADM so that local district staff could provide referrals to the appropriate BPA&O in their area. On October 1, 2006, the SSA awarded a new round of cooperative agreements to seven community organizations in New York State and with the new awards came a new name. These projects are now called Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA). Each WIPA project has Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs), formerly known as Benefits Counselors.

The CWICs will:

- conduct outreach efforts to beneficiaries with disabilities and their families, who are potentially eligible to participate in Federal or State work incentives programs;
- work in cooperation with Federal, State, private agencies and nonprofit organizations that serve beneficiaries with disabilities;
- screen and refer beneficiaries with disabilities to appropriate Employment Networks based on the beneficiary's expressed needs and type of impairment(s);
- provide general information on the adequacy of health benefits coverage that may be offered by an employer of a beneficiary with a disability and the extent to which other health benefits coverage may be available to that beneficiary in coordination with Medicare and/or Medicaid; and
- provide information on the availability of protection and advocacy services for beneficiaries with disabilities and how to access such services.

Attached is a list of WIPAs and their locations. Local districts are encouraged to refer SSA beneficiaries to the WIPA assigned to their area if the individual may benefit from the services offered.

## Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Cooperative Agreement Awards in New York State

| <u>WIPA's</u>   | <u>Address</u>  | <u>Phone Number</u>                                       | <u>Service Area</u>   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Abilities, Inc.</b>  | 201 I.U. Willets Road<br>Albertson, NY 11507  | (516) 465-1480/1405                                       | Nassau & Suffolk Counties of Long Island NY   |
| <b>City University of NY (CUNY)<br/>Research Foundation</b>   | 101 West 31 <sup>st</sup> Street, 14 <sup>th</sup> Fl<br>New York, NY 10001   | (646) 344-7315  | Bronx County  |
| <b>Goodwill of Greater New York and Northern<br/>New Jersey, Inc.</b>   | 4-21 27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue,<br>Astoria, NY 11102  | (718) 777-6338  | Kings and Queens Counties   |
| <b>Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.</b>  | 295 Main Street, Room 495<br>Buffalo, NY 14203  | (716) 847-0655 x 262                                      | Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie,<br>Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans,<br>Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne,<br>Wyoming, and Yates Counties   |
| <b>Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene.<br/>Subcontractor;<br/>Institute for Community Living, Inc (ICL)</b> | 8620 18 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rm 105<br>Brooklyn, NY 11214<br><br>40 Rector Street, 11 <sup>th</sup> Fl<br>New York, NY 10006 | (718) 256-5631<br><br>(212) 385-3030 x3139                | New York and Richmond Counties<br>(Staten Island)   |
| <b>Resource Center for Independent Living</b>   | 401-409 Columbia Street, PO Box 210<br>Utica, New York 13503  | (315) 797-4642  | Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango,<br>Clinton, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin,<br>Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis,<br>Madison, Montgomery, Oneida, Onondaga,<br>Oswego, Otsego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence,<br>Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Sullivan,<br>Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, and Washington<br>Counties |
| <b>Transitional WIPA</b>  | <b>Imagine Enterprises</b>  | Toll free<br>1-866-426-1132<br>9am to 7pm<br>Eastern Time | Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange,<br>Putnam, Rockland, Ulster and Westchester<br>Counties   |

For more information, individuals can;  
Call their local SSA office or call the Statewide Technical Assistance Line  
toll free at 1-888-224-3272 TDD (716)847-1322.  
They can also visit the SSA website at  
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ServiceProviders/WIPADirectory.html>  
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/WIPA.doc>