

# Membership Matters

Quarterly News from The 501 Alliance

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**December 2016**

## **New Members Join The 501 Alliance**

At the November meeting, the board approved seven new organizations for membership in the group. This will increase our total membership to almost 350 nonprofit agencies across the state of Michigan.

We would also like to thank those members who took advantage of our Member Referral Program and helped us to recruit new members. As a reminder, this program provides your organization with a \$50 charitable donation for every prospective member you refer who completes and submits an application. An additional \$150 charitable donation is provided to your organization for every prospective member who also qualifies and is approved for membership. That's up to \$200 you can receive for each prospective member referred to The 501 Alliance.

The applicant simply needs to include your name and telephone number on the application and we will send you a check. In addition, there is no limit to the number of prospective members you can refer. For example, refer just five prospective members and your agency will receive at least \$250 and up to \$1,000.

You can also contact us at any time to inquire about the status of any nonprofit you have referred. If you have any questions, please contact us at 800-968-9675. You can also visit our web site at [501alliance.org](http://501alliance.org) for more information.

## **New Directors Elected to the Board**

Two new directors were recently elected to the Board of Directors. Please join us in welcoming Donald A. Fields, VP Human Resources and Training, Spectrum Human Services in Westland and Denise Herndon, Human Resources Director, Covenant House Michigan in Detroit. The board and staff are both excited about working with these two new individuals.

Mr. Fields and Ms. Herndon both work at member agencies and have been members of the group for a number of years. Spectrum Human Services has been a member for 25 years and Covenant House Michigan has been a member for over ten years.

For a listing of all of the directors on the board, please visit our web site at [501alliance.org](http://501alliance.org). If you're interested in becoming a director, please contact the Administrator at 800-968-9675.

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### How Would You Rule?

#### **Background:**

The claimant was discharged for negligently handling medication. She was disqualified from benefits upon a finding that she was discharged for misconduct connected with work. The claimant appealed and a hearing was scheduled before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ).

#### **At the Hearing:**

*Employer's Evidence:* The employer testified that the claimant, a health aide, was discharged after the employer discovered that she had dropped newly delivered controlled medication into the trash and left it in the garbage. The trash was removed shortly there-after and the medication was lost. The employer's review of video in the room revealed that the claimant looked into the trash and still held a document that came with the medication which should have been with the bottle. The claimant had not been assigned the duty of handing the medication but took it upon herself to deliver it to the medication room. When confronted with the video, the claimant apologized for what she termed a "mistake." She had received several prior warnings about negligently handling medications, had all medication responsibility removed from her job duties and had been informed that another incident could lead to the termination of her employment.

*Claimant's Evidence:* The claimant testified that on the date of the final incident, she had made a mistake that anyone could make and that she did not realize she had dropped the medication in the trash. When questioned about the fact that she was standing over the trash can and had looked into it prior to walking away, the claimant reiterated her earlier testimony that she did not know she had dropped the medication into the trash and she had simply made an error.

#### **The Hearing Decision:**

The ALJ found that the claimant was discharged for misconduct connected with the work and the claimant remained disqualified from benefits. The claimant had several prior warnings regarding handling medications and she had the duty to her employer to handle them properly. The claimant disagreed and appealed the decision arguing that her actions were not misconduct because she did not deliberately throw the medication into the trash.

#### **The Board of Review Decision:**

The Board of Review agreed with the ALJ. Even if the claimant did not throw the medicine in the trash deliberately, she was aware that the medicine was lost because she still held the documentation that came with it. She had the duty to her employer to keep the medication secure. The claimant's repeated negligence despite warnings rose to the level of misconduct connected with work.

#### **Takeaway:**

In this case, the claimant had been warned several times about handling medicine and had even had her medication duties taken away. She had breached the duty she owed the employer to handle medications securely. In addition, the employer was able to testify to exactly what the claimant did with the medication and documentation.