

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1915

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE,
APRIL 4, 1991

Brief Description: Providing employment services in mental health programs.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives R. King, Prentice, Morris, Prince, Nealey, Ogden and Chandler).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators West, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Niemi, and Wojahn.

Staff: Suzanne Brown (786-7483)

Hearing Dates: April 2, 1991; April 4, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Psychiatrically disabled persons view themselves as increasingly capable of functioning as contributing members of society when they are employed. Successful mental health programs with vocational components have been in Washington for many years.

Current law requires state and local mental health authorities to provide day treatment for mentally ill persons. These services include training in basic living and social skills, supported work and vocational rehabilitation.

The Mental Health Division, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and community mental health programs identify the need for collaboration to expand locally based supported employment opportunities for mentally ill persons.

SUMMARY:

Existing Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) requirements regarding community mental health programs are expanded to include employment services. Employment services include supported employment, transitional work, placement in competitive employment, and other work-related services resulting in meaningful and gainful full or part-time work for mentally ill persons. The Department of Social and Health Services may use a variety of funding sources, including Division of Vocational Rehabilitation funds, to maximize federal funding and service integration.

The existing duties of county authorities under Chapter 71.24 RCW are expanded to include employment services. The regional support network's statutory duties are also expanded to include employment services.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Employment services are a vitally important part of the rehabilitation and treatment of mentally ill individuals. The bill provides an opportunity to develop employment opportunities and programs for mentally ill individuals.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Jeanne Munro, DVR; Sharon Stewart Johnson, MHD; Pat Thibaudeau, WA Community Mental Health Council (pro)