

Rehabilitation Facilities of Hawaii, Inc.

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Rehabilitation facilities are typically non-profit organizations which provide a variety of services designed to minimize the handicapping effects of the disabled person's physical, mental, social and/or vocational limitations. Specific goals and services provided by such agencies vary according to the needs of the persons served and the nature of the community. Most rehabilitation facilities provide work-oriented experiences in controlled environments to facilitate the handicapped person's progress toward normal living and vocational productivity. Sheltered workshops, as a place of employment for handicapped individuals, provide careful evaluation of skill areas and work tolerance, progressive work experience, extended employment, and community job placement, as well as opportunities for education, socialization and recreation.

Rehabilitation Facilities of Hawaii, Inc. (RFH) is a non-profit corporation comprised of 12 facilities providing rehabilitation services in the State of Hawaii. One of these facilities is a hospital; the other 11 are workshops for the handicapped which have collectively labored to improve the conditions surrounding sheltered employment over the past eight years. These sheltered workshops are located throughout our island-state: Goodwill Vocational Training Center, Salvation Army Service Center, Lanakila Rehabilitation Center, Fort Ruger Association for Retarded Children Day Activities Center, Waimano Home and Training School, Ho'opono Rehabilitation Center, and The Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific on Oahu; Brantley Center, Rainbow Crafts, and Kona Krafts on Hawaii; Maui Rehabilitation Center on Maui; and Rehabilitation Unlimited Kauai on Kauai.

In July 1975, a grant from the Federal Region IX Office of Rehabilitation Services provided RFH with staff for development of capacities and resources to be utilized by Hawaii's rehabilitation programs. More specifically, the primary objective of RFH is rehabilitation of a greater number of severely-disabled individuals. Among the steps being taken by RFH toward this goal are: standardization of the client evaluation systems used by all facilities; development of products, programs, and marketing methods; and, expansion of opportunities for sheltered and extended employment. RFH coordinates efforts of the facilities in education, legislation, and the exchange of ideas and experiences. It provides leadership, in cooperation with other professional associations, agencies, community and individual groups, for the advancement of rehabilitation of the handicapped.

A continuing issue in the historical development of sheltered workshops has been the conflict, actual or potential, between the two goals of production and rehabilitation. Subcontracts from area industries represent the major source of work to be done by clients of rehabilitation facilities. Without ample contract work, both the purpose and the actual existence of the facility are jeopardized. That is, an optimal amount of contract work provides real and varied vocational training opportunities and funds to support the facility and its rehabilitation programs. The facilities association concentrates its efforts on assisting workshops in developing and maintaining a steady work flow. Rehabilitation Facilities of Hawaii, Inc., helped draft state legislation to identify items to be manufactured by rehabilitation facilities and purchased by the