



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

POLK CENTER
POLK, PA, 16342

January 18, 1978

RECEIVED JAN 19

Nicholas J. D'Aluisio
Superintendent

PHONE 814 432-3171

Mr. Robert Nelkin
Associate Executive Director
Allegheny County Chapter, PARC
1001 Brighton Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15233

Dear Bob:

I am responding to your letter whereby you have received word that the position freeze is seriously affecting the care of residents at Polk.

We are in the same position as all facilities, in that there is a hiring freeze on.

Although we use the term "freeze", it is a misnomer in that we are able to fill most positions after a lengthy process of the facility justifying the need for the job and, then, a series of approvals must be sought through the Department, ultimately ending at the Budget Secretary. The process usually takes about six weeks. Obviously, this delay is very detrimental to a smooth-running operation and creates a heavy overtime situation.

Each of our resident buildings has a minimum staffing requirement below which we very seldom go. When there are unfilled vacancies on a shift, it is impossible to meet this minimum without using overtime. In many cases this overtime is accomplished by the use of the mandatory process. That is, when a shift coming on duty is without the required number and no other buildings can provide additional manpower, then, a number of staff from the shift going off duty must stay over into the next shift. The problem that this causes is that the person staying on for a second, 8-hour shift is certainly not at his best. He may have had plans after work and since he cannot go home, his attitude is extremely poor. This is not an exception but almost a daily occurrence. So, in the final analysis, even though we are keeping the staff at a minimum level, the quality of their efforts is greatly diminished.

We understand the necessity of the "freeze" because of budget problems, but we are consistently confronted with a serious morale problem in the ranks.

It would be very advantageous for the freeze to be lifted on all direct-care positions. That would be a major improvement.

If you have any further questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely yours,

Nicholas J. D'Aluisio
Superintendent

NJD/dss

cc: Mr. Polloni
Mr. Jenkins