STATE OF CALIFORNIA--HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY

PETE WILSON, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
1600 - 9TH STREET
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(916) 654-3551

February 13, 1997

DMH INFORMATION NOTICE NO.: 97-04

TO: LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CHIEFS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATORS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
CHAIRPERSONS, LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARDS

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT (NVRA) OF 1993

REFERENCE: National Voter Registration Act 42 United States Code Section 1973gg

EXPIRES: Retain Until Superseded
(Use in conjunction with DMH Information Notice No.'s 95-19 and 96-03)

The purpose of this information notice is to provide additional implementation instructions and follow-up on the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993. The Department of Mental Health conducted a survey of all counties and their contract providers to determine compliance efforts. The results of that survey indicate that although counties are in substantial compliance, there are areas in which improvement can be made. It is very important that these concerns be addressed both within the county and to all contract providers.

Not all counties and contract providers are properly storing copies of voter registration forms and/or declination forms. Copies of these forms should be retained as the state is required to report to the federal court for approximately two more years regarding efforts in registering voters. Thus, these forms should be available in order to determine actual counts for future surveys. Some counties and contractors have indicated that the files are kept in the client's confidential files. Voter registration forms or declination forms should not be kept in these files, but in a separate file that is available should the department require additional information for the courts.

In addition, some counties and contractors have indicated that they batch and send forms to the local registrar of voters on a quarterly basis. This is not sufficient. Voter registration forms should be sent to the registrar of voters **at a minimum** on a weekly basis.

It is important that counties and contractors adhere to the information contained in the DMH Information Notices No. 95-19 and No. 96-03 issued previously, as well as this notice. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please contact Kaye Antel-Berenson, our liaison for Technical Assistance and Training, at (916) 654-0543.

Sincerely,

GARY M. PETTIGREW
Deputy Director
Systems of Care

Enclosures

cc: California Mental Health Planning Council
Chief, Technical Assistance and Training

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