

# Freeze lifted a bit more on state hiring

ALBANY (AP) — The state has allowed a second partial lifting of a 14-month-old hiring freeze at institutions for the mentally retarded, the Mental Hygiene Department announced yesterday.

The lifting affects Newark and Rome state schools, a spokesman said.

Early in January, Gov. Rockefeller made \$5 million available to the department to lift partially the freeze at Willowbrook State School, Letchworth Village and Wassaic State School "to ease manpower problems."

The announcement came a day after two days of legislative hearings into allegations of insufficient care at the schools especially Willowbrook, which has received wide national broadcast and printed publicity.

## AMOUNT UNCERTAIN

How much money is involved in the lifting was not available.

The departmental spokesman said the partial thaw in the hiring freeze affects only the policy of attrition — not filling vacancies — and does not mean workers laid off by budget cuts will be rehired.

He said he did not know whether the ceiling would continue partially lifted in the new fiscal year.

"The action was taken to prevent a further decline in the number of patient-care employes at both schools," he said.

The number of patients and employes at the two schools was not available immediately.

As to what effect the hearings marked by angry protests of institutional conditions by parents and various organizations, had on the decision to lift the attrition policy further, the spokesman noted: "The process of getting relief to Willowbrook, Letchworth