

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research**

ACTION: Notice of Public Meetings and Request for Comments.

SUMMARY: The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is interested in gathering information from consumers, families, service providers, advocacy organizations, community groups, State agencies, and other stakeholders on existing and future needs for assistive technology services and devices, systemic barriers to meeting those needs, and successful approaches that have been used to remove barriers to the acquisition of assistive technology services and devices for individuals with disabilities.

NIDRR invites interested parties to submit written comments or present oral comments at four public meetings on current assistive technology needs and issues, as well as future directions for meeting those needs. The purpose of these meetings is to help formulate future policy related to assistive technology for persons with disabilities.

Date, Time, and Location of Meetings

The meeting sites are accessible to individuals with disabilities. An individual with a disability who will need an auxiliary aid or service to participate in the meeting (e.g., interpreting service, assistive listening device, or materials in an alternate format) should notify the contact person listed in this notice at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting date. Although the Department will attempt to meet a request received after that date, the requested auxiliary aid or service may not be available because of insufficient time to arrange it.

The first public meeting is scheduled to be held in:

Washington: Wednesday, March 4, 1998 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Microsoft Campus, Building 43, Room 1560 at the intersection of 156th NE Avenue and NE 31st Street, Redmond, Washington.

For Further Information and Oral Comments Contact: Persons desiring further information and those who plan

to provide oral comments at the March 4, 1998 public meeting should telephone Jovine Umali on (206) 685-4181. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call (206) 685-4181. Requests to provide oral comments may also be sent through the Internet: uwat@u.washington.edu.

The second public meeting is scheduled to be held in:

Missouri: Wednesday, March 18, 1998 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Courtyard by Marriott, 7901 Northwest Tiffany Springs Parkway, Kansas City, Missouri.

For Further Information and Oral Comments Contact: Persons desiring further information and those who plan to provide oral comments at the March 18, 1998 public meeting should telephone Diane Golden on (800) 647-8557. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call (800) 647-8558. Requests to provide oral comments may also be sent through the Internet: matpmo@qni.com.

The third public meeting is scheduled to be held in:

Boston: Wednesday, March 25, 1998 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Massachusetts Archives Building at Columbia Point, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts.

For Further Information and Oral Comments Contact: Persons desiring further information and those who plan to provide oral comments at the March 25, 1998 public meeting should telephone Marion Pawlek on (603) 224-0630. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call (603) 224-0630. Requests to provide oral comments may also be sent through the Internet: mjpawlek@christa.unh.edu.

The fourth public meeting is scheduled to be held in:

Florida: Thursday April 2, 1998 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Florida State University, Center for Professional Development, 555 West Pensacola Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

For Further Information and Oral Comments Contact: Persons desiring further information and those who plan to provide oral comments at the public meeting should telephone Terry Ward on (850) 487-3278. Individuals who use

a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call (850) 487-2805. Requests to provide oral comments may also be sent through the Internet: faast@faast.org.

Written Comments

NIDRR invites written comments from those who will be unable to provide oral comments at the public meetings. Written comments should be received by April 30, 1998. Written comments should be addressed to Ms. Nell Bailey, RESNA Technical Assistance Project, 1700 N. Moore St., Suite 1540, Arlington, VA 22209. Written comments may also be sent through the Internet: nbailey@resna.org.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to Nell Bailey.

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Note: The official version of a document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 23, 1998.

Judith E. Heumann,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 98-4972 Filed 2-26-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P