

provisions of such subsection for such period, such estimate to be based on such records of the State and information furnished by it, and such other investigation as the Commissioner may find necessary.

(2) The Commissioner shall pay, from the allotment available therefor, the amount so estimated by the Commissioner for such period, reduced or increased, as the case may be, by any sum (not previously adjusted under this paragraph) by which the Commissioner finds that the estimate of the amount to be paid the State for any prior period under such subsection was greater or less than the amount which should have been paid to the State for such prior period under such subsection. Such payment shall be made prior to audit or settlement by the Government Accountability Office, shall be made through the disbursing facilities of the Treasury Department, and shall be made in such installments as the Commissioner may determine.

(Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §111, as added Pub. L. 105-220, title IV, §404, Aug. 7, 1998, 112 Stat. 1162; amended Pub. L. 105-277, div. A, §101(f) [title VIII, §402(b)(8)], Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-337, 2681-413; Pub. L. 108-271, §8(b), July 7, 2004, 118 Stat. 814.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 731, Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §111, Sept. 26, 1973, 87 Stat. 371; Pub. L. 95-602, title I, §122(b)(1), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2987; Pub. L. 99-506, title II, §208, title X, §1001(b)(6), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1818, 1842; Pub. L. 100-630, title II, §202(e)(1), (2)(A), (3), Nov. 7, 1988, 102 Stat. 3306; Pub. L. 102-569, title I, §132, Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4390; Pub. L. 103-73, title I, §107(f), Aug. 11, 1993, 107 Stat. 723, related to payments to States, prior to the general amendment of this subchapter by Pub. L. 105-220.

#### AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 108-271 substituted “Government Accountability Office” for “General Accounting Office”.

1998—Pub. L. 105-277 made technical amendment to section designation and catchline in original.

### § 732. Client assistance program

#### (a) Establishment of grant program

From funds appropriated under subsection (h) of this section, the Secretary shall, in accordance with this section, make grants to States to establish and carry out client assistance programs to provide assistance in informing and advising all clients and client applicants of all available benefits under this chapter, and, upon request of such clients or client applicants, to assist and advocate for such clients or applicants in their relationships with projects, programs, and services provided under this chapter, including assistance and advocacy in pursuing legal, administrative, or other appropriate remedies to ensure the protection of the rights of such individuals under this chapter and to facilitate access to the services funded under this chapter through individual and systemic advocacy. The client assistance program shall provide information on the available services and benefits under this chapter and title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12111 et seq.) to individuals with disabili-

ties in the State, especially with regard to individuals with disabilities who have traditionally been unserved or underserved by vocational rehabilitation programs. In providing assistance and advocacy under this subsection with respect to services under this subchapter, a client assistance program may provide the assistance and advocacy with respect to services that are directly related to facilitating the employment of the individual.

#### (b) Existence of State program as requisite to receiving payments

No State may receive payments from its allotment under this chapter in any fiscal year unless the State has in effect not later than October 1, 1984, a client assistance program which—

(1) has the authority to pursue legal, administrative, and other appropriate remedies to ensure the protection of rights of individuals with disabilities who are receiving treatments, services, or rehabilitation under this chapter within the State; and

(2) meets the requirements of designation under subsection (c) of this section.

#### (c) Designation of agency to conduct program

(1)(A) The Governor shall designate a public or private agency to conduct the client assistance program under this section. Except as provided in the last sentence of this subparagraph, the Governor shall designate an agency which is independent of any agency which provides treatment, services, or rehabilitation to individuals under this chapter. If there is an agency in the State which has, or had, prior to February 22, 1984, served as a client assistance agency under this section and which received Federal financial assistance under this chapter, the Governor may, in the initial designation, designate an agency which provides treatment, services, or rehabilitation to individuals with disabilities under this chapter.

(B)(i) The Governor may not redesignate the agency designated under subparagraph (A) without good cause and unless—

(I) the Governor has given the agency 30 days notice of the intention to make such redesignation, including specification of the good cause for such redesignation and an opportunity to respond to the assertion that good cause has been shown;

(II) individuals with disabilities or the individuals' representatives have timely notice of the redesignation and opportunity for public comment; and

(III) the agency has the opportunity to appeal to the Commissioner on the basis that the redesignation was not for good cause.

(ii) If, after August 7, 1998—

(I) a designated State agency undergoes any change in the organizational structure of the agency that results in the creation of one or more new State agencies or departments or results in the merger of the designated State agency with one or more other State agencies or departments; and

(II) an agency (including an office or other unit) within the designated State agency was conducting a client assistance program before the change under the last sentence of subparagraph (A),

the Governor shall redesignate the agency conducting the program. In conducting the redesignation, the Governor shall designate to conduct the program an agency that is independent of any agency that provides treatment, services, or rehabilitation to individuals with disabilities under this chapter.

(2) In carrying out the provisions of this section, the Governor shall consult with the director of the State vocational rehabilitation agency, the head of the developmental disability protection and advocacy agency, and with representatives of professional and consumer organizations serving individuals with disabilities in the State.

(3) The agency designated under this subsection shall be accountable for the proper use of funds made available to the agency.

**(d) Class action by designated agency prohibited**

The agency designated under subsection (c) of this section may not bring any class action in carrying out its responsibilities under this section.

**(e) Allotment and reallocation of funds**

(1)(A) The Secretary shall allot the sums appropriated for each fiscal year under this section among the States on the basis of relative population of each State, except that no State shall receive less than \$50,000.

(B) The Secretary shall allot \$30,000 each to American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(C) For the purpose of this paragraph, the term "State" does not include American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(D)(i) In any fiscal year that the funds appropriated for such fiscal year exceed \$7,500,000, the minimum allotment shall be \$100,000 for States and \$45,000 for territories.

(ii) For any fiscal year in which the total amount appropriated under subsection (h) of this section exceeds the total amount appropriated under such subsection for the preceding fiscal year, the Secretary shall increase each of the minimum allotments under clause (i) by a percentage that shall not exceed the percentage increase in the total amount appropriated under such subsection between the preceding fiscal year and the fiscal year involved.

(2) The amount of an allotment to a State for a fiscal year which the Secretary determines will not be required by the State during the period for which it is available for the purpose for which allotted shall be available for reallocation by the Secretary at appropriate times to other States with respect to which such a determination has not been made, in proportion to the original allotments of such States for such fiscal year, but with such proportionate amount for any of such other States being reduced to the extent it exceeds the sum the Secretary estimates such State needs and will be able to use during such period, and the total of such reduction shall be similarly reallocated among the States whose proportionate amounts were not so reduced. Any such amount so reallocated to a State for a fiscal year shall be deemed to be a part of its allotment for such fiscal year.

(3) Except as specifically prohibited by or as otherwise provided in State law, the Secretary shall pay to the agency designated under subsection (c) of this section the amount specified in the application approved under subsection (f) of this section.

**(f) Application by State for grant funds**

No grant may be made under this section unless the State submits an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the Secretary deems necessary to meet the requirements of this section.

**(g) Regulations; minimum requirements**

The Secretary shall prescribe regulations applicable to the client assistance program which shall include the following requirements:

(1) No employees of such programs shall, while so employed, serve as staff or consultants of any rehabilitation project, program, or facility receiving assistance under this chapter in the State.

(2) Each program shall be afforded reasonable access to policymaking and administrative personnel in the State and local rehabilitation programs, projects, or facilities.

(3)(A) Each program shall contain provisions designed to assure that to the maximum extent possible alternative means of dispute resolution are available for use at the discretion of an applicant or client of the program prior to resorting to litigation or formal adjudication to resolve a dispute arising under this section.

(B) In subparagraph (A), the term "alternative means of dispute resolution" means any procedure, including good faith negotiation, conciliation, facilitation, mediation, factfinding, and arbitration, and any combination of procedures, that is used in lieu of litigation in a court or formal adjudication in an administrative forum, to resolve a dispute arising under this section.

(4) For purposes of any periodic audit, report, or evaluation of the performance of a client assistance program under this section, the Secretary shall not require such a program to disclose the identity of, or any other personally identifiable information related to, any individual requesting assistance under such program.

**(h) Authorization of appropriations**

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 1999 through 2003 to carry out the provisions of this section.

(Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §112, as added Pub. L. 105-220, title IV, §404, Aug. 7, 1998, 112 Stat. 1163; amended Pub. L. 105-277, div. A, §101(f) [title VIII, §402(b)(9)], Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-337, 2681-413.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, referred to in subsec. (a), is Pub. L. 101-336, July 26, 1990, 104 Stat. 327, as amended. Title I of the Act is classified generally to subchapter I (§12111 et seq.) of chapter 126 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short

Title note set out under section 12101 of Title 42 and Tables.

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Prior sections 732 and 740 were omitted in the general amendment of this subchapter by Pub. L. 105-220.

Section 732, Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §112, Sept. 26, 1973, 87 Stat. 371; Pub. L. 93-516, title I, §§102(b), 111(f), Dec. 7, 1974, 88 Stat. 1618, 1620; Pub. L. 93-651, title I, §§102(b), 111(f), Nov. 21, 1974, 89 Stat. 2-3, 2-5; Pub. L. 94-230, §§2(b), 11(b)(4), Mar. 15, 1976, 90 Stat. 211, 213; Pub. L. 95-602, title I, §§105, 122(b)(1), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2960, 2987; Pub. L. 97-375, title I, §105, Dec. 21, 1982, 96 Stat. 1820; Pub. L. 98-221, title I, §113(a), Feb. 22, 1984, 98 Stat. 20; Pub. L. 99-506, title I, §103(d)(2)(C), title II, §209, title X, §1001(b)(7), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1810, 1818, 1842; Pub. L. 100-630, title II, §202(f), Nov. 7, 1988, 102 Stat. 3306; Pub. L. 102-52, §2(c), June 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 260; Pub. L. 102-569, title I, §§102(p)(10), 133, Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4357, 4391; Pub. L. 103-73, title I, §107(g), Aug. 11, 1993, 107 Stat. 723; Pub. L. 104-66, title I, §1041(c), Dec. 21, 1995, 109 Stat. 714, related to client assistance program.

Section 740, Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §120, as added Pub. L. 102-569, title I, §134(a), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4392, related to State eligibility for grants.

Another prior section 740, Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §120, Sept. 26, 1973, 87 Stat. 372; Pub. L. 95-602, title I, §§101(e)(1), 122(b)(1), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2957, 2987; Pub. L. 99-506, title X, §1001(b)(8), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1842; Pub. L. 100-630, title II, §202(g), Nov. 7, 1988, 102 Stat. 3306, provided for State allotments to assist in meeting the cost of vocational rehabilitation services, prior to the general amendment of part C of former subchapter I of this chapter by Pub. L. 102-569.

#### AMENDMENTS

1998—Pub. L. 105-277 made technical amendment to section designation and catchline in original.

#### PART C—AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

### § 741. Vocational rehabilitation services grants

#### (a) Governing bodies of Indian tribes; amount; non-Federal share

The Commissioner, in accordance with the provisions of this part, may make grants to the governing bodies of Indian tribes located on Federal and State reservations (and consortia of such governing bodies) to pay 90 percent of the costs of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near such reservations. The non-Federal share of such costs may be in cash or in kind, fairly valued, and the Commissioner may waive such non-Federal share requirement in order to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

#### (b) Application; effective period; continuation of programs and services; separate service delivery systems

(1) No grant may be made under this part for any fiscal year unless an application therefor has been submitted to and approved by the Commissioner. The Commissioner may not approve an application unless the application—

(A) is made at such time, in such manner, and contains such information as the Commissioner may require;

(B) contains assurances that the rehabilitation services provided under this part to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near a reservation

in a State shall be, to the maximum extent feasible, comparable to rehabilitation services provided under this subchapter to other individuals with disabilities residing in the State and that, where appropriate, may include services traditionally used by Indian tribes; and

(C) contains assurances that the application was developed in consultation with the designated State unit of the State.

(2) The provisions of sections 450c, 450d, 450e, and 450f(a) of title 25 shall be applicable to any application submitted under this part. For purposes of this paragraph, any reference in any such provision to the Secretary of Education or to the Secretary of the Interior shall be considered to be a reference to the Commissioner.

(3) Any application approved under this part shall be effective for not more than 60 months, except as determined otherwise by the Commissioner pursuant to prescribed regulations. The State shall continue to provide vocational rehabilitation services under its State plan to American Indians residing on or near a reservation whenever such State includes any such American Indians in its State population under section 730(a)(1) of this title.

(4) In making grants under this part, the Secretary shall give priority consideration to applications for the continuation of programs which have been funded under this part.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize a separate service delivery system for Indian residents of a State who reside in non-reservation areas.

#### (c) "Reservation" defined

The term "reservation" includes Indian reservations, public domain Indian allotments, former Indian reservations in Oklahoma, and land held by incorporated Native groups, regional corporations, and village corporations under the provisions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act [43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.].

(Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §121, as added Pub. L. 105-220, title IV, §404, Aug. 7, 1998, 112 Stat. 1166; amended Pub. L. 105-277, div. A, §101(f) [title VIII, §402(b)(10)], Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-337, 2681-413.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, referred to in subsec. (c), is Pub. L. 92-203, Dec. 18, 1971, 85 Stat. 688, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 33 (§1601 et seq.) of Title 43, Public Lands. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1601 of Title 43 and Tables.

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Prior sections 741 to 744 and 750 were omitted in the general amendment of this subchapter by Pub. L. 105-220.

Section 741, Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §121, as added Pub. L. 102-569, title I, §134(a), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4392, related to contents of strategic plans.

Another prior section 741, Pub. L. 93-112, title I, §121, Sept. 26, 1973, 87 Stat. 373; Pub. L. 93-516, title I, §102(c), Dec. 7, 1974, 88 Stat. 1618; Pub. L. 93-651, title I, §102(c), Nov. 21, 1974, 89 Stat. 2-3; Pub. L. 94-230, §2(c), Mar. 15, 1976, 90 Stat. 211; Pub. L. 95-602, title I, §§101(e)(2), 122(b), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2957, 2987; Pub. L. 98-221, title I, §114, Feb. 22, 1984, 98 Stat. 23; Pub. L. 99-506, title I, §103(d)(2)(C), title II, §210, Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat.