

VENTURE PRODUCTIONS, INC. ACCOMPLISHMENT IN ADAMS COUNTY

By Terri O'Connell, Editor



Kevin Ross holds a Certificate of Appreciation from the Village of Manchester, given in recognition of Kevin's contribution to the village's holiday light display. Community awareness and involvement are emphasized at Venture Productions, Inc.

Adams County sits on the Ohio River some fifty miles east of Cincinnati at the western edge of the Appalachians. With a population density of fewer than 50 people per square mile there's plenty of room to stretch your legs. But with a tax yield of just \$544,500 per mil, Adams County public service agencies must stretch every dollar too. To squeeze as many service dollars as possible from the county MRDD board's two mil levy, the adult program, Venture Productions, Inc., employs an organizational structure that's as flat as they come. Workshop Director Lizabeth Lafferty and Secretary Deloris Alexander form Venture's administrative layer. There is no middle management. The Workshop Director is responsible for administrative, habilitation, and production management functions. All fifteen (15) staff members are direct reports.

Lafferty is quick to point out that Venture Productions, Inc. is a true team effort. She praises staff for adopting the premise that everything is everyone's responsibility. Venture's horizontal structure demands a lot from staff according to Lafferty. Each member must be cross trained, flexible, and able to make decisions and take action independently. All members of the team must be committed to shared values, continuous communication, and productive collaboration. There is nowhere to shed responsibility.

It works. Last year the Adams County Board of MRDD was awarded a four-year Accreditation from ODMRDD. They received no citations on the Adult Services standards. The program places a strong emphasis on responding to consumer and family requests. The group honors choice and works hard to provide appropriate service options. There's a steady resolve to respect consumers' right to control. All behavior support strategies are positive.

Venture Productions, Inc. currently serves sixty-three individuals. There's a waiting list of fifteen (15). Facility-based programs are provided in a well planned and fully utilized 15,000 square foot building. Facility based programs are:

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Work Alternatives - Activities include health maintenance, sensory stimulation, socialization, and recreation/leisure. Eight (8) consumers participate, most are medically fragile. The staff to consumer ratio is 3:8.

Sheltered Employment – A variety of work provides full employment to fifty-five (55) sheltered employees. There's been no downtime in seven years – an impressive statistic. Supervision is provided by seven (7) full-time and one (1) part-time staff. Staff to consumer ratios range from 1:1 to 1:16. The non-profit board owns two trucks (14' and 24') for pick-up and delivery. Venture's customers include GE Aircraft (refurbish engine connectors and Hoke panels), Cincinnati Dowel Manufacturing (sorting and packaging good/bad wooden dowels), Red Devil Flint (packaging flints for lighters), Ellis Farms (packaging corn), Premier Packaging (building box partitions), and K & M Farms (building and packaging sizzle sticks). Secure document destruction is also offered and serves as a fill-in to contract work.

Venture's community-based employment program is comprised of numerous sites located in Adams and adjacent Brown counties. Mobile crew sites include a roadside rest, a primitive rest area, an ODOT garage, and an ODOT outpost. Venture also cleans offices for the Adams County Health Department and provides lawn maintenance and landscaping services for GE Aircraft. Projects are staffed by twelve (12) consumers and eight (8) staff. Consumers are paid on an hourly basis and earn at least minimum wage. Competitive job

placement services are provided through Rehabilitation Services Commission.

Community awareness and involvement is a strong focus of Venture's staff and consumers. Each November the group conducts a food drive. In conjunction with the local Marine Corp they also manage an annual 'Christmas Sharing' program. Three hundred children received gifts through the program this past holiday. And under a unique contract with GE Aircraft, Venture is paid to conduct community service work. Venture's employees pick up, wash, fold, hang and deliver donated clothing to the Community Interfaith House on behalf of GE. Venture was also selected by GE Aircraft employees as a recipient of GE's community service fund. Money from the fund is restricted to use for consumers. With all this Lafferty is still able to find time each week to prepare and submit a news article to the local paper. An attractive PR photo is maintained on file for each consumer for press release purposes. Lafferty's weekly articles serve to educate the public about the program and focus on individual consumers, staff, special projects, program events and board functions.

Sitting in town on the main thoroughfare, Venture Productions, Inc. recently installed an electronic sign in front of their facility. The sign is used for the program's own communication and is also rented to businesses and the general public for advertising and announcements (birthdays, anniversaries, congratulations). It could accurately say, **Together Everyone Achieves More.**

Venture Productions, Inc. is located at 11516 State Route 41 South, West Union, Ohio 45693. Adams County, whose topography varies from rugged hills and narrow valleys to gently rolling farmland, is home to Serpent Mound, the largest effigy mound in the world.

THE NEW OHIO MINIMUM WAGE: Impact on Work Centers

By Kim Linkinhoker, OACBMRDD

On January 1, 2007, and as a result of voter approval of State Issue 2, the minimum wage in Ohio increased to \$6.85 per hour and will increase each year thereafter. The OACBMRDD requested a legal review of this constitutional amendment and potential impact on work centers holding federal wage and hour special minimum wage certificates. That memo is available under the Resources/documents tab on the front page of the OACBMRDD website. www.oacbmrrd.org Adult Services Administrators should read the entire memo. Requirements of the new amendment are discussed and include the following:

- An employee, or person acting on behalf of an employee, can bring a lawsuit for enforcement of the minimum wage.
- Plaintiffs are not liable for the costs of the lawsuit or attorney fees, unless it is determined that the action was frivolous.
- If an employer is found liable, it must pay back wages, plus liquidated damages of two times the back wages and the employee's costs and attorney fees within thirty (30) days.
- For a period of not less than three (3) years from the date of last employment, the employer must keep a record of each employee's name, address, occupation, pay rate, hours worked for each day worked, and amount paid.
- An employer, at the time of hire, is required to provide an employee with the employer's name, address, telephone number, and other contact information and update such information when it changes.

Exemptions contained within the amendment are:

Employees under the age of sixteen and employees of businesses with annual gross receipts of two hundred fifty thousand dollars or less for the preceding calendar year shall be paid a wage rate of not less than that

established under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act or its successor law.

This exemption seems to indicate that work centers with annual gross receipts of not more than \$250,000 could pay workers a rate of \$5.15 per hour (the federal minimum wage) and not be required to conduct semi-annual productivity ratings on those workers. Work centers will want to review the application of this exemption with their legal counsel.

It is important to recognize that the prevailing wage used for time studies of work paid on either a piece rate or hourly rate basis should be no less than the state minimum of \$6.85 per hour effective January 1, 2007. It is very unlikely that a valid prevailing wage survey would include employers exempt from the state minimum wage.

Work Centers are required to update their existing prevailing wage survey as the result of the change in the state minimum wage. OAAS has recommended that updated surveys be conducted at the end of February with an effective date no later than March 1st.

OAAS has asked the Wage and Hour Division of the Ohio Department of Commerce if work centers that pay wages to individuals with disabilities below the state minimum wage need to apply for a special Ohio license to do so. The Division has stated that work centers that possess a current federal special minimum wage certificate do not need an Ohio license, however a copy of the federal approval letter must be submitted to the Director of Commerce (O.A.C. 4101:9-1-04(F)) OAAS recommends that work centers send in a copy of both their approval letter and special minimum wage certificate. Additionally, provide a name, address, phone number and email of a primary contact.

MUI RULE CHANGES: Many Implications for Adult Services

By Terri O'Connell, Editor

Changes in rule 5123:2-17-02 Incidents adversely affecting health and safety (hereinafter referred to as the MUI rule) became effective January 1st of this year. At the same time rule 5123:2-17-04 Standards for the Substantiation of Abuse or Neglect was rescinded and not replaced. The "new" MUI rule responds to many issues identified through practice and implements a continuous quality improvement process in order to prevent or reduce the risk of harm to individuals. The rule applies to county boards, developmental centers, and providers.

Changes in the rule include additions, deletions, and changes to definitions. New definitions include administrative investigation, agency provider, at-risk individual, county board as provider and individual provider. Many definitions are changed to improve both specificity and discrimination. The rule is now organized by requirements, increasing ease of use.

Adult Services administrators should acquire a thorough knowledge of the entire MUI rule. Many sections of the rule require process change and/or new activity. (A table comparing some of the "old" and "new" rule requirements can be found in the *Resources* section of this newsletter). A few highlights of provider and county board as provider requirements under the new rule include:

- Immediately upon identification or notification of an MUI, take all reasonable measures to ensure the health and safety of any at-risk individuals
- Immediately, but no later than 4 hours after discovery of the incident, notify the county board of an incident

or allegation of abuse, exploitation, misappropriation, neglect, suspicious or accidental death or media inquiry regarding an MUI

- Submit a written incident report for all MUIs to the county board no later than 3:00 pm the next working day following initial knowledge of a potential or determined MUI

- Immediately report to law enforcement or CSB any allegation of abuse, including misappropriation or neglect, which may constitute a criminal act

- Make same day notifications, as applicable, when the incident or discovery of the incident occurs when the provider has responsibility for the individual. Include immediate actions taken. Document all notification and notification efforts.

- Train staff on rule requirements prior to allowing unsupervised contact with any individual

- Develop and implement a policy and procedure that identifies what is to be reported as a UI (Unusual Incident), UI reporting requirements and timelines, and actions to be taken to protect the health and safety of any at-risk individuals

- Review UIs no less than monthly, document UI trends and patterns, and maintain UI logs

- Teams shall collaborate on preventative measures

- Agency providers shall submit the results of any internal reviews of an incident for which an MUI has been filed to the county board within fourteen calendar days of becoming aware of the incident

The MUI Registry Unit has announced additional training dates for the new rule training. Go to www.odmrdd.state.oh.us/training/odmrdd.htm for time, dates and location.

Mark Your Calendars - More Information Coming Soon

April 2, 3, 4, 2007

Tackling Restraints

Behavior Support Conference

National and Local Speakers - 5 Tracks Each Day!!

Embassy Suites Hotel - Dublin

September 24 and 25, 2007

OAAS Annual Meeting

Featuring: Mark Knuckles - Department of Labor Consultant

Location: TBA

Billing Adult Day Services . . . It's all in the Details

By Tom Houser, Primary Solutions

The time has come to begin assembling the puzzle presented by the new Adult Day Service rules. How will we organize our groups? What should our documentation look like? How do we handle multiple providers billing for Day Services on the same day? How will the services be authorized and billed? Many of the details surrounding the implementation of the new Adult Day Service rules are open to a variety of interpretations. Without formal guidance surrounding these details, individuals and agencies will spend a great amount of time developing their own understanding of the correct implementation of the rules. This will cost Ohio's MR/DD community countless hours of time and inevitably result in disparate Day Service implementations throughout the state.

One such issue involves two important questions:

1. *How can a provider bill* for the services they provided given the parameters outlined in rule?
2. If the provider can bill, *how should they bill?*

Imagine the confusion if there were literally 88 different interpretations of the "correct" method to answer these questions. Billing submitted by Delaware County could be significantly different than the billing generated by Hamilton County which in turn might be different than a private provider in Knox County. Additionally, there would be no ability to exchange

information between Counties or between Counties and private providers...everyone would have different information, different calculations and different results!

To help address these problems, Primary Solutions is partnering with OAAS to develop four key items:

1. Documentation detailing the correct way to determine if/how to bill for Day Services.
2. An information exchange definition to provide a consistent method for exchanging the information necessary to determine #1.
3. An information exchange definition to provide a consistent method for exchanging the billing resulting from #1.
4. A software application and applicable test cases to enable OAAS (or it's designated agent) to provide a qualified statement regarding a 3rd party software's ability to correctly interpret #1, accept #2, and produce #3.

We believe that the adoption of these four items will allow Counties and providers to focus their energy around the operational issues presented by the new Day Service rules. They will no longer have to wonder whether their software will enable them to bill for their services correctly. It is only one small piece of the puzzle, but it is our hope that we can make this piece fit perfectly!

Word of the Day: Conflate\Kuhn-FLAYT\ - 1) To bring together; to fuse together; to join or mold 2) To combine into one whole. "I dreamed I was able to conflate all my documentation requirements with one simple entry." *Dream on...*

FROM AROUND THE STATE



Central Region

After thirty years of service with the Marion County Board of MRDD, William 'Bill' McCaulley retired January 31 as Marca Industries' Director of Industrial Services. Bill has been an active member of OAAS and a regular facilitator of conference 'investment seminars.' Although he plans to maintain his certification and do some work, Bill hopes retirement will allow more time to pursue his many leisure activities. An eagle scout, Bill is active in Boy Scouts and numerous other civic organizations. He also

loves to hunt, fish, golf, bowl, and play poker. Bill and his wife of 32 years, Norma, plan to celebrate his retirement with a trip to Las Vegas. As a memento for OAAS members, Bill has authorized *The Leader* to publish his secret pheasant recipe (below). Good luck Bill. We love you with all our hearts – and our diamonds, spades and clubs.

Bill McCaulley's Famous Fried Pheasant Recipe

Take one dead pheasant and filet the breast and thighs out of the bird so that all you have is meat. Take the meat and cut into strips and then cut them into chunks. I use a batter called Drake's, available at Kroger's. It's a dry mix that can be prepared as thick as you want. I prefer it rather thick. I have a small deep frying pot and a wire basket that I use but you could also use a fry daddy or such. Heat peanut oil to 350° degrees. Place chunks of meat into a bowl and pour the batter over the chunks. Make sure that each piece is coated. Place each piece into the hot peanut oil and cook for about 3-5 minutes. If you are using a basket insert you might have to stir the nuggets a little as they tend to stick to the basket on the bottom. When nuggets are a golden brown remove and place on a paper towel in a baking pan or a plate and drain the excess oil. You can use honey mustard, barbeque sauce, or my favorite sweet and sour dip to put on the nuggets. They are also very good just plain. I do the same thing with my perch except I only cook them at 325° degrees. Enjoy!

North Central/Northwest

NODA has named the following slate of officers for 2007.

President - Kim Tabor (Morrow)
 Vice President – Kimm Kessinger (Crawford)
 Secretary – Angie Herzog (Allen)
 Treasurer – Jim Brook (Ashland)

NODA's next meeting is scheduled for February 21. Tom Houser, Primary Solutions, will present.

Southwest

Brown County Board of MRDD Adult Services Director Barb Evans retired December 31, 2006 after thirty years of service to the field of MRDD. Barb will most miss the consumers she's worked with, many of whom she knew as children. Monica Boler, Habilitation Manager, assumed responsibility for Brown County's Grow, Inc. in November. Monica is a graduate of Wilmington College and has prior experience in both educational and residential programs. Monica has a daughter, age 10 and a son, age 7. Thank you Barb, for your service. And welcome Monica! Good luck in your new position.

RESOURCES

E-LAWS: A HELPFUL FLSA REFERENCE

E-laws are interactive e-tools that provide easy-to-understand information about a number of federal employment laws. Each advisor simulates the interaction you might have with an employment expert. E-laws can be accessed at www.dol.gov/elaws. Specific information by topic is helpful to guide wage and hour policy and practice. The site also provides summaries and fact sheets that can be used for staff and/or board member training.

A drop-down menu appears at the bottom of the home page. To access information about special minimum wage programs select FLSA section 14 (c) Advisor (special minimum wage). The introductory page gives an overview of the special minimum wage program. To access the main topic menu click Continue at the bottom left of the introductory page. Select the topic of interest – coverage, determining commensurate wage, hours worked etc. to access increasingly specific information. For example, hours worked addresses downtime, travel time, rest periods and breaks, and more. Try e-laws. The answer to your question may be just a few clicks away!

DUAL DIAGNOSIS

The Ohio Coordinating Center of Excellence in Dual Diagnosis (MI/MRDD) publishes a quarterly community development newsletter: Bridging the Gap. The purpose of the newsletter is to share information about how teams around Ohio are working together to improve dual diagnosis services locally. Go to www.ohiomimrdd.org and click on links to access the newsletters. *(OAAS thanks Jesse Roberts (Union) for sharing this resource)*

OLD/NEW MUI COMPARISON GRID

The following table of information was prepared by the Richland County Board of MRDD MUI unit as an aid for all board staff. It’s shared by Liz Prather. Thank you Richland County!

**AGENCY PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITY CHANGES
BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2007**

	OLD RULE	NEW RULE
Provider review of their UI Logs	Weekly	“As Necessary”, but NO LESS than MONTHLY
County Board Collection of UI Logs to assure provider is reviewing.	Monthly	Random Sampling each month. The County Board will notify the providers to send their logs
MUI Trends and Pattern Analysis (Provider submits to the Co. Board)	Quarterly	Twice a year: Review of Feb. 1 – July 31 is due NO LATER than Aug. 31. Review of Aug. 1 – Jan. 31 is due NO LATER than Feb. 28.
Stakeholder Committee Group review of Trends and Patterns (with 2 provider reps)	Did not exist	Shall meet twice per year: Sept. & March
Training on This Rule	All provider staff shall receive training on the requirements of this rule at the time of initial employment and annually thereafter.	All agency providers shall ensure their staff are trained on the requirements of this rule prior to unsupervised contact with any individual and in all cases, no later than thirty calendar days after employment. Thereafter, all employees shall receive training during each calendar year which shall include a review of health and safety alerts released since the previous calendar year’s training. All individual providers shall follow the requirements for initial training on the provisions of this rule according to their certification requirements and shall receive annual training.

Do you have a resource that might be of interest to fellow OAAS members? Please email your suggestions to oaasqueen@columbus.rr.com

Non-Profit Excellence – A Matter of Business

OAAS is sponsoring a training series designed to improve management and operation of your non-profit. Training will be held at the Harold Lewis Center, Marysville, Ohio. Registration is \$89.00 per module or \$632.00 for the entire series of eight modules. Lunch is included in the registration fee. Presenters are Elaine Woloshyn, Center for Non Profit Excellence CEO and President; Jeff Vengrow, Director of CNE Solutions; and David Visocky, Cuyahoga County Business Manager.

One training module will be covered each month, March through October 2007.

Module 1 – Critical Elements of Non-Profit Operation

Module 2 - How efficient, effective, and competitive is your organization?

Module 3 - What you need to know and what your board will expect

Module 4 - Non-profit marketing – selling your mission and your service

Module 5 - Human Resources: regulations and best practices

Module 6 - Accountability – managing for results metrics

Module 7 - Pulling it all together/simulation case study

Module 8 – Privatization

For module descriptions, training dates and times, and to register, go to www.oaas.org and click on Training and Conferences.

ODH Files Rules for Indoor Smoking Ban

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has filed draft rules with the Secretary of State and the Legislative Service Commission, triggering a 65-day process that provides for public comments, a public hearing and a final hearing before the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR). The public hearing is planned for February 27 at 10:00 a.m. Earlier, ODH had convened a smoking rule advisory committee meeting January 22 on short notice. New updates to the drafts reflecting input and discussion from members of the advisory council and the public did not affect language related to nursing home and residential care facilities. Some of the latest changes eliminate prescriptive wording that would detail the number and size of signs to be posted by a proprietor. It was also determined that entryway signs may be in locations other than on the door itself, such as a permanent post in the ground nearby. Similarly, new amendments will allow for receptacles for disposing of cigarettes near the entrance to a building, and inside storage of ashtrays used for outdoor smoking when they are not in use. The majority of the advisory committee and ODH representatives agree that there should not be a specific distance for prohibiting smoking “immediately adjacent” to a door, but that tobacco smoke should not enter the enclosed space. ODH also increased the time to provide evidence in response to a complaint from 15 days to 30 business days. The current drafts are posted on the ODH website at [Smoking Rules](#). For additional information please contact Ginger Norris (gnorris@ohca.org), 614/540-1323



THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW!

One of the benefits of being a member of OAAS is that we can provide you with cost saving opportunities. However, Ohio's employers have only one opportunity to enroll in a workers' compensation group rating plan. Now is your chance to sign up with our plan! Through our partnership with CompManagement, Inc., an employer can potentially save 20% to 90% on workers' compensation premiums.

CompManagement is in the final stages of group rating enrollment. The deadline for filing groups with the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation is February 28, 2007. If you have received a quote through the OAAS and have not responded, you must complete and submit the appropriate forms to CompManagement by February 20th to be included in the 2007 workers' compensation group plan.

If you have not received a free no-obligation workers' compensation premium analysis, call CompManagement, Inc. at 1-800-825-6755, option 3 to speak with a CompManagement Group Rating Representative.

ACT NOW before time runs out!