I-Search

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ENG/100

April 30th, 2015

Instructor: Professor Sabatino

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**Section One Proposal**

The student has chosen to write about, why Pennsylvania lawmakers should drug test for welfare assistance. This student believes that the topic is interesting. One of the reasons is that she has encountered individuals who receive such benefits. Most of them either had employment with good jobs or was unemployed and looking for work currently. On the other hand, some welfare recipients take advantage of the system. In this I-search paper, the student will analyze if drug screening should be mandatory in order to receive Governmental benefits.

“At least twelve states have passed legislation regarding drug testing or screening for public assistance applicants or recipients (Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Utah.) (sic). Some apply to all applicants; others include specific language that there is a reason to believe the person is engaging in illegal drug activity or has a substance use disorder; others require a specific screening process” (NSCL, 2015).

In result of the economy, dropping many people searched for other channels to survive. Another reason for this research is for self-education, and it is informative to others that are interested in this topic. In this I-Search paper, the student will use different sources to gather information to find out why should Pennsylvania Lawmakers drug test for welfare recipients and applicants. Search engines like Google, Ask.com and the local school library database will be my main source for information. In her personal opinion, she believes that Pennsylvania Lawmakers is looking for ways to save money. Unfortunately, the targets are the welfare recipients or people who apply for assistance. Furthermore, she may be wrong however, that is the purpose of this research.

**Section Two Process**

In order to write my I-Search paper I will first search for a question that I can possibly write about. Most of the questions came from classroom discussions. At first, I wrote down three questions and asked my colleagues including Professor Sabatino which question is worth writing about. Once I chose my question I begin to research the question: Should Pennsylvania drug test for welfare? After searching through some literature I then copied the articles off the internet. Next, I read through the articles to get a better understanding for this research question. After close scrutiny, I summarize most of the information I’ve read about. In the process of working on my paper, I have visited family members and friends so that I would not be distracted by daily activities. The format type I chose for my I-Search paper will be APA. Although, this my second time using APA I hope this attempt goes well.

**Section Three Paper**

Pennsylvania Officials believe that drug testing welfare recipients and applicants should save the government money. Pennsylvania plans to randomly test only those with a felony drug conviction within the past five years and those on probation for such offenses. I believe this is a good thing because Florida just random not with records and it cost so much that the state could not afford it and it showed only 2% have tested positive. Meanwhile 96% proved to be drug free, leaving the state on the hook to reimburse the cost of their tests. Study after study have, proven that most who receiving any type of unemployment are not on drug. If they had their preference, recipients would be working and not depending on public assistance. I think the Lawmakers in Washington and Harrisburg waste way more of our tax dollars then anyone who is on public assistance. On the other hand, some people who need welfare for genuine reasons have no worries at all for drug testing. Political officials believe these legislations would not save money yet, interfere with most recipients constitutional rights. Which is true however, no state has been able to legislatively get around the constitutional challenges. Instead, some have focused on more intensive screening to identify substance abusers and get them help, said Rochelle Finzel of the National Conference of State Legislatures. (AP Regional State Report- Florida, 05/10/2011)

If Pennsylvania randomly drug test recipients like the state of Florida, what about the people who are on medication that will create a false positive. What if the recipients that are being tested ate something that could create a false positive test. For example, bagels with sesame seeds cooked in them. Truth is people who abuse drugs and/ or alcohol are less likely to establish self-sufficiency.

“A few states, including Florida and New Mexico, want recipients to pay for the drug tests themselves. The estimated total in Florida costs between $15 and $35. (AP Regional State Report- Florida 05/10/2011.)

“The 1996 welfare law bars states from providing TANF assistance to persons convicted of a felony for possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs. However, it allows states to opt out of the ban or modify the period for which the ban applies. At least five states modified the ban to require those convicted of drug felony charges to comply with drug testing requirements as a condition of receiving benefits, including Maine, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.” (NSCL, 2015)

Unfortunately in the state of Pennsylvania the law require that welfare applicants apply for at least three jobs per week even if their application still pending.

References

NSCL. (2015). *Drug testing for welfare recipients and public assistance.* Retrieved from. http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/drug-testing-and-public-assistance.aspx

Retrieved from: http://www.post-gazette.com/news/state/2014/04/21/Pa-denies-75-percent-of-welfare-applicants/stories/201404210071

(AP Regional State Report- Florida, 05/10/2011)