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§10–1202.

(a) A core service agency shall:

(1) Be an agent of a county or Baltimore City government which may include a local health department;

(2) Unless an exception is requested by an individual county and is granted by the Secretary, serve a county or counties with an estimated population of over 80,000 people;

(3) Either purchase services or provide the services directly;

(4) Annually submit a program plan to the secretaries of the affected State departments for review and to the Secretary for approval; and

(5) Meet the standards required under this subtitle and, as needed, the rules and regulations set by the Secretary.

(b) A core service agency may not be a for-profit entity.

(c) Each core service agency shall function under the Secretary's authority.

(d) Once established in a jurisdiction, the core service agency shall:

(1) Submit, on an annual basis, a program plan to the Secretary for approval;

(2) Incorporate in its method of governance a mechanism for the local county mental health advisory committee or joint mental health and substance abuse committee to serve as the advisory committee to the core service agency and, if serving more than 1 unit of government, a method of representation serving those jurisdictions;

(3) Implement guidelines developed by the Secretary which establish or designate the local mental health advisory committee's authority to advise and assist in the planning and evaluation of the publicly funded mental health services;

(4) In accordance with guidelines developed by the Secretary, develop planning, management, and accountability mechanisms for the delivery of services including:

(i) Case management;

(ii) Data collection which satisfies the Department's requirements

for client tracking and incorporates clear outcome measures to enable the local entity to govern itself and monitor and evaluate the system; and

(iii) A yearly summary which includes at a minimum:

1. Relevant financial statements; and

2. Program evaluation reports which articulate the core service agency's ability to identify the outcomes of services provided for the target populations and the effects of those services on program planning for the target population;

(5) As an agent of county government, function in any of the following organizational structures:

(i) A unit of county or Baltimore City government;

(ii) A local health department;

(iii) A quasi-public authority; or

(iv) A private, nonprofit corporation;

(6) Be authorized to screen individuals for whom voluntary or involuntary admission is being initiated to determine whether a less restrictive alternative can be provided; and

(7) Provide clear guidelines to avoid either the appearance or occurrence of conflicts of interest in the direction and operation of the core service agency or organizations which provide mental health services.

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