

Willowbrook gets time to hire

For the second time since the original court order, Federal Court Judge Orrin G. Judd yesterday extended the deadline to Nov. 30 for Willowbrook State School to hire attendants to meet a one - to - nine ratio.

The state Department of Mental Hygiene this time told the court that they had failed to meet the June 30 deadline because of a "serious error in estimating the additional ward attendants necessary."

When the original order was

made in April, Judge Judd of the Eastern District court in Brooklyn, called for "400 additional ward attendants to provide a ratio of nine residents to one attendant in all buildings housing severely retarded or emotionally disturbed patients."

Later in May, he modified that order to include only on the ward direct care staff members working in the treatment room, except the building office, the laundry room or other areas not normally used by the residents.

The first deadline of May 15 was not met because the Mental Hygiene Department said it would "need until the end of June to recruit and train additional attendants to comply with the full practical impact of the order."

Besides the extension, Judge Judd denied a motion that Dr. Miodrag Ristig, director of the state facility, be held in contempt for failure to comply, but pointed out that the contempt order could be heard again after

Nov. 30 if there has been no compliance.

Judd, in defense of Ristig, said that the failure to comply "results from an inability not primarily created by Ristig," stating that he was thrown into the middle of Willowbrook and was not to blame for the conditions there.