

obtain documentation of his citizenship through the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

When he applied to the department for GA,¹ the Department determined that he was able to reside free of charge in a men's shelter located in a town about 30 miles from the Department's district office, which the petitioner considers his hometown. The petitioner maintains that the job and housing at the lodge remain open to him as soon as he can obtain proof of citizenship.

The petitioner's reasons for not wanting to move to the shelter are primarily personal. Although he relies on certain friends for "transportation", the petitioner did not establish a particular need in this regard. The job market in the town where the shelter is located is larger than in the petitioner's hometown. He would be inconvenienced by changing his mailing address, but there was no evidence that, overall, the petitioner wouldn't be able to adjust to such a move, or that living in the shelter would hinder his efforts to straighten out his problems with I.N.S.

Based on the evidence presented, it cannot be concluded that the men's shelter constitutes an unsuitable temporary housing alternative for the petitioner.

ORDER

The Department's decision is affirmed.

REASONS

Welfare Assistance Manual § 2613, which sets forth the criteria for GA payments of "housing" provides that "payments may be authorized only when housing cannot be obtained without cost to the applicant, e.g., supplied by relatives, friend, community groups, etc." W.A.M. § 2613.2 provides further, criteria regarding "temporary housing." This includes the following:

"Temporary housing is intended to provide short term shelter for applicants who are involuntarily without housing through circumstances in which the applicant could not reasonably have avoided the situation and for whom permanent housing or alternative arrangements are not immediately available (emphasis added) . . .

. . . the recipient shall be informed that he is primarily responsible for locating permanent housing accommodations and that if he does not make an active effort to locate permanent housing, or fails to accept a housing accommodation deemed suitable by the District Director . . . even if in a location other than where he is situated, continued General Assistance payment for temporary housing shall be denied (emphasis in original). . .

As noted above, considering the petitioner's circumstances, the shelter located 30 miles from the petitioner's hometown constitutes a suitable alternative temporary housing situation for the petitioner. See Fair Hearing No. 7768. The Department's decision is in accord with its regulations (supra), and is, therefore, affirmed. 3 V.S.A. § 3091(d).

FOOTNOTES

¹The petitioner sought GA for a room in a local motel.

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