

3-Tiered Transportation Work Group

Mission Statement: To develop a cost effective plan for Virginia to implement a three-tiered statewide transportation system by 2012 for persons involved in the civil commitment process that will be designed:

- 1) to decriminalize the process and reduce stigma through reduction of Virginia's reliance on law-enforcement agencies and the use of restraints in the transportation process, while ensuring the safety of the person, the transporter and the public, and
- 2) to promote the recovery of the individual by enabling the provision of voluntary services in the least restrictive manner and setting.

The plan may include interim implementation steps, including recommendations for pilot projects.

Composition: The Work Group is composed of seven representatives from the Sheriffs' Association and Association of Chiefs of Police, three representatives from the Department of Health and public and private emergency medical services providers, two representatives from the Department of Medical Assistance Services, one private hospital provider, two CSB emergency services workers, one consumer and one family member, one representative from Senate Finance, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, and the Virginia Supreme Court.

Work Plan: The Work Group has met three times by telephone conference call on June 9, June 25, and July 16, 2008, and will meet again on August 18, 2008 to study in detail each of the components of a three-tiered transportation system:

1. **First tier:** transportation by family and friends, CSB, taxi service, Medicaid vendor transportation.
2. **Second tier:** ambulance service or step-down service similar to a wheelchair transport. Requirements related to the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA) will also be explored.
3. **Third tier:** Use of law enforcement for transportation, including potential for creation of "mental health officers," and use of restraints in transportation.

Under each tier, the Work Group will study (i) how the system would work in urban, suburban and rural areas, (ii) in what circumstances each tier would be used and how that determination would be made, (iii) who would manage the system, and (iv) how it would be financed. The statutes, policies and practices of other states will be reviewed, especially those of Vermont, which has developed an assessment process for determining when and under what circumstances "humane restraints" will be used.