§ 1004-a. Sheltered workshops for individuals with developmental disabilities, mental illness or a severe physical handicap. 1. Declaration of purpose. The conditions associated with a developmental disability, mental illness and severe physical handicap are such that many young people, after laborious training in the schools and otherwise, reach the point in their lives where they can and should, under proper and continued guidance, engage in sheltered employment. The effects of such employment are salutary in many ways. The affected individual is helped to become a contributing member of society. The state is saved the expense of his or her institutionalization in already overcrowded state schools and facilities. The family retains closer contact with him or her and is spared the anxieties naturally attaching to separation and institutionalization. All of these factors have also been shown to reflect tangible benefit upon individuals with developmental disabilities, mental illness or a severe physical handicap in improving his or her overall condition. The purpose of this measure is to specifically encourage the development, improvement and expansion of such sheltered employment facilities by non-profit agencies, so that the salutary effects mentioned can be expediently accomplished.

2. Special provisions relating to individuals with a developmental disabilities, mental illness or a severe physical handicap in extended sheltered employment in workshops. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, when it shall appear to the satisfaction of the department that an individual with a developmental disability, mental illness or a severe physical handicap over the chronological age of seventeen years can reasonably be expected to benefit from, or in his or her best interests reasonably requires extended sheltered employment in a workshop as defined in subdivision eight of section ten hundred two of this article, furnished by an approved non-profit organization, the department is authorized to contract with such organization for the furnishing of such sheltered employment to such individual with a developmental disability, mental illness or a severe physical handicap; and the department is further authorized to expend for such purpose a sum or sums not less than one thousand five hundred dollars per annum for each such individual with a developmental disability, mental illness or a severe physical handicap, for or towards the cost of providing such

sheltered employment for each such individual with a developmental disability, mental illness or a severe physical handicap.

The department shall pay at least quarterly during the state fiscal year such sums as are authorized to such organizations for such sheltered employment immediately upon the completion of evaluation and personal adjustment services under the sponsorship of the department.

3. The department shall maintain a register of such nonprofit organizations which, after inspection of the facilities for sheltered employment provided by them, it deems qualified to meet the needs of such individuals with developmental disabilities, mental illness or a severe physical handicap. Such inspection shall also determine the eligibility of such organization to receive the funds hereinbefore specified.

4. The department is authorized to contract with such nonprofit organizations for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services which lead to sheltered employment.

5. The department shall assure that individuals in long-term sheltered employment operated by not-for-profit agencies are periodically reviewed to determine the feasibility of their employment, or training for employment, in integrated work settings and that maximum efforts toward such employment occur, whenever it is determined to be feasible.

6. The commissioner is authorized to promulgate such reasonable rules and regulations as he may deem necessary or proper to carry out the provisions of this section.