



RCPA Position Paper on Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) operating under 14(c) Certificates July 2021

With well over 350 members, the majority of who serve over 1 million Pennsylvanians annually, Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association (RCPA) is among the largest and most diverse state health and human services trade associations in the nation. RCPA provider members offer mental health, drug and alcohol, intellectual and developmental disabilities, children's, brain injury, medical rehabilitation, and physical disabilities and aging services, through all settings and levels of care.

RCPA supports assisting people with disabilities to secure and maintain competitive-integrated employment and efforts to increase meaningful community participation as an option in an array of services. We also believe that the option for individuals to make the decision to work in a vocational setting with a 14(c) certificate should be respected. Not everyone wants to work in competitive employment, or attend a day program where they may participate in volunteer work, or recreational activities. We believe that an array of services is necessary in order to provide individuals, families, and providers with the flexibility needed to allow Pennsylvanians with disabilities to be supported in a way that is based on their individualized needs and circumstances. There are thousands of people with IDD who currently chose to work in a vocational setting under a 14(c) certificate and are quite happy with their jobs and the support that they receive. No one is forced to work in a 14(c) facility. It is the individual's decision. If they do not want to work in a facility, they have other options such as Supported Employment, Small Group Employment, Competitive employment, Community Participation supports in or outside of a facility, to name a few.

The push by advocates to eliminate this program is disrespectful to the individuals who chose this service. The elimination of these programs takes away the rights of those individuals just because it is against someone else's values or ideology. Over 9,000 individual comments were made to the Civil Rights Commission in favor of keeping 14c in place. Why are these comments not given the same respect?

There are many factors that individuals consider when making a decision about where they want to work. Community Rehabilitation Programs offer a safe, supportive environment with staff who understand their needs, and are respectful in meeting them including personal care and behavioral supports. Every person has individual needs and desires. It is important to remember that one size does not fit all. Individuals with disabilities should be able to make a decision about how they wish to spend their day and what services they receive – in short they should be respected regarding their wishes and have an array of services available to them.