

# State officials seek way to fund monitoring panel for Willowbrook

State officials, faced with a contempt of court finding, are seeking a way to fund a court-appointed monitor in panel of the Staten Island Developmental Center eliminated from the state budget by the Legislature.

"By no means do we intend to be in contempt of court," said a spokesman for Gov. Carey.

Carey and Mental Retardation Commissioner James E. Introne must tell a federal judge Monday why they should not be held in contempt of court because the 1980-81 budget does not contain funds for the Willowbrook Review Panel, a seven-member panel charged with monitoring care for former and current residents of the developmental center.

Carey included a \$348,000 request in his budget proposal for the panel, but the Senate and Assembly deleted it.

Snyder said counsel on the governor's staff are looking for ways to keep the group in operation.

But it was unclear how the governor could allocate money without legislative approval. Lawmakers said they deleted funds for the panel because they do not

think the panel serves a useful function.

But Katherine Schwanager, the group's executive director, said the panel is needed to monitor community placement efforts mandated by a sweeping 1975 court decree. The decree, known as the Willowbrook Consent Decree and signed by Carey, mandates

better care for the retarded and the virtual closing of the Staten Island Developmental Center by April 1981.

"We plan to continue our operations," said Mrs. Schwanager, adding she is confident the courts will force the state to pick up the panel's costs in the annual budget.