



REASONS

The eligibility provisions of the G.A. program are set forth in Welfare Assistance Manual (W.A.M.) § 2600 et. seq. Those regulations provide that G.A. is available to individuals without children only if they are not "able-bodied", or if they are "able-bodied" but have two or more "employment barriers as defined in 2607.1 (c)."<sup>1</sup> W.A.M. § 2600 B. Except for her age (she is over 40) the petitioner concedes she meets none of these barriers. Also, the petitioner concedes she does not face a "catastrophic situation", which would be the only way for her to avoid the "able-bodied" prohibition. See W.A.M. § § 2600 B and 2602.<sup>2</sup>

Although the hearing officer agrees with the petitioner that, ideally, some forms of temporary assistance should be available for single working individuals who have trouble making ends meet, the fact is that in this state (and in many others) there simply is none. Inasmuch as the petitioner does not meet the regulatory eligibility criteria for G.A., the Department is affirmed. 3 V.S.A. § 3091 (d) and Fair Hearing Rule No. 19.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>W.A.M. § 2607.1 (c) lists the following seven "employment barriers"

1. Age 40 or over,
2. Eighth-grade education or less;

3. Inability to read or write;
4. Lives 10 or more miles from a town of 2500 or more and has no available transportation, and cannot reasonably be expected to relocate within 30 days;
5. Has not for six consecutive months or more in the last five years been either employed by one employer or been a full-time student;
6. Released within 6 months from a mental health institution or hospital unit;
7. Participating in a state or federally funded drug or alcohol treatment program.

<sup>2</sup>The petitioner testified her rent was late but that she was in no way threatened with a "court ordered or constructive eviction". See § 2602 (b). The other catastrophic situations are "death of a spouse or minor dependent child", "a natural disaster such as flood, fire, or hurricane", and "an emergency medical need." See §§ 2602 (a), (c), and (d).

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