

# Social rehabilitation of people with disabilities in Poland

## Legislation:

- Act of 27 August 1997 on Occupational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities (Journal of Laws of 2016, item 2046, as amended),
- Regulation of the Minister of Labor and Social Policy of 25 June 2002 on defining types of the poviats' tasks that may be financed by the State Fund for the Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 926)



- Regulation of the Minister of Economy, Labor and Social Policy of 25 March 2004 on occupational therapy workshops (Journal of Laws item 587),
- Regulation of the Minister of Labor and Social Policy of 15 November 2007 on rehabilitation stays (Journal of Laws item 1694, as amended)

Pursuant to the Act on Poviats Local Government, the poviat performs public tasks of a supra-municipal nature, related to, among other things, supporting people with disabilities. Such tasks are specified in other legal acts.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Act of Occupational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities, the poviat's tasks include taking action to solve problems encountered by people with disabilities.

The range of such tasks and the method of their implementation are defined by the poviat's local government.

These tasks are implemented using mainly poviats' own funds, whereas financing from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities is supposed to facilitate their implementation.

Pursuant to the Act on Occupational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities, funds from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities are transferred by the President of the Management Board of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities to voivodeship local governments and powiat local governments to implement specific tasks or types of tasks in accordance with a dedicated algorithm.

Funds from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities transferred to local governments for the implementation of tasks related to social rehabilitation depend on the amount of funds provided for in the financial plan of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities for the implementation of the aforementioned tasks by local government in a given financial year. The algorithm is used to distribute only these funds.

A decision to allocate funds from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities to specific tasks is made by the poviats council, which should make specific decisions taking into account the provisions of the poviats action program for people with disabilities, whose development and implementation belong to the poviats tasks, which include also handling identified current needs of disabled inhabitants.

Accordingly, the distribution of funds from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities for the implementation of particular forms of social and occupational activation belongs to the tasks of local governments.

People with disabilities may receive financial aid from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities on the terms and conditions laid down in the Act on Occupational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities and in its implementing acts.



## **Forms of support for people with disabilities**

- ❖ participation in occupational therapy workshops;
- ❖ co-financing of:
  - participation of people with disabilities and their carers in rehabilitation stays;
  - eliminating architectural and technical barriers and barriers to communication;
  - provision of rehabilitation equipment,
  - provision of orthopaedic products and aids;
  - services rendered by a sign language interpreter or by an interpreter-guide.





## **Occupational therapy workshops:**

- an occupational therapy workshop may be attended by a disabled person who is unable to take up work, holding a disability certificate in which participation in an occupational therapy is recommended;
  
- the aim of occupational therapy workshops social rehabilitation and occupational activation with respect to acquiring or regaining skills necessary to take up work by people with disabilities;

- rehabilitation takes place through the use of various occupational therapy techniques aimed at developing the ability to perform daily activities and personal resourcefulness as well as professional skills enabling participation in professional training or taking up work, practiced in particular therapeutic workshops;
- workshops are created by foundations, associations or other entities [e.g. local government institutions, entrepreneurs (e.g. sheltered workshops)];



The costs of creating and running workshops as well as those related to increasing the number of their participants are covered with funds from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities and with funds of poviats local governments, or funds from other sources:

- up to 90% of funds may come from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities and at least 10% of funds should come from the poviats local government's budget (the poviats local government's share may be lower, provided that other sources of funding, in particular for the workshop's development, are found).

## Rehabilitation stays:

- an organized form of active rehabilitation combined with relaxation, aimed at general improvement of the psychophysical condition of participants and development of their social skills, e.g. by establishing and developing social contacts, pursuing and developing hobbies, as well as through participation in other activities provided for in the stay's program;



- a person with disabilities may receive a subsidy to participate in a stay, provided that he/she has a referral from a medical doctor and meets the income criterion;
- the subsidy amount depends on the severity of a given person's disability;
- a stay should last minimum 14 days and take place in centers entered in the register of centers.
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## **Eliminating architectural and technical barriers and barriers to communication:**

According to the dictionary definition

- architectural barriers are any obstacles in the building and in its immediate surroundings, which due to technical, construction or other solutions prevent or impede free movement of people with disabilities;

- technical barriers are obstacles resulting from the lack of objects or equipment appropriate for a specific disability. Eliminating such barriers should lead to a better functioning of a person with disabilities in the society and enable him/her to be more efficient;
- barriers to communication are constraints which prevent a person with disabilities from free communication with others and/or transfer of information, or make this difficult for such a person.

People with disabilities are entitled to the co-financing of the elimination of barriers to communication and technical barriers once every three years. A person with disabilities may apply for the elimination of architectural barriers at any time;

- the amount of co-financing is up to 95% of the cost of such a project, but no more than up to the fifteen times the average wage. Hence, a person with disabilities has to pay at least 5% of the cost of the project.





## **Co-financing of rehabilitation equipment:**

A person with a disability may apply for co-financing of rehabilitation equipment in the amount corresponding to his /her needs arising from the disability, provided that:

- he/she meets the income criterion,
- he/she needs to be rehabilitated using this equipment at home.

The amount of co-financing is up to 80% of such equipment cost, but no more than up to five times the average wage.

When granting subsidies to buy rehabilitation equipment, one should keep in mind that this is supposed to be equipment facilitating the rehabilitation process.

Rehabilitation of people with disabilities involves a number of activities, in particular organizational, therapeutic, psychological, technical, training, educational and social ones, aimed at achieving – with active participation of those people – the highest possible level of their functioning, quality of life and social inclusion.

Thus, rehabilitation equipment includes different devices, the choice of which depends on the disability type and on the individual psychophysical determinants of the person that will be using such equipment.

## **Co-financing of supplies of orthopaedic products and aids:**

Pursuant to the Act on Publically Funded Healthcare Services, the supplies concerned are available to an insured person and a child being dependent on this person, and are financed with funds available to the National Health Fund.

Where it is required to make one's own contribution necessary to buy an orthopaedic product or aid, a person with disabilities may apply – in the powiat family support center – for co-financing by the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities of costs covered by this person with his/her own funds, provided that this person's average monthly income calculated in accordance with the regulation does not exceed 50% of the average wage - per person, in one household.

Such co-financing amounts to:

- up to 100% of the disabled person's own contribution in the price limit, if such a contribution is required by regulations,
- up to 150% of the sum of the amount of the limit referred to above, set out by the minister competent for health, and the required own contribution of a person with disabilities in the purchase of such products or aids, if the purchase price exceeds the set limit.

## **Co-financing of services rendered by a sign language interpreter or by an interpreter-guide:**

People with disabilities may apply for co-financing of services rendered by a sign language interpreter or an interpreter-guide where this is justified by needs arising from the disability.

The amount of co-financing of services rendered by interpreters may not exceed 2% of the average wage for an hour of their work.

A person with disabilities may apply for co-financing of services rendered by interpreters at any time.



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**Thank you for your attention.**