

July 23, 2012

The Arc of New Jersey's Statement on the Resolution of the State Taskforce on Institutional Closure

This morning, the New Jersey Taskforce on Institutional Closure met. The Taskforce voted on and passed a binding resolution calling for the closure of North Jersey and Woodbridge Developmental Centers, in that order, over the next five years.

The Arc of New Jersey is grateful to the Taskforce for its painstaking and conscientious effort to thoroughly review the issue of closing state developmental centers; and we enthusiastically support its decision today to proceed with closing two of New Jersey's seven developmental centers. The Arc of New Jersey believes that all individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities have the right to live, and be fully included, in communities of their choosing. For over thirty years there has been a clear direction in federal and state policy toward community living for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. As the census of New Jersey's developmental centers has decreased, it has become clear that we simply do not need seven developmental centers.

We recognize the critical need for detailed planning and oversight in the process of transitioning developmental center residents into community-based settings. The Arc of New Jersey and its 20 local county chapters pledge to assist in this process in any way possible, to ensure the safe and appropriate placement of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the community, alongside their fellow citizens and peers.