

Department of Social and Health Services

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

2016-2020 State Plan Update, March 2, 2018

A. Input of State Rehabilitation Council

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. Input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;

Introduction

This section has been jointly developed by the Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) and Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DSHS/DVR). Included herein are the input and recommendations of the WSRC, provided to DSHS/DVR during FFY 2016-2017, as well as DSHS/DVR's formal responses to each item.

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council

The WSRC provides guidance and advocacy to improve vocational rehabilitation services and makes recommendations about important or emerging issues. The WSRC met on a quarterly basis during the reporting period.

Summary of Input & Recommendations

WSRC Item One

December 16, 2015

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) submitted input and serious concerns about DVR's placement within the DSHS Rehabilitation Administration. One reason for our concern was the potential influence the Administration would exert related to the use of DSHS/DVR funds.

Members of the WSRC became aware of an inter-local agreement between DSHS/DVR and the University of Washington with a begin date of 11/14/2014 in the amount of \$116,578. The

contract was intended to improve services to incarcerated youth served by JJRA. There was no disability focus to the work and it did not meet the definition of a VR service. Believing it was a misuse of DSHS/DVR funds, the WSRC requested JJRA repay DSHS/DVR for funds spent related to this work.

The WSRC also shared concerns with the placement's impact on employment outcomes achieved by DSHS/DVR participants.

WSRC Item Two

November 16, 2015

The WSRC submitted the following feedback regarding the October 2015 Customer Forum held at the Tacoma DSHS/DVR office:

The Council appreciates the DSHS/DVR counselors and supervisors who attended the forum and responded to customer issues; however, the absence of DSHS/DVR senior leaders was disappointing and sent the wrong message to staff and consumers. Over 3,000 DSHS/DVR customers were invited to attend the forum. Many consumers attended and expressed significant and serious concerns. While the SRC moderators conveyed the Council's role in hearing their feedback and passing it on, a DSHS/DVR leadership presence would have gone a long way toward communicating DSHS/DVR's concern and commitment to addressing their concerns.

While these forums are scheduled months in advance, we understand unavoidable conflicts will arise that limit your attendance or others on the SLT at every forum. Despite these conflicts, we request that you prioritize SLT representation to ensure at least one representative is present at all scheduled customer forums in the future.

WSRC Item Three

July 28, 2016

WSRC requested DSHS/DVR provide WSRC Executive Director, Teesha Kirschbaum, with ongoing access to the DSHS/DVR self-service management-reporting module.

As our conduit for information and support, the Council needs the WSRC Executive Director to have easy access to standard DSHS/DVR performance reports on an ongoing basis. This access is important to the Council's ability to efficiently and effectively carry out the functions outlined under CFR 361.17.

WSRC Item Four

October 28, 2016

WSRC members who are CRP representatives expressed frustration with the length of time it was taking DSHS/DVR to complete its work related to the CRP cost study. Members expressed

concern about how dated the data would be if DSHS/DVR delayed its decision until the following year (2017), and that provider rate increases would not be considered sooner.

Based on CRP feedback, it appears there has been no formal communication with CRPs about the status of the cost study and DSHS/DVR's plan to act on it. The WSRC requests that DSHS/DVR follow up with a formal communication to Community Rehabilitation Programs to update them on the status of the study, next steps, and DSHS/DVR's timeline for considering and making a decision.

WSRC Item Five

April 2017

At our February 2017 Council meeting, one of our Council members raised a concern about how DSHS/DVR protects the safety and well-being of DSHS/DVR customers who are referred to contracted vendors, employers, or other settings where the services or activities are unsupervised by DSHS/DVR. The Council felt it was important to follow up due to the detrimental impact to the individual involved as well as the risk it poses for DSHS/DVR.

We would like to thank DSHS/DVR's Chief of Field Services for sharing the steps DSHS/DVR currently takes to protect customers, including:

- Annual review checklist related to mandatory abuse reporting
- Complaint procedures

While the steps above provide general direction, they do not specifically address the referral of individuals to a setting that is unsupervised by DSHS/DVR. The WSRC respectfully recommends that DSHS/DVR take additional steps to protect individuals, particularly those at risk of harm or exploitation, prior to placement in an unsupervised setting as follows:

1. DSHS/DVR establish policies, procedures, training or other safeguards to assure that DSHS/DVR staff advise customers before placement in an unsupervised setting to discontinue working with any vendor staff, employer, co-worker, or other person who threatens harm, is verbally abusive, or otherwise makes the individual uncomfortable, and to report the situation to DSHS/DVR as soon as possible.
2. DSHS/DVR establish procedures and training that instruct DSHS/DVR employees how to respond if a DSHS/DVR customer reports a situation of this nature to DSHS/DVR, including how DSHS/DVR assures the protection of others who have been referred to the same setting.

Steps to reinforce and remind DSHS/DVR staff periodically about the importance of these precautions when placing DSHS/DVR customers in unsupervised settings.

Summary of Consumer Satisfaction

WSRC Summary

Between October 1, 2015 and July 30, 2016, customer satisfaction was gathered at WSRC customer forums held at each WSRC quarterly meeting to obtain direct customer input. We also began working on completely transforming how the WSRC gathers customer input.

In the past, the WSRC periodically contracted with an outside organization to complete a Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS). DSHS/DVR also sent a written survey to all customers at the time of case closure.

The WSRC decided to improve these methods of collecting consumer satisfaction information by redesigning its CSS approach. The WSRC and DSHS/DVR worked together to design and build an automated CSS module. Through the CSS module, monthly surveys are generated and sent to a random sample of customers in all case statuses asking a set of six core questions. The CSS module has built-in features to assure the validity and reliability of survey results. The survey asks customers to rate their experience on the following measures by using a five point Likert scale:

1. My counselor does a good job keeping in touch with me.
2. My counselor understands what is important to me.
3. My counselor understands how my disability affects me.
4. My counselor cares about my input.
5. DVR moves quickly enough for me.
6. Overall, I am satisfied with DVR.

This new system for collecting customer satisfaction was implemented on August 1, 2016. Between implementation and the end of this reporting period (September 30, 2017), the WSRC used the CSS module to send out 9,675 surveys and entered 1,796 responses. The WSRC continues to make improvements to the CSS module and plans include reaching more customers by making the survey accessible online and customizing surveys to add questions in a specific target area or to a specific target population.

The data for this period shows the following trends:

- DVR moves quickly enough for me is the lowest scoring measure across all case statuses (average of 3.48).
- Closed other case status has the lowest satisfaction level on all measures (overall satisfaction of 3.27).

Input & Recommendations on the Implementation of an Order of Selection

The WSRC would like to express our gratitude to DSHS/DVR on their openness and collaboration related to developing DSHS/DVR's State Plan amendment to enter into an Order of Selection. The WSRC appreciates DSHS/DVR's prompt response and the action taken in response to our concerns about how priority categories are determined under an Order of Selection.

Despite our disappointment that an Order of Selection is necessary, the WSRC has no additional input or concerns related to the amendment, and concurs with DSHS/DVR's decision. DSHS/DVR has clearly and effectively presented the information and data and, as usual, has done an exceptional job of communicating the need for this action.

2. The Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

DSHS/DVR Responses to Input & Recommendations

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Item One

In mid-2017, a new Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services was appointed. In late 2017, DSHS/DVR and the WSRC held joint public forums to gather comment from customers and stakeholders regarding DVR's placement. Those comments and the opinion of the WSRC were submitted to the Secretary for consideration. DSHS/DVR thanks the WSRC for its continued advocacy and for maintaining the stance that reporting to the Secretary would result in equal representation within DSHS and align with the requirement of the law.

Effective January 1, 2018, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's placement within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), moved directly under the Secretary. DSHS/DVR appreciates the thoughtful consideration and decision of the Secretary. This move reflects the appropriate and most autonomous placement for DVR within DSHS while removing the potential influence another administration would have over decision making and program development.

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Item Two

DSHS/DVR Executive Leadership appreciates the collaborative partnership between DSHS/DVR and the WSRC. DSHS/DVR remains committed to attending quarterly meetings and sharing meaningful updates regarding DSHS/DVR's priority areas. DSHS/DVR values the interactions with council members and customers and recognizes the dedication of the WSRC to ensure customers' voices are heard and their concerns addressed. DSHS/DVR leadership continues to uphold the promise made in 2015 of ensuring at least one member of the Executive Leadership Team attends the quarterly public forums. Additionally, DSHS/DVR is committed to increasing attendance of all VR professionals and will develop a plan to foster participation at all levels.

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Item Three

DSHS/DVR acknowledges the role carried out by the WSRC as outlined in federal regulation. Managing performance is an area of significant importance to DSHS/DVR. Currently, DSHS/DVR is conducting a review and iterative redesign of the management reports as well as exploring new tools and methods to report data. The self-service feature will be obsolete and replaced with a more robust and flexible reporting tool. DSHS/DVR is committed to include the WSRC Executive Director in discussions regarding the new management reports and together, will develop a plan for regular sharing of the reports.

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Item Four

Recognizing the challenges of developing data collection methodologies to ensure an accurate representation of the experiences of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) throughout Washington State, the results of the CRP Cost Study were delayed. Additionally, DSHS/DVR experienced a change in executive leadership in late 2016 which postponed the implementation of modifications based on the results of the study. DSHS/DVR formally communicated the

results of the cost study in early 2017. The CRP Cost Study resulted in a restructure of the fees paid to CRPs. To DSHS/DVR's knowledge, this study was the first of its kind in the nation. The methodologies and results were shared at a national level to help improve the delivery of services to customers and the businesses that provide these valuable services.

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Item Five

The safety and well-being of our customers is of the utmost importance. DSHS/DVR has long-established protocol when contracting with vendors to ensure that background checks are completed. DSHS/DVR professionals are currently required to complete training on mandatory reporting upon hire and annually thereafter. DSHS administrative policy and DSHS/DVR procedural guidance outline the steps to take and documentation to complete when alerted to a harmful situation. DSHS/DVR will reinforce our concern for customer safety and point to the appropriate guidance during New Employee Orientation. DSHS/DVR will develop a method by which staff advise customers of the importance of their personal safety and what to do when it has been threatened or compromised. Additionally, DSHS/DVR will further develop current guidance and establish a Standard Operating Procedure that addresses responding to a customer report of harm or threatened safety. The procedure and supporting documentation will be used to develop a required training that will be added to DSHS/DVR's internal training program, Rehab University.

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Customer Satisfaction Summary

DSHS/DVR appreciates the dedication of the WSRC to ensure DSHS/DVR customers are surveyed at regular intervals. DSHS/DVR strongly values the opinions of our customers and strives for great customer experiences. We continue to build a culture where our customers' experiences are our highest priority.

DSHS/DVR Response to WSRC Input & Recommendations on the Implementation of an Order of Selection

DSHS/DVR acknowledges the WSRC's concurrence with DSHS/DVR's decision to enter into an Order of Selection. DSHS/DVR sincerely appreciates the WSRC's partnership and active participation in the implementation process, State Plan amendment and public comment activities, and engagement of stakeholders. DSHS/DVR will continue to keep the WSRC and the Client Assistance Program informed of its implementation efforts and related issues, seeking further opportunities to strengthen this partnership.

3. The designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

DSHS/DVR appreciates the input and recommendations of the Council. All recommendations are thoughtfully considered and will be developed to the greatest extent possible. DSHS/DVR has no rejection to the input and looks to collaborate with the WSRC when developing solutions to improve practice and standard operating procedures, as appropriate.

B. Certifications

C. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA)

DSHS/DVR and WDVA have procedures for referring DSHS/DVR customers with military service to WDVA to determine eligibility for any state or federal Veterans' benefits. This collaboration has increased the use of Veterans' benefits as comparable services for DSHS/DVR customers who are veterans with disabilities.

United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA)

DSHS/DVR has a cooperative agreement with the regional USDVA Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) and its regional offices to facilitate improved service delivery for customers receiving USDVA benefits by formalizing referral procedures, designating local referral liaisons, and coordinating services that contribute to the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Washington State Department of Social & Health Services

DSHS administers a wide range of programs which include, but are not limited to, Medicaid services, substance abuse recovery, long term care and disability services, children's services, economic assistance services, and juvenile justice services. DSHS/DVR continues close collaboration throughout DSHS.

DSHS Community Services Division (CSD)

CSD administers the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program, Aged, Blind, Disabled (ABD) Program (formerly known as the General Assistance - Unemployable (GAU) Program), Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) Program, and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) Program. These programs provide time-limited income assistance and other support services to low-income families and individuals. Washington DSHS/DVR continues to have an interagency agreement with the CSD that defines mutual roles and practices for serving joint customers.

DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR)

DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) contracts with counties to deliver outpatient chemical dependency treatment and directly contracts for residential treatment services. DBHR contracts with regional entities for the delivery of community mental health services and directly operates two state psychiatric hospitals.

- DSHS/DVR maintains active referral relationships with treatment providers at the local level that are funded through DBHR contracts with each county.
- DSHS/DVR has been collaborating with DBHR on a pilot project that provides extended services for joint supported employment customers, using Medicaid behavioral health funding. In 2017, a Medicaid waiver was approved, which will expand these services throughout the State. In addition to DSHS/DVR and DBHR, partners in the Medicaid waiver collaborative include the State Health Care Authority, Aging and Long-Term Care Administration and a third party vendor.
- DBHR has become a Ticket-to-Work (TTW) Employment Network and is establishing a Partnership Plus Agreement with DSHS/DVR to build a revenue stream from the TTW Program that will fund extended services for those mental health customers who require a supported employment model.
- DSHS/DVR is participating with DBHR in conducting a pilot project at two locations that is designed to integrate the Individual Placement Support (IPS) model of supported employment with DSHS/DVR supported employment services.
- DSHS/DVR has assigned liaison counselors that work itinerantly from several Mental Health agencies across the state. The counselor works from the mental health center approximately one day per week, facilitating access to DSHS/DVR services for mental health consumers.
- DSHS/DVR is represented as a member of the Washington State Behavioral Health Advisory Council.

DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)

DDA is the primary agency that funds extended services for individuals with developmental disabilities who require supported employment. DDA contracts for these services with Washington counties, and counties sub-contract with employment service providers to provide extended services to DSHS/DVR customers.

- DSHS/DVR and DDA leadership meet on a regular basis, and are co-sponsoring several initiatives aimed at improving employment outcomes for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities and advancing the skills of employment service providers and community rehabilitation programs that serve joint DSHS/DVR and DDA customers.
- DSHS/DVR is represented as a member of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council.

DSHS Aging and Long Term Support Administration (AL TSA)

AL TSA provides long-term care through personal care attendant services, Kinship Care, Roads to Community Living, “money follows the person” policies, New Freedom Services, the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Council, and the Title V Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP). DSHS/DVR and AL TSA will develop a cooperative agreement for serving joint customers.

DSHS Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR)

JR provides rehabilitative services to justice-involved youth. DSHS/DVR and JR have a cooperative agreement to jointly serve JR youth who are eligible for Pre-employment Transition

Services and other DSHS/DVR services. Through coordinated services, JR youth with disabilities will receive services supporting community re-entry along career pathways.

DSHS Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)

ODHH coordinates with DSHS/DVR's assigned supervisor on multiple projects including accessibility and accommodations for DSHS/DVR customers. Specific liaison duties are distributed locally to supervisors and the 13 rehabilitation counselors for the deaf. ODHH manages the Sign Language Interpreter Contract and values feedback from all sources to improve the quality of interpreter services. ODHH is the managing agency for DSHS/DVR's contract for Video Relay System (VRS) and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) technologies.

State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) oversees the operation of thirty-nine Community and Technical Colleges across the state. DSHS/DVR will develop cooperative agreements with SBCTC programs authorized, and not authorized, by WIOA to jointly serve students with disabilities who require VR services to achieve competitive employment outcomes.

Health Care Authority

The Health Care Authority (HCA) administers Medicaid services to all DSHS/DVR customer recipients. DSHS/DVR and HCA closely coordinate to assure that individuals receive medical and behavioral health services necessary to achieve their employment goals. In addition, DSHS/DVR is working to develop a cooperative agreement with HCA, DBHR, and DDA that describes how Title 19 services under the State Medicaid Plan, including community-based waiver programs, will be utilized to develop and support integrated, community-based employment opportunities for customers.

HCA also administers Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD), a Medicaid buy-in program. DSHS/DVR coordinates with HWD to assist qualified individuals in continuing to receive medical benefits after they become employed.

Tribal Programs

DSHS/DVR and the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) have a joint memorandum of understanding with Washington's eight Tribal 121 programs. This joint memorandum outlines how all partners will ensure effective communication, collaboration, coordination, and cooperation in serving individuals with disabilities who are tribal members in Washington. The agreement, updated on an annual basis, outlines procedures for referrals, joint cases, financial responsibility, shared training opportunities, information sharing, and communication. Tribal 121 directors meet annually with DSHS/DVR and DSB directors in a government-to-government collaboration to promote partnership, maximize resources, and ensure high service quality.

Through DSHS, DSHS/DVR continues its cooperative working relationships and service delivery commitments with all federally recognized tribes in Washington, including those that do not operate federally funded Tribal VR programs. DSHS/DVR participates as a member on the DSHS Indian Policy Advisory Committee. This includes annual and quarterly meetings to review our partnership and identify service delivery improvements for individuals with

disabilities who are members of federally recognized tribes as well as those who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native.

Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE)

The DSHS/DVR Director participates as a member of the GCDE and partners with committee members on initiatives.

Centers for Independent Living

DSHS/DVR currently contracts Title VII, Part B funds to four independent living centers statewide. These centers use Part B funds to enhance and expand core independent living services with a focus on youth with significant disabilities. In addition to core services, independent living centers have been focusing on outreach to increase services in unserved or underserved geographic areas. Additional outreach efforts include targeted disability groups, minority groups, and urban or rural populations with the focus on youth with significant disabilities and 504 plans. The goal is to create a safe environment for youth with disabilities in which youth feel comfortable and confident when talking to allies. This goal will be accomplished by enhancing youth understanding of independent living philosophy, successful self-advocacy, and how engage with legislators about disability issues.

Washington Workforce Association

The Washington Workforce Association (WWA) is a nonprofit, non-partisan membership organization comprised of Washington's twelve LWDBs. The WWA partners with state, regional, and national organizations advocating for a coordinated and fully funded workforce development system focused on the needs of job seekers and businesses. To coordinate and align workforce development services at the local level, DSHS/DVR and the WWA have created and signed a *Shared Vision, Values, & Principles of Collaboration* document which outlines how DSHS/DVR and LWDBs will provide integrated services to individuals with disabilities in Washington's One-Stop Centers.

Association of County Human Services - Developmental Disabilities

The Association of County Human Services - Developmental Disabilities (ACHS-DD) is a nonprofit, non-partisan membership organization of the thirty nine County Developmental Disabilities (CDD) Coordinators across the state who contract with DSHS/DDA to deliver residential, employment and other services to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. DSHS/DVR will collaborate with ACHS-DD to initiate cooperative agreements for the provision of supported employment extended services with each CDD program.

Washington State Business Leadership Network (WSBLN)

The WSBLN is a network of employers who educate and support businesses to hire, retain, and improve customer service for people with disabilities.

Community Employment Alliance

The Community Employment Alliance is a membership organization comprised of Community Rehabilitation Programs. DSHS/DVR participates in meetings to share information, hear concerns and collaborate on issues affecting employment services.

Traumatic Brain Injury Strategic Partnership Advisory Council

In the late 1990s, DSHS/DVR was the primary sponsor of a demonstration grant to identify gaps in providing services to individuals who sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI). DSHS/DVR continues to be a represented member of the TBI Strategic Partnership Advisory Council. This group discusses TBI-related policy issues, system development, and the need for services to meet the needs of TBI survivors, family members, prospective employers, and community members. The TBI Strategic Partnership Advisory Council has identified gaps in housing, a lack of resources, and a need for support group facilitator training. This Council has successfully encouraged the Washington State Legislature to pass legislation that adds fees to specific traffic violations (e.g. negligent driving and speeding) which correlate with increased risk of injury accidents and TBIs. These collected fees are used to help fund TBI-related programs and resources. DSHS/DVR continues to be an active partner in addressing the needs of individuals who have been, or will be affected by, traumatic brain injuries.

University of Washington Rehabilitation Program

Since 2006, DSHS/DVR and the University of Washington Rehabilitation Medicine Unit have collaborated to maintain an on-site Rehabilitation Medicine-DSHS/DVR liaison role. This mutually beneficial relationship improves inpatient and outpatient care at the University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) by providing UWMC patients with direct access to DSHS/DVR services during their hospital treatment. The UWMC is designated as the only regional rehabilitation medicine center in the Pacific Northwest for the treatment of spinal cord injuries and other severe disabling medical conditions. Early introduction in the medical setting provides DSHS/DVR with comprehensive insight into patient needs and makes the referral process more efficient. This relationship provides UWMC patients with additional resources for education, support, and funding. The DSHS/DVR liaison works to coordinate DSHS/DVR orientation and intake procedures for individuals referred from UW Rehab Medicine; determines eligibility for DSHS/DVR services; provides information and referral; participates in UWMC team staffing to coordinate DSHS/DVR services with the interdisciplinary team treatment; upon release from the hospital, assists with transitioning the individual to a VR Counselor near their home; learns about extensive medical and other resources available through the UW Medical School; and shares resources with other DSHS/DVR counselors.

2. State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

DSHS/DVR does not have a formal written agreement with the Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP), the state program carrying out activities under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. However, DSHS/DVR does maintain a close collaborative relationship with WATAP, which includes DSHS/DVR representation on WATAP's Advisory Council.

DSHS/DVR customers will continue to have access to assistive technology devices, services, and consultations. DSHS/DVR counselors will assess whether assistive technology (AT) services or devices are needed to address all customers' barriers to employment as part of DSHS/DVR's standardized vocational assessment process. Two full-time Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioners (ATAPs) will continue to provide customers with specialized AT assessments, consult with staff and customers regarding a full spectrum of AT services and products,

coordinate service delivery with AT vendors, and disseminate information and resources about advancements in AT devices.

To ensure that DSHS/DVR staff is informed of ongoing developments in the AT field, assistive and rehabilitative technology will continue to be a core focus of the redesigned DSHS/DVR Rehab University curriculum.

DSHS/DVR will monitor AT service delivery in compliance with new WIOA requirements. In addition, DSHS/DVR will renew its commitment to being an organizational role model in effective utilization of AT as accommodations for individuals with disabilities including, but not limited to, individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing and individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

3. Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture;

DSHS/DVR has not entered into agreements with programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

4. Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

DSHS/DVR has not entered into cooperative agreements with noneducational entities not carrying out activities under the state workforce development system who serve out-of-school youth.

5. State use contracting programs.

DSHS/DVR has not entered into state use contract agreements.

D. Coordination with Education Officials

Describe:

1. DSU's plans

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

Introduction

The 2014 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 profoundly enhance expectations for coordination between DSHS/DVR and education officials to provide early job exploration and work-based learning opportunities for secondary students with disabilities.

DSHS/DVR has developed a long-range plan to develop and strengthen the education-vocational rehabilitation infrastructure for the coming four years.

Pre-employment Transition Services

With the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandate that state vocational rehabilitation programs allocate 15% of federal funds to provide five required Pre-employment

Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to all students with disabilities, it is imperative that DSHS/DVR develops a strategic, thoughtful, and intentional plan to meet the needs of secondary students with disabilities statewide. These five required activities include 1) job exploration; 2) information regarding post-secondary opportunities at institutions of higher education; 3) self-advocacy instruction; 4) work readiness training; and 5) work-based learning.

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) has expanded the population of students who receive services from DSHS/DVR. Secondary students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans who receive Pre-ETS may be either eligible for DSHS/DVR services or potentially eligible for services. Pre-ETS are provided as generalized services to groups of eligible or potentially eligible students with disabilities, or as individualized and intensive services for students with higher support needs.

Previously, DSHS/DVR has recommended that students engage services in their second-to-last or last year of high school. WIOA draft CFRs specifically note that services may begin as early as age 14, if students have transition IEPs. While not all students receiving Pre-ETS will apply for DSHS/DVR services, early engagement is expected and encouraged.

Students with higher support needs may apply for DSHS/DVR services and receive Pre-ETS on an individualized basis. These students are able to receive the same pre-employment services provided to potentially eligible students while concurrently receiving individualized services from DSHS/DVR through their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). IPEs for students and youth with disabilities may include projected or generally described employment goals.

Coordinated Services for Students and Youth: Goals & Objectives

Strengthen and enhance the DSHS/DVR and education agency partnership at state and local levels so that students receive a seamless continuum of transition services.

- Work with the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to include guidelines and expectations for coordinating the provision of Pre-ETS and other transition services.
- Update DSHS/DVR's Memorandum of Understanding with OSPI to include definitive federal guidance regarding the provision of Pre-ETS and required coordination with education entities.
- Provide vocational rehabilitation training and technical assistance to local education agency teachers and staff regarding post-school transition planning.

Partnership with the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS) will strengthen DSHS/DVR's partnerships with education agencies. DSHS/DVR-CCTS partnership activities include:

- Establish and/or strengthen interagency transition councils, as appropriate, in each Educational Service District that include local DSHS/DVR and educational staff and community partners.
- Develop pilot transition projects in each Educational Service District.
- Develop and provide transition portfolios (T-folios) that provide resources for DVR staff who provide transition services to students.

- Provide training and technical assistance to DSHS/DVR staff, teachers, and community partners.
- Provide gap analysis and outcome data regarding coordinated services between DSHS/DVR and local education agencies.
- Partner with education and community partners to present a statewide transition forum in 2018 that is focused on results of the pilot projects and ways DSHS/DVR and school partners can coordinate more effectively to provide services to all students with disabilities.

After the DSHS/DVR-CCTS contract is completed, DSHS/DVR is committed to continued partnership and collaboration with CCTS.

Increase student access to Pre-Employment Transition Services and individualized transition services from DSHS/DVR.

- Assign DSHS/DVR counselors and staff as liaisons to individual schools, and provide training and technical assistance to staff in building and maintaining established presence in schools.
- Provide DSHS/DVR Student and Youth Transition Handbooks to students, families, teachers, and community partners.
- Develop interagency agreements and service contracts with organizations to provide Pre-ETS to potentially DSHS/DVR-eligible and DSHS/DVR-eligible students.
- Develop statewide Pre-ETS provision agreements with higher education, including building Pre-ETS programs in partnerships with trades and technical schools, community colleges, and four-year universities.
- Develop and maintain a DSHS/DVR student transition website that provides information for students and their families, DSHS/DVR staff, and school personnel.
- Provide ongoing transition best practices guidance, training and technical assistance to DSHS/DVR supervisors, counselors, and staff. Guidance will focus on ensuring that student access to individualized services is provided in a simple and engaging manner, that students may be served earlier than the second to last or last year of high school in order for them to more adequately prepare for post-secondary employment, and that work-based learning experiences are provided for students as part of Pre-ETS.
- Increase outreach to students in traditionally unserved and underserved disability populations, including those with 504 plans, those with emotional-behavioral challenges, students who are deaf or hearing, those who have specific learning disabilities, as well as other disability populations who often do not receive services. Outreach activities include media, opportunities for participation in Pre-ETS activities, individual outreach at schools, relationship building and coordination with education officials, presentations and career fairs for students, youth, families, schools, and community partners.
- Increase outreach to students in traditionally unserved and underserved populations that include tribal youth, justice-involved youth, homeless youth, and students and youth receiving foster care. Outreach activities include media, opportunities for participation in Pre-ETS activities, individual outreach at schools, DSHS/DVR relationship building and coordination with education officials, as well as presentations for students, youth, families, schools, and community partners.

- Strengthen DSHS/DVR participation in current School-to-Work programs statewide by providing increased training and technical assistance for School-to-Work partners, including earlier DSHS/DVR input into assessment and employment planning for students.
- Contract with Centers for Independent Living to enhance and expand core independent living services, focusing on youth with significant disabilities. In addition to core services, Centers for Independent Living have been focusing on outreach to increase services in unserved or underserved geographic areas. Additional outreach efforts include targeted disability groups, minority groups, and urban or rural populations with the focus on youth with significant disabilities and 504 plans. The goal is to create a safe environment in which youth feel comfortable and confident when talking to allies. This goal will be accomplished by enhancing youth understanding of the Independent Living philosophy, successful self-advocacy, and how engage with legislators about disability issues.

2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

A. Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;

Consultation with Education

As part of the formal interagency agreement developed in 2017 between DSHS/DVR, Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), and OSPI, DSHS/DVR consults with and provides technical assistance to staff at secondary schools and local educational agencies in transition planning for students with disabilities from school to post-school activities. This agreement defines partners' roles in pre-employment transition services, collaborative training activities, and consultation and technical assistance which support educational agencies in transition planning for students with disabilities.

B. Transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;

DSHS/DVR and Individualized Education Plans

DSHS/DVR has designated counselor liaisons which work closely with local education agencies statewide; every high school in Washington has a designated DSHS/DVR counselor liaison, including tribally operated secondary schools. DSHS/DVR liaisons maintain close collaborative relationships with students, families, educators, and stakeholders. Their activities include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing consultation in the development of transition IEPs
- Coordination of IPE and IEP services for students with disabilities, including pre-employment transition services
- Training and outreach events with students, families, and other stakeholders
- Dissemination of informational materials, such as the DSHS/DVR Transition Handbook

C. Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;

Financial Resources and Personnel

Financial Responsibilities

DSHS/DVR provides any financial resources and services needed to establish eligibility for students and youth with disabilities. In addition, funds are made available for students' activities primarily related to employment and pre-employment transition services. Activities primarily related to education are funded by educational agencies.

Personnel

DSHS/DVR, OSPI, and local education agencies maintain lists of DSHS/DVR liaisons on public-facing web sites. DSHS/DVR liaison counselors conduct outreach and ongoing consultation to teachers, students, families, and stakeholders.

D. Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

Outreach and Identification Activities

The current agreement between DSHS/DVR, DSB, and OSPI identifies outreach activities to increase the number of students with disabilities who engage in DSHS/DVR and DSB services. In addition, this agreement specifies that DSHS/DVR services should be available to all students with transition IEPs well before students prepare to exit secondary education.

Outreach and engagement activities include:

- An OSPI representative is a member of the Washington State Rehabilitation Council
- DSHS/DVR counselors are assigned as liaisons to each high school in the state
- DSHS/DVR and OSPI share training and information materials for cross-program professional development
- DSHS/DVR provides outreach and education about DSHS/DVR services to underserved populations, including students with disabilities

E. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

Introduction

This section describes how DSHS/DVR contracts with private vocational rehabilitation (VR) service providers, Washington's Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), as well as the services these partners provide.

CRP Contract & Services

DSHS/DVR contracts with CRPs to provide assessment, placement, retention, and training services. The majority of CRPs are private nonprofit providers. However, in some instances, the CRP contract is with a government organization or private, for-profit businesses.

The State of Washington requires contracts, in lieu of cooperative agreements, for the purpose of procuring goods and services. These contracts meet requirements specified within CFR 361.31. DSHS/DVR's CRP contract is procured through an open Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process and is renewed every two years. The RFQ defines the services, expected outcomes of service delivery, payment systems, uniform fees, and the qualifications prospective contractors must meet to be granted a CRP contract. DSHS/DVR does not currently limit the number of contractors who may respond to the RFQ and contractors choose which of the contracted services they provide. Currently, approximately 110 organizations have a CRP contract with DSHS/DVR.

The following service are defined, and provided to DSHS/DVR customers through, the CRP contract:

- Vocational Evaluation: Customers participate in one or more types of standardized vocational tests used to obtain objective information requested by a DSHS/DVR counselor regarding work-related strengths and limitations.
- Trial Work Experience: Customers' ability to benefit from DSHS/DVR services is assessed in a real work setting(s) arranged by the contractor. Results are used to determine eligibility based on clear and convincing evidence whether the individual's disability is too significant to benefit from services.
- Community Based Assessment: Customers' work interests, abilities, and employment barriers are assessed in realistic work settings arranged by the contractor. These assessments collect information and help identify the nature and extent of supports or accommodations needed for the customer to obtain and maintain competitive employment.
- Job Placement: Customers are placed into paid and integrated employment, arranged by the contractor, through mutual agreement between the DSHS/DVR counselor, customer, and contractor.
- Intensive Training (Supported Employment): Customers attain job stabilization with job supports, meet their employers' expected levels of work productivity, and transition to long-term Extended Services provided by an entity other than DSHS/DVR through one-on-one job skills training and support provided at the supported employment job site by the contractor.
- Job Retention: Customers learn the essential functions of a job, meet the employer's expected level of performance, and retain employment for ninety calendar days after placement through individualized training and support services provided by the contractor.
- Off-Site Psycho-Social Job Support Services: Customers who have not disclosed their disabilities to their employers or customers whose employers prohibit access to the worksite receive regular therapeutic interaction. Off-Site Psycho-Social Job Support Services enables customers to maintain satisfactory job performance and successful interactions with others at the workplace.

- Pre-employment Transition Services: Students with disabilities participate in pre-employment activities as appropriate, and in coordination with their schools. These services include 1) job exploration; 2) information regarding post-secondary opportunities at institutions of higher education; 3) self-advocacy instruction; 4) work readiness training; and 5) work-based learning.

Trial Work Experience, Community Based Assessment, Job Placement, Intensive Training, and Job Retention are available at three levels of intensity. Customers' universal and unique barriers determine which intensity level, and commensurate support level, is needed.

All contracted service payments are outcome based; delivery of the expected result or outcome is required to receive payment. The expected outcome is specific to the service as indicated in the definition with a report detailing the activities associated with the provision of service and outcomes attained. Bonus payment incentives for employment outcomes under certain circumstances (e.g. employment which offers health insurance) are included in the contract.

Collaborative Activities

DSHS/DVR will establish a workgroup of DSHS/DVR and CRP staff. This workgroup will collaborate on a series of initiatives which will improve service quality, promote better outcomes, and improve DSHS/DVR and CRP partnerships.

Workgroup Initiatives:

1. Review the current contract model to determine needed improvements or modifications.
2. Develop an evaluation tool to assess CRP performance and service quality.
3. Develop and provide training for DSHS/DVR and CRP staff to promote effective collaboration, CRP staff retention, and shared best practice service methodologies.
4. Disseminate best practice guidance to DSHS/DVR staff regarding communication and collaboration with local CRPs.

In the FFY 2015 DSHS/DVR State Plan, DSHS/DVR targeted quarterly local-level meetings between CRPs and office-level DSHS/DVR staff. These quarterly meetings were implemented statewide and both DSHS/DVR and CRP staff report that these meetings have strengthened partnerships and improved service coordination. Therefore, DSHS/DVR will continue to conduct these mandatory quarterly meetings and will continue to foster strengthening local-level partnerships.

F. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

Supported Employment Partners & Agreements

DSHS/DVR primarily provides supported employment services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and individuals with mental health disabilities. Of these customer groups, individuals with developmental disabilities represent the majority of supported employment outcomes.

DSHS/DVR's success in serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities is based on a long-standing relationship with the DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration (DSHS/DDA). DSHS/DDA is committed to funding extended services for all of its clients who achieve a supported employment outcome through DSHS/DVR.

Substantial resource reductions within the DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR), DSHS/DVR's supported employment partner for customers with mental health disabilities, has limited State capacity to provide extended services to this population. Diligent efforts continue to address these reductions. DSHS/DVR continues its collaboration with DBHR, the Mental Health Employment Consortium, and the Washington Community Mental Health Council to expand the availability of extended services through alternative resources and innovative approaches. These efforts intend to establish cooperative agreements with all Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs) responsible for county-level delivery of community mental health services.

DSHS/DVR continues to promote the use of Ticket to Work as a potential income source for developmental disability, mental health, and traumatic brain injury service providers to build their capacity for providing extended support services.

During the 2017 - 2020 planning cycle, DSHS/DVR will collaborate with DBHR to leverage the strong state-level partnership to facilitate local-level agreement development. In addition, DSHS/DVR will collaborate with the DSHS Aging and Long Term Support Administration to explore funding of extended services to be provided for individuals with traumatic brain injuries and other significant disabilities who require supported employment.

Many individuals with disabilities would benefit from supported employment, yet do not have access to a long term funding source for extended services. In response, DSHS/DVR has encouraged supported employment providers to focus on developing natural supports within customers' workplaces.

DSHS/DVR strategies for expanding the availability of supported employment services:

- Participate in an interagency service committee which supports initiatives and increased employment outcomes for persons living with developmental disabilities, mental health disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and traumatic brain injuries.
- Train staff and partners on Social Security Work Incentives, Plan to Achieve Self Sufficiency, and other work incentives to identify optional funding sources.
- Provide technical assistance on the use of natural supports in the workplace.
- Coordinate cross-program training opportunities on innovative supported employment strategies.

G. Coordination with Employers

Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR services; and

Introduction

This section describes DSHS/DVR's contributions to coordinated business engagement activities. DSHS/DVR and its workforce development partners will embrace a dual—customer model, serving both Washington's businesses and Washingtonians living with disabilities.

Businesses will have unprecedented access to talented and highly skilled job seekers with disabilities, while enjoying DSHS/DVR's training and technical assistance supports. Concurrently, DSHS/DVR and its partners will provide Washingtonians living with disabilities with the full breadth of state-of-the-art rehabilitation, training, and employment services needed to thrive in Washington's workplaces and communities.

This dual-customer model will close skill gaps for businesses, promote the economic self-sufficiency of Washingtonians living with disabilities, and contribute to a more prosperous Washington.

Businesses & Vocational Rehabilitation Services

In coordination with workforce development partners at the state and local level, DSHS/DVR establishes the following business engagement objectives for 2017 - 2020:

- Engage in the development and implementation of coordinated business engagement, industry sector strategies, and career pathways programs.
- Utilize DSHS/DVR Business Specialists to assist with the recruitment and referral of qualified job seekers with disabilities to meet businesses' demands.
- Lead coordinated Local Workforce Development Board engagement of federal contractors and subcontractors, linking these contractors to skilled job seekers with disabilities.
- Increase visibility through a methodical outreach and marketing plan which includes participation in local boards of commerce, membership in professional organizations, representation at career and recruitment fairs, and the provision of training services.
- Support and expand innovative partnerships, such as Microsoft's Specialisterne Project, which partners DSHS/DVR and Washington's businesses to promote the hiring of individuals with disabilities in high-skill and high-demand occupations.

2. Transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

Businesses & Transition Services

Pre-employment transition services provide value to both students and businesses. In the dual-customer model, pre-employment transition services will engage Washington's businesses in actively molding the future workforce. By exposing students with disabilities to hands-on and realistic work experiences, these students will enter the workforce well-prepared to meet

business' skill needs and expectations. As a result, business will experience higher productivity, better engagement, and reduced turnover.

DSHS/DVR will collaborate with its workforce development, education, and community partners to:

- Build relationships with businesses who will work with students and youth by developing internships and on-the-job training programs.
- Develop business training and outreach materials which address hiring youth and students with disabilities.
- Promote the development and expansion of on-site job exploration and internship programs, such as Project Search, statewide.
- Partner with businesses, leveraging pre-employment experiences to prepare youth for the realities and expectations of the 21st Century workplace.

H. Interagency Cooperation

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. The State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

Health Care Authority

The Health Care Authority (HCA) administers Medicaid services to all DSHS/DVR customer recipients. DSHS/DVR and HCA closely coordinate to assure that individuals receive medical and behavioral health services necessary to achieve their employment goals. In addition, DSHS/DVR is working to develop a cooperative agreement with HCA, DBHR, and DDA that describes how Title 19 services under the State Medicaid Plan, including community-based waiver programs, will be utilized to develop and support integrated, community-based employment opportunities for customers.

HCA also administers Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD), a Medicaid buy-in program. DSHS/DVR coordinates with HWD to assist qualified individuals in continuing to receive medical benefits after they become employed.

2. The State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)

DDA is the primary agency that funds extended services for individuals with developmental disabilities who require supported employment. DDA contracts for these services with Washington counties, and counties sub-contract with employment service providers to provide extended services to DSHS/DVR customers.

- DSHS/DVR and DDA leadership meet on a regular basis, and are co-sponsoring several initiatives aimed at improving employment outcomes for youth with intellectual and

developmental disabilities and advancing the skills of employment service providers and community rehabilitation programs that serve joint DSHS/DVR and DDA customers.

- DSHS/DVR is represented as a member of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council.

3. The State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR)

DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) contracts with counties to deliver outpatient chemical dependency treatment and directly contracts for residential treatment services. DBHR also contracts with regional entities for the delivery of community mental health services and directly operates two state psychiatric hospitals.

- DSHS/DVR maintains active referral relationships with treatment providers at the local level that are funded through DBHR contracts with each county.
- DSHS/DVR has been collaborating with DBHR on a pilot project that provides extended services for joint supported employment customers, using Medicaid behavioral health funding. In 2017, a Medicaid waiver was approved, which will expand these services throughout the State. In addition to DSHS/DVR and DBHR, partners in the Medicaid waiver collaborative include the State Health Care Authority, Aging and Long-Term Care Administration and a third party vendor.
- DBHR has become a Ticket-to-Work (TTW) Employment Network and is establishing a Partnership Plus Agreement with DSHS/DVR to build a revenue stream from the TTW Program that will fund extended services for those mental health customers who require a supported employment model.
- DSHS/DVR is participating with DBHR in conducting a pilot project at two locations that is designed to integrate the Individual Placement Support (IPS) model of supported employment with DSHS/DVR supported employment services.
- DSHS/DVR has assigned liaison counselors that work itinerantly from several mental health agencies across the state. The counselor works from the mental health center approximately one day per week, facilitating access to DSHS/DVR services for mental health consumers.

I. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

A. Qualified Personnel Needs.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. The number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

Personnel Data

DSHS/DVR employs a total of 256 field service personnel to serve approximately 20,000 individuals per year. Personnel providing direct services to customers are employed in eight distinct classifications. DSHS/DVR’s direct service personnel are chiefly comprised of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) and Rehabilitation Technicians (RTs), representing DSHS/DVR’s professional and paraprofessional personnel, respectively.

ii. The number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Personnel Data & Vacancies

DSHS/DVR Personnel Levels and Vacancies by Classification, January 19, 2018

| Classification | Personnel | Vacancies |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| VRC 1 In-training | 17 | 2 |
| VRC 2 In-Training | 0 | 0 |
| VRC 3 Journey | 70 | 5 |
| VRC 4 Lead | 45 | 8 |
| RT 1 Case Aide | 82 | 2 |
| RT 2 Benefits Tech | 9 | 1 |
| RT 2 Business Spec | 14 | 4 |
| VR Supervisor | 25 | 2 |
| Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioner | 2 | 1 |

iii. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Personnel Data & 2016 — 2020 Projections

DSHS/DVR Projected New Staff Needs by Personnel Classification, 2016 — 2020

| Personnel Classification | Projected Number of Positions to be Filled, 2016 — 2020 |
|--------------------------|---|
| VRC 1 In-Training | 6 |

Personnel Classification**Projected Number of
Positions to be Filled, 2016 –
2020**

| | |
|--|----|
| VRC 2 In-Training | 23 |
| VRC 3 Journey | 28 |
| VRC 4 Lead | 3 |
| RT 1 Case Aide | 33 |
| RT 2 Benefits Technician & Business Tech | 10 |
| Supervisor | 11 |
| Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioner | 1 |

B. Personnel Development

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

- i. A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

Higher Education Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

Western Washington University (WWU) offers the only graduate program in Washington that directly prepares vocational rehabilitation professionals. Currently 35 students are enrolled in the Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling program. In FFY 2016, 14 graduates completed this program and attained the credentials for certification as a rehabilitation counselor.

- ii. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

WWU Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling Participants and Sponsorships, FFY 2016

| | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Students Enrolled | 35 |
| DSHS/DVR Sponsored | 0 |
| RSA Sponsored | 14 |
| Graduates | 15 |
| DSHS/DVR Sponsored | 1 Customer |
| RSA Sponsored | 7 |

- iii. The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down

by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

| | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Students Enrolled | 35 |
| DSHS/DVR Sponsored | 0 |
| RSA Sponsored | 14 |
| Graduates | 15 |
| DSHS/DVR Sponsored | 1 Customer |
| RSA Sponsored | 7 |

2. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

Recruitment, Preparation, & Retention of Qualified Personnel

DSHS/DVR’s FTE allotment is capped at 318.0 FTEs until June 30, 2019. The division is able to recruit all field service vacancies as they occur but may not exceed this FTE cap. Approval by the DSHS Secretary is required to fill any newly established exempt or program management positions, as part of ongoing budget savings policies.

Qualified Personnel Recruitment & Preparation Strategies

DSHS/DVR will maintain recruitment linkages and concentrated efforts with regional higher education institutions offering rehabilitation counseling programs. These include:

- Western Washington University
- University of Idaho
- Portland State University
- Western Oregon University
- San Diego State University
- Fresno State University
- Utah State University

DSHS/DVR will also continue to send recruitment announcements to higher education institutions offering rehabilitation counseling programs nationwide.

Recruiting qualified candidates in sufficient numbers to fill VRC positions is a continuing challenge. The national shortage of qualified VRC applicants has significantly affected DSHS/DVR’s ability to fill vacancies in a timely manner, especially in rural locations. In response, DSHS/DVR has broadened its list of qualifying master’s degrees to include

psychology, counseling, or a field related to vocational rehabilitation (i.e. fields which promote the physical, psychosocial, or vocational well-being of individuals with disabilities). While the list of qualifying master's degrees has broadened, the required competencies that a VRC candidate must demonstrate have remained unchanged.

Per Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) revisions to Rehabilitation Act CSPD requirements, DSHS/DVR will incorporate new VRC Bachelor's level education qualifications in to the VRC classification series. It is anticipated that this will result in a broader recruitment pool and more timely appointments to vacant positions.

A particular focus of recruitment continues to be attracting candidates who identify as African-American, Latino, and American Indian, as these individuals are presently under-represented among DSHS/DVR personnel. Targeted recruitment will continue in collaboration with Latino community-based organizations, American Indian VR Programs and other Tribal organizations, as well as African-American community-based organizations.

Retention & Advancement

To ensure new employees start successfully, DSHS/DVR continues to use a comprehensive employee onboarding program. Used by supervisors when new employees are hired, this program ensures that individuals receive adequate orientation and training to perform their roles and responsibilities.

DSHS/DVR encourages staff to prepare and compete for future leadership training, introductory courses on supervision, mentoring and networking activities, and other advancement opportunities.

3. Personnel Standards

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and

Personnel Standards

In accordance with 101(a)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act, DSHS/DVR maintains consistent standards for all rehabilitation personnel. These standards include prior education and experience requirements as well as specific core competencies. All current DSHS/DVR counseling personnel (Field Services Administrator, Regional Administrators, VR Supervisors, and VRCs) hold credentials that are consistent with either the state-based VRC registration requirements or the national certification standards of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

DSHS/DVR continues to apply educational qualifications for new hires into VRC 2, VRC 3, VRC 4, and VR Supervisor classifications that require the following credentials:

- A master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling, psychology, counseling, or a field related to vocational rehabilitation (i.e. fields which promote the physical, psychosocial, or vocational well-being of individuals with disabilities; or
- CRCC Certification; or
- A master’s degree in a closely related field, plus 18—quarter (12—semester) credit hours in specified rehabilitation counseling courses at the graduate level.

DSHS/DVR has adopted education qualifications at the Bachelor’s level for the VRC1 classification as an entry point in to the VRC classification series. However, the VRC1 has been designated as an “In-training” classification that requires incumbents to obtain a Master’s degree within two years of hire.

B. The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Staff Development - 21st Century Education & Experience

In July 2017, DSHS/DVR revised specifications for the VRC classification series as follows:

VRC1 – Designated as an “In-training” classification that requires incumbents to have at least one year of experience and obtain a Master’s degree within two years of hire.

VRC2 – Redesignated from “Journey” to an “In-training” classification that requires incumbents to have a Master’s degree with less than three years of experience.

VRC3 – Redesignated from “Lead” to a “Journey” classification that requires incumbents to have a Master’s degree with at least three years of experience.

VRC4 – Designated as a “Lead” classification that requires incumbents to have a Master’s degree with at least four years of experience.

DSHS/DVR completes an annual Performance and Development Plan (PDP) with each employee that covers the period September 1 to August 31. The PDP is a standard State of Washington tool used to evaluate job performance and emphasize individualized staff development needs. Specific development needs identified for each employee are to be addressed in the following year. In addition to determining individual training needs, DSHS/DVR compiles results to plan overall training and developmental priorities conducted staff-wide. While specific priorities evolve year-to-year, DSHS/DVR consistently addresses assessment, counseling and guidance, vocational planning, job placement, as well as assistive and rehabilitation technology. New and ongoing training and continuous improvement activities specifically target the development of staff competencies using labor market and industry sector data.

4. Staff Development.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. System of staff development

A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

Professional Development

DSHS/DVR requires all VRCs to participate in comprehensive in-service trainings on an ongoing basis which address assessment, counseling and guidance, vocational planning, job placement, as well as assistive and rehabilitation technology. The Rehab University, DSHS/DVR's in-service training platform, features standard training modules. The Basic Curriculum must be completed by all VRCs within 12 months of appointment.

Rehab University: Basic Curriculum

1. Vocational Rehabilitation Process
2. Special Programs
3. Employment Outcomes
4. Benefits Planning
5. Rehabilitation Law Review
6. Motivational Interviewing
7. Medical Aspects of Disability

The ongoing redesign of all in-service training curricula to be competency-based, focused on contemporary case management practices, and available using web-based and other distance-learning methods has demonstrated initial success. Statewide WIOA implementation training, designed and conducted by DSHS/DVR's Rehabilitation Act Steering Committee, successfully leveraged in-person and web-based platforms to educate staff on competencies and best practices which support initial WIOA implementation. This success prompted numerous stakeholders to request in-person and web-based WIOA trainings, which DSHS/DVR provided. Stakeholder training participants included Tribal VR directors, workforce development professionals, DSHS staff, and Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) staff.

DSHS/DVR continues to provide training via video conferencing equipment at 21 office locations statewide. This technology permits larger numbers of staff to receive more timely training while reducing travel costs.

B. Acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge

Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

DSHS/DVR has not developed standard procedures for the dissemination of significant knowledge assets throughout the organization. Designing and implementing such procedures is included in DSHS/DVR's planned redesign of its training platform and curricula.

5. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

DSHS/DVR continues to assure full communication access for all individuals with limited English proficiency. In addition to bi-lingual DSHS/DVR staff, contracted interpreter and translation services are available. DSHS/DVR forms and publications are available in Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Laotian, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese and translations to other languages are provided as needed.

Individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing may communicate with DSHS/DVR staff at all locations via video phone, video relay, voice relay, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, real-time captioning, augmentative listening devices, and Ubi-Duo devices. DSHS/DVR's Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCDs) provide effective and culturally competent services for customers who are Deaf.

6. Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Coordination of Personnel Development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

DSHS/DVR has worked closely with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to coordinate personnel development activities and has an interagency agreement with OSPI and the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) to address mutual issues. This agreement is intended to facilitate the required coordination with education and provision of Pre-employment Transition Services, as required under WIOA. In addition, this agreement will allow for DSHS/DVR, DSB, and OSPI to identify necessary training for DSHS/DVR and education staff regarding new services, new coordination, and best practices in serving students with disabilities.

J. Statewide Assessment

1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

A. With the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

(Source: *Disability and DVR Statistics Report, July 2017*, WA DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.)

Introduction

US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, DSHS/DVR case service records, DSHS/DVR customer survey responses, 2014 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) findings, DSHS integrated client database, Assessment of the VR Service Needs of Students and Youth with Disabilities, Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) special education enrollment statistics, WorkSource participation data (Washington's One-Stop Centers), and Social Security Administration (SSA) data are presented to evaluate the vocational rehabilitation service needs of Washingtonians living with disabilities. This report is not intended to be exhaustive; these data represent many of the social, economic, and customer service factors which affect DSHS/DVR and the individuals it serves.

Washingtonians Living with Disabilities

According to 2015 American Community Survey estimates, 908,818 individuals with disabilities reside in Washington, representing 12.9% of the State's population, or approximately one out of every eight people.

The population of people with disabilities grew faster than Washington's population overall from 2011-2015. During that period, the estimated number of Washingtonians with disabilities increased by 8.2%, exceeding the State's growth rate of 5.2%. Additionally, the proportion of working age individuals living with a disability increased. The population of working age individuals with disabilities increased by 5.6%, compared to an increase of 3.3% in the working age population overall.

Individuals report the following types of disabilities:

- 441,737 individuals, 26% of all individuals with disabilities, have an ambulatory difficulty;
- 362,519 individuals, 21.3%, have a cognitive difficulty;
- 294,328 individuals, 17.3%, have an independent living difficulty;
- 286,096 individuals, 16.8%, have a hearing difficulty;
- 158,996 individuals, 9.3%, have a vision difficulty; and
- 157,929 individuals, 9.3%, have a self-care difficulty.

Washingtonians with disabilities are 50.5% male and 49.5% female. More than half (53%) of people with disabilities are between the ages of 18 and 64, the prime working years. People aged 65 to 74, who are increasingly in the work force, represent another 18% of Washingtonians with disabilities. Approximately 7% of those with disabilities are under 18 years of age. The prevalence of disability increases with age of the population and a majority of individuals 75 years and older have a disability.

Disability is reported at a higher rate for White, Not Hispanic individuals, who represent 77.5% of people with disabilities while comprising 69.8% of the State's population. Of the 22.5% that identify as minorities, 7.9% report Hispanic ethnicity; 4.6% Asian; 3.5% Black or African American; 1.9% American Indian or Alaska Native; and .6% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. 4.7% identify as Two or more and 2.7% as Other.

For most minority groups, disability is similar to or less prevalent than their share of the State's population, except for people who identify as American Indian or Alaska Natives. American Indian or Alaska Native individuals make up a small percentage of Washingtonians with disabilities (1.9%), but are much more prevalent in the population of people with disabilities than

in the State's general population (1.3%). 19% of people who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native report having a disability.

For Asian and Hispanic populations, rates of disability are about 3-4 percent lower than their rates in the overall population. 12.4% of Washington's population identifies as Hispanic, whereas 7.9% of people with disabilities are Hispanic. Individuals who identify as Asian represent 8.0% of the State's population overall and 4.6% of people with disabilities.

Labor Force Participation

Individuals between the ages of 16 and 64 years are predominant in the labor force and individuals with disabilities of this "working age" range are the primary customers and potential customers of DSHS/DVR services.

483,334 individuals with disabilities are between the ages of 16 and 64 years. 53.2% of people with disabilities are of working age, compared to 62.8% of Washington's population overall.

Washingtonians with disabilities are employed at less than half the rate of people without disabilities. Individuals with disabilities represent 10.9% of Washington's working age population but only 6% of the State's approximately 3.4 million labor force. An estimated 177,921 (36.8%) of working age individuals with disabilities are employed, compared to 76.4% of people without disabilities. An additional 26,968 (5.6%) individuals are unemployed but in the labor force. This rate is 1.2% higher than the unemployment rate for people without disabilities (4.4%).

The majority of working age individuals with disabilities, 56.6%, is not in the labor force. This significantly contrasts with the 19.2% of working age individuals without disabilities. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 70% of individuals with disabilities who are unemployed or out of the labor force report some type of barrier to employment. In addition to their disability, the most common barriers to employment include lack of education and training, lack of transportation, and the need for job accommodations.

Disability and Poverty

Washingtonians with disabilities experience very high rates of poverty, relative to people without disabilities. An estimated 19.5% of people with disabilities have incomes below 100% of poverty level and 43% below 200% of poverty. The comparable rates for people without disabilities are 10% and 23%. Poverty rates for people with disabilities are at their highest during the working years and the disparity between people with and without disabilities is greatest for this age group.

Factors that contribute to disproportionate poverty in the disability community include lower labor force participation, differences in workers' occupations, and differences in educational attainment levels compared to people without disabilities. Most working age individuals with disabilities (56.6%) are not in the labor force.

Workers with disabilities are more likely to be employed part-time and in service occupations, compared to workers without disabilities. Although people with and without disabilities work in the same types of industries, occupations and job classes differ significantly. Individuals with disabilities are less frequently employed in management and professional jobs and more frequently in service positions. The disparities in types of occupation and class of worker are

likely to result in lower earnings for workers with disabilities; for example, service occupations typically pay less than management and professional occupations.

Meaningful differences are seen in the occupations of employees with and without disabilities. 32% of employees with disabilities work in management, business, science, and arts positions, compared to 40.4% of employees without disabilities. 21.2% of people with disabilities are employed in service occupations, whereas 16.6% of workers without disabilities work in service positions.

Employees with disabilities are also more likely to work for non-profit and government agencies or to be self-employed than workers without disabilities. 61.7% of employed people with disabilities work for private companies, compared to 66.7% of people without disabilities. Employment in the public and non-profit sectors is 16.6% and 8.8% for individuals with disabilities, compared to 15.6% and 7.8%, respectively, for people without disabilities. Self-employment rates are 12.5% for people with disabilities and 9.7% for people without disabilities.

Washingtonians with disabilities are less likely to have completed high school (15.3% versus to 7.9%) or to obtain a bachelors or higher degree (19.3% versus to 37.5%), compared to people without disabilities. Rates of college attendance or attaining an associate's degree are similar for individuals with and without disabilities.

Median annual earnings for people with disabilities are \$22,445, the equivalent of about \$10.75/hour for full-time employment. They earn 62% of median earning (\$36,217) of Washingtonians without disabilities. Women with disabilities earn 63% of their male counterparts, with an annual earnings gap of \$10,573.

Comparing DSHS/DVR FFY 2016 Case Service Data to External Sources

The following analysis of DSHS/DVR services is based on case data for 9,057 cases for which eligibility was determined and case closure occurred during federal fiscal year 2016 (FFY 16), the period from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. Based on American Community Survey estimates, DSHS/DVR served the equivalent of 4.4% of working age Washingtonians with disabilities in the labor force and 33.7% of those who are unemployed.

At the time of application, 77.1% of DSHS/DVR customers are unemployed, including the 10.5% of applicants who are students. 13.2% are working either in competitive, supported or self-employment. The employment status of 9.8% of applicants is identified as "Other".

Type of Disability: Washingtonians with disabilities are nearly equally female and male, with 449,434 females (49.5%) and 459,384 males (50.5%). Males are a somewhat larger percentage of working age individuals with disabilities, at 51.8% compared to 48.2% female.

Sex: DSHS/DVR cases were closed for 4,404 females and 5,053 males in FFY 16. The service population was 46.9% female and 53.4% male, indicating that women were underserved in comparison to their prevalence in the population.

Age: DSHS/DVR service data show that DSHS/DVR customers are predominantly between the ages of 16 and 64, which are considered the prime working years. During FFY 16, 96.4% of DSHS/DVR's closed cases were for individuals between the ages of 16 and 64. 45.2% of customers were 18-34 years of age; 36.4% were 35-43; and 14.8% were 55-64.

Of the 483,334 working age individuals with disabilities:

- 23.7% are between the ages of 18 and 34;
- 39.6% are between 35 and 54 years
- 36.7% are between 55 and 64 years

DSHS/DVR customers are younger than the working age population overall, with more than 80% of customers in the 18-54 age range. Individuals age 55 and above are not served in proportion to their prevalence in the population.

Race/Ethnicity: A comparison of the racial and ethnic identities of Washingtonians with disabilities and DSHS/DVR customers in FFY 16 shows that DSHS/DVR served a population that represents the diversity of people with disabilities. 77.5% of Washingtonians with disabilities and 73.2% of DSHS/DVR customers identify as White, Non-Hispanic. People who identify as a minority race or ethnicity represent 22.5% of individuals with disabilities and 26.3% of DSHS/DVR customers.

The overall percentage of minority customers in FFY 16 exceeded their share of the State's population of people with disabilities by 3.8%. Each minority group was well-represented in DSHS/DVR's service population.

DSHS/DVR case service data for cases closed in FFY 16 show that 10.6% identified as Hispanic (compared to 7.9% of individuals with disabilities statewide); 10.6% identified as Black/African American (compared to 3.5% statewide); 5.8% identified as Native American/Alaska Native (compared to 1.9% statewide); 5.0% identified as Asian (compared to 4.6% statewide); .8% identified as Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (compared to .6% statewide); 2.9% identified as Two or More (compared to 4.7% statewide); and 3.1% identified as Other (compared to 2.7% statewide).

Veterans: ACS data indicate that 152,765 veterans with disabilities reside in Washington, representing 16.8% of Washingtonians with disabilities. 53,247 veterans with disabilities are of working age, 11% of the State's working age population of people with disabilities. The poverty rate for veterans with disabilities is 9.1%, less than half the 19.5% statewide rate for people with disabilities. This statistic suggests that veterans with disabilities are working or receiving income assistance above the poverty line more frequently than other individuals with disabilities.

Veterans are a very small percentage of DSHS/DVR's service population, which may be due to preference for using the services available from the Veterans Administration or lack of knowledge about DSHS/DVR programs. Only 99 individuals with a closed DSHS/DVR case in FFY 16 identified as veterans, 1.1% of closed cases.

Comparisons by Geographic Locations

ACS 1-year estimates require a minimum population of 65,000 to accurately estimate in a given geographic area, allowing for accurate estimates in 19 of Washington's 39 counties. These 19 counties account for more than 90% of the State's working age population and working age individuals with disabilities. In FFY 2016, DSHS/DVR closed 92.8% of its cases where eligibility was determined in these counties. Comparing county-level distribution of working age individuals with disabilities to case closure data indicates DSHS/DVR's service coverage, including potential gaps, across regions.

ACS_14_1YR_B18120 Estimates and DSHS/DVR FFY 2016 Closures, by County

| County | DSHS/DVR Location(s) | Number of Working Age Individuals with Disabilities | Percent of Working Age Individuals with Disabilities | Number of DSHS/DVR FFY 2016 Case Closures | Percent of DSHS/DVR FFY 2016 Case Closures |
|------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| <i>Statewide</i> | <i>(All)</i> | 483,334 | 100.0% | 9,057 | 100.0% |
| Benton | Kennewick | 13,218 | 2.7% | 251 | 2.8% |
| Chelan | Wenatchee | 5,040 | 1.0% | 127 | 1.4% |
| Clallam | Port Angeles | 7,028 | 1.5% | 116 | 1.3% |
| Clark | Vancouver | 31,661 | 6.6% | 398 | 4.4% |
| Cowlitz | Kelso | 9,170 | 1.9% | 145 | 1.6% |
| Franklin* | Kennewick | 4,822 | 1.0% | 77 | 0.9% |
| Grant | Moses Lake | 6,481 | 1.3% | 131 | 1.4% |
| Grays Harbor | Aberdeen | 7,336 | 1.5% | 85 | 0.9% |
| Island* | Mt. Vernon | 6,054 | 1.3% | 61 | 0.7% |
| King | Kent, Bellevue, Redmond, SeaTac, Seattle Mercer, Seattle North | 101,760 | 21.1% | 2,353 | 26.0% |
| Kitsap | Silverdale | 20,860 | 4.3% | 458 | 5.1% |
| Lewis | Centralia | 7,200 | 1.5% | 168 | 1.9% |
| Pierce | Puyallup, Tacoma | 64,395 | 13.3% | 816 | 9.0% |
| Skagit | Mt. Vernon | 8,825 | 1.8% | 171 | 1.9% |
| Snohomish | Arlington, Everett, Lynnwood | 52,940 | 11.0% | 939 | 10.4% |
| Spokane | Spokane | 40,388 | 8.4% | 781 | 8.6% |
| Thurston | Tumwater | 19,360 | 4.0% | 422 | 4.7% |
| Whatcom | Bellingham, Whatcom | 16,403 | 3.4% | 408 | 4.5% |
| Yakima | Yakima, Sunnyside, Wapato | 14,774 | 3.1% | 494 | 5.5% |
| All Other | Clarkston, Colville, Omak, Port Townsend, Shelton, Walla Walla | 45,619 | 9.4% | 656 | 7.2% |

**Denotes counties served by offices in adjacent counties*

County and regional comparisons show that DSHS/DVR services are provided in proportion to the population of working age individuals with disabilities in most areas. Some rural areas and

urban communities in Southwest Washington are underserved. Pierce and Clark counties have the largest gap between the proportion of working age individuals with disabilities and percentage of DSHS/DVR customers served in those counties. These two counties are home to 19.9% of Washingtonians with disabilities, but only 13.4% of DSHS/DVR's closed cases in FFY 16.

Supported Employment Services

(Source: DSHS/DVR Case Service Data, STARS Database)

While Title VI Supported Employment Grant funds are being eliminated in 2018, DSHS/DVR will continue to provide supported employment services under the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grant Fund. For 2017 - 2020, DSHS/DVR estimates between 1,450 and 1,600 customers will receive supported employment services through Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), resulting in 300 - 400 supported employment outcomes per year. At these levels, DSHS/DVR estimates serving approximately 6,100 supported employment IPEs and producing 1,400 supporting employment outcomes during the four-year period of this plan.

Social Security Beneficiaries

(Source: *OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2015*; *SSI Recipients by State and County, 2015*, Social Security Administration, Office of Retirement and Disability Policy, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics)

In Washington, an estimated 36% of working age people with disabilities receives income support from the Social Security Administration.

113,763 individuals, or 25%, receive monthly SSDI payments, Social Security benefits provided to workers who become disabled. Working age people with disabilities in Washington received an average SSDI payment of about \$1,300 per month in 2016.

97,535 individuals (20%) of working age Washingtonians with disabilities receive SSI benefits. The monthly payment provided by this federal assistance program for low-income aged, blind or disabled persons averaged \$586 in 2016. An estimated 36,057 people, 7% of working age individuals with disabilities, receive both SSI and SSDI.

In addition to employment-related services, DSHS/DVR customers receive benefits counseling to provide guidance on programs for which they may be eligible. In comparison to the overall population of working age Washingtonians with disabilities, SSI and SSDI recipient rates for DSHS/DVR customers are higher for SSI and similar for SSDI at application and higher for both at case closure: 24% at application and 32% at closure for SSI and 23% at application and 30% at case closure for SSDI. For both SSI and SSDI, 43% of DSHS/DVR customers are receiving benefits at application and 52% at case closure.

DSHS/DVR Monthly Customer Satisfaction Survey

DSHS/DVR has worked with the WSRC to design and build an automated Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) with targeted questions that have improved customer response rates and the validity of results. Through the CSS module, monthly surveys are generated and sent to a random sample of customers in four case statuses: Eligible, Plan, Closed-Rehabilitated and Closed-Other. The CSS module has built-in sample and response sizes to ensure that responses

can be generalized. The survey measures customers' agreement with the following statements about their DSHS/DVR experience, using a five-point Likert scale:

1. My counselor does a good job keeping in touch with me.
2. My counselor understands what is important to me.
3. My counselor understands how my disability affects me.
4. My counselor cares about my input.
5. DVR moves quickly enough for me.
6. Overall, I am satisfied with DVR.

The new CSS was implemented in August 2016 and responses through September 30, 2017 have provided the following results:

- Overall customer satisfaction with DSHS/DVR is rated 3.85 on a 5-point scale. Satisfaction is highest for customers with closed-rehabilitated cases (4.24) and lowest for customers with closed-other cases (3.30). Overall satisfaction for customers in eligible or plan status is nearly identical, at 3.8 and 3.9, respectively.
- Individuals with a successful outcome are more highly satisfied across on all measures.
- Service timeliness (“DVR moves quickly enough for me”) is the lowest rated item across all case statuses, with ratings of 3.07 for closed-other cases and 3.86 for closed-rehabilitated cases.
- “My counselor cares about my input” receives the highest customer rating for all case statuses, with an average of 4.08 and range from 3.69 for closed-other to 4.36 for closed-rehabilitated cases. Responses from customers in eligible and plan status are similar to the average rating.

Service Needs of DSHS/DVR Customers

(Source: *Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Final Report*, Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation, University of Washington, June 30, 2014)

An assessment of customer service needs, conducted in partnership with the Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) and the University of Washington Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER), was published in FFY 2014.

Between September 2013 and February 2014, CCER sent online needs assessment surveys to DSHS/DVR customers, staff, and service providers. A Steering Committee comprised of DSHS/DVR, WSRC, and CCER staff developed the survey questions. All questions were the same for each survey group.

Customers and service providers most frequently identified Placement into a Job, Assistance Searching for a Job, and Job Coaching as needed services. DSHS/DVR staff most frequently identified Vocational Counseling & Guidance and Mental Health Counseling and Treatment as needed services, though the top three customer-identified needs were also selected by a majority of DSHS/DVR staff.

Customers and service providers also generally agreed on the challenges customers have to receiving DSHS/DVR services, most frequently citing Need More Time with VR Counselor,

Wait a Long Time for Services, and Do Not Understand All the Services that Are Available. Half of DSHS/DVR staff respondents also identified Do Not Understand All the Services that Are Available as a barrier. The most frequent barrier identified by DSHS/DVR staff is Customer Health Issues Prevent Customer from Regularly Meeting with VR Counselor.

The online survey was distributed to 10,774 current and recently closed DSHS/DVR customers. A total of 1,552 individuals responded for a response rate of approximately 15.0%. This included responses from 1,047 current customers and 505 recently closed customers. The following summarizes key results for each of the participant groups.

Customers identified the DSHS/DVR services they most frequently require:

- Placement into a job (56.0%)
- Assistance searching for a job (53.0%)
- Community college or other vocational training (41.0%)
- Job coaching at work (39.0%)

Customers identified the most frequent challenges to receiving DSHS/DVR services:

- Need more time with the VR Counselor (36.0%)
- Wait a long time for services to begin (30.0%)
- Do not understand all the services that are available (30.0%)
- Difficulty developing an Individualized Plan for Employment (30.0%)

CSNA Staff Survey

The online survey was distributed to 247 DSHS/DVR staff. 147 individuals responded for a response rate of approximately 60.0%. Respondents most frequently identified services that customers require from DSHS/DVR:

- Vocational counseling and guidance (86.0%)
- Mental health counseling and treatment (78.0%)
- Placement into a job (77.0%)
- Assistance searching for a job (66.0%)
- Transportation (61.0%)
- Job coaching at work (58.0%)
- Social Security benefits planning (51.0%)

Respondents identified customers' most frequent challenges receiving services from DSHS/DVR:

- Customer health issues prevent customer from regularly meeting with VR Counselor (58.0%)
- Customer does not understand all the services that are available (50.0%)
- Customer disagrees with VR services required to achieve employment goal (25.0%)
- Getting to DSHS/DVR office using public transportation (23.0%)

CSNA Service Provider Survey

The online survey was distributed to organizations and agencies which jointly serve DSHS/DVR customers. 355 respondents completed the survey. A response rate could not be calculated as the survey was distributed to organizations, not individual participants. Service provider responses came from WorkSource staff, Community Rehabilitation Programs, developmental disabilities programs, and mental health providers.

Respondents identified the DSHS/DVR services that customers most frequently require:

- Placement into a job (74.0%)
- Job coaching at work (69.0%)
- Assistance searching for a job (66.0%)
- General work attitude and behavior (57.0%)
- Vocational counseling and guidance (56.0%)

Respondents identified customers' most frequent challenges receiving DSHS/DVR services:

- Customer does not understand all the services that are available (63.0%)
- Customers wait a long time for services to begin (31.0%)
- Customer disagrees with what VR services are required to achieve their employment goal (24.0%)
- Need more time with the VR Counselor (24.0%)

B. Who are minorities;

ACS estimates for 2015 and FFY 2016 DSHS/DVR case service data indicate that the DSHS/DVR service population represents the racial and ethnic diversity of people with disabilities. People who identify as a minority race or ethnicity represented 22.5% of Washingtonians with disabilities and 26.3% of DSHS/DVR customers in those years. (More detailed information about the race and ethnicity of DSHS/DVR customers and Washingtonians with disabilities is provided in previous sections of the State Assessment, **Washingtonians Living with Disabilities** and **Comparing DSHS/DVR FFY 2016 Case Service Data to External Sources**.)

Additionally, an analysis of individuals with disabilities in DSHS service systems (see Section C below) found that minorities were one-third of DSHS/DVR customers and one-third of individuals with indication of disability in DSHS integrated client databases. DSHS/DVR served African American and American Indian individuals with disabilities at 1-2% higher rates and Hispanic/Latino(a) individuals at a 1% lower rate than their representation in the DSHS service population overall.

C. Who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

(Source: *DVR Service Needs for Adults: Adults Ages 18-64 in Calendar Year 2015*, DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, July 31, 2017.)

In collaboration with DSHS' Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA), DSHS/DVR completed an analysis for calendar year 2016 of individuals with indication of a disability, based on information in DSHS' integrated client database. The integrated client database allows for analyses of customer demographic and service needs data across the State's health, behavioral

health, developmental disabilities, vocational rehabilitation, economic assistance, and other programs. The indicators used to identify disability included presumptive SSI or Medicaid disability eligibility; chronic disease burden; high or medium risk psychiatric diagnoses; and prescriptions for antipsychotic or anti-mania medications. The analysis completed for DSHS/DVR identified working age (18-64 years) adults with disabilities in the integrated client database and compared DSHS/DVR customers to all individuals with disabilities.

The analysis shows that DSHS/DVR serves proportionately more youth between the ages of 18 and 24 and fewer individuals 55-64 years of age in comparison to all individuals with disability indicators. Consistent with ACS data, DSHS/DVR serves minority populations in proportion to their representation in the DSHS population of people with disabilities. DSHS/DVR serves proportionately more individuals with developmental disabilities and fewer individuals with behavioral health and substance use treatment needs, in comparison to the overall need for these services. Food assistance recipients, homeless individuals and people with a criminal history are also underrepresented in DSHS/DVR's service population.

Individuals with Mental and Behavioral Health Needs: DSHS estimates that 75% of individuals with disabilities in their service systems have a mental health service need, compared to 50% of customers served by DSHS/DVR. The proportions of customers receiving State mental health services, however, are comparable: 27% of DSHS/DVR and 28% of all DSHS customers. In other words, behavioral health needs of individuals with disabilities are greatly underserved across DSHS programs.

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Needs: An estimated 14% of DSHS/DVR customers are in need of treatment for substance use disorders, compared to 26% of all DSHS customer with disabilities.

Individuals with Developmental Disabilities: 16% of DSHS/DVR customers have a developmental disability, compared to 6% of all DSHS customers with disabilities.

Medicaid Coverage: 72% of DSHS/DVR customers are covered by Medicaid whereas 96% of individuals with disabilities identified in DSHS service systems receive Medicaid. This difference is also reflected in the proportion of individuals with a chronic illness: 18% of DSHS/DVR customers compared to 43% in the general DSHS service population.

Economic Assistance: 63% of DSHS/DVR customers receive economic assistance. 59% receive food assistance, 3% TANF, and 7% Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) cash assistance. 74% of individuals with indicators of disability receive economic assistance, including food assistance (70%), TANF (4%), and ABD (7%)

Homeless: 12% of DSHS/DVR customers and 16% of individuals with indicators of disabilities are homeless.

Criminal History: 31% of DSHS/DVR customers and 44% of individuals with indicators of disability have a history of arrest or conviction of a crime.

Key informant interviews, conducted as part of DSHS/DVR’s 2014 comprehensive needs assessment, also identified veterans with disabilities and high-functioning adults living with autism as underserved by DSHS/DVR.

D. Who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

DSHS/DVR Customers and The State Workforce Development System

DSHS/DVR maintains data sharing protocols with the state workforce agency, the Employment Security Department, which provides DSHS/DVR customer participation data in workforce development services authorized under WIOA Titles IB and III. DSHS/DVR recently entered into data sharing agreements with Washington’s workforce education providers (i.e. OSPI and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges) and began receiving data matches for DSHS/DVR customers in FFY 2018.

Analysis of DSHS/DVR customer participation in WorkSource services (Washington’s One-Stop centers) indicates that about 2-3% of WorkSource reportable individuals are shared customers with DSHS/DVR.

DSHS/DVR Eligible Customers Participation in WorkSource Programs

| Service Category | Number of DSHS/DVR Reportable Individuals | Number of WorkSource Reportable Individuals | DSHS/DVR % of WorkSource Reportable Individuals |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Basic Career Services | 1,949 | 99,869 | 2.0% |
| Individualized Career Services | 715 | 25,666 | 2.8% |
| Youth Services | 772 | 31,340 | 2.5% |

E. Who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

Washingtonians Who Are Students with Disabilities

(Source: *Assessment of the VR Service Needs of Students and Youth with Disabilities*, Center for Change in Transition, Seattle University, May 23, 2017)

DSHS/DVR contracted with the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS) at Seattle University to conduct an assessment of student needs for the five required Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). CCTS used data from the State’s Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) to identify the total number of students with disabilities age 15-21, who are potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. CEDARS maintains data used for federal reporting on students with disabilities who receive services under IDEA and students with a 504 plan.

The CCTS study reported 49,812 potentially eligible secondary school students with disabilities in Washington in the 2015-16 school year. 34,882 (70%) were receiving special education or related services and 14,930 (30%) had a 504 plan. Based on an analysis of the transition services already available to students, CCTS estimated that between 17,500 and 29,500 students need

additional Pre-ETS services. Needs data were provided for each school district and regional education service districts. The assessment did not investigate the number of potentially eligible students attending recognized education programs at institutions of higher education. This number is unknown at this time.

The CCTS assessment also identified the relative need for each of the five required Pre-ETS, based on an assessment of the types of services most commonly available in students' schools and alignment with DSHS/DVR Pre-ETS service categories. Workplace Readiness Training and Work Based Learning were the least available, followed by Instruction in Self-Advocacy. However, service needs vary considerably from one school district to another.

2. Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

DSHS/DVR has not established or developed CRP programs. Information on collaborative research, service delivery improvement, and training activities is described in detail in the Cooperative Agreements with Nonprofit Organization section of this State Plan.

3. Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

See 1.e. above.

K. Annual Estimates

Describe:

1. The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services;

Introduction

This section identifies estimated numbers of customers DSHS/DVR expects to serve and associated case service costs. Specific attention is given to the impact of order of selection implementation on customer volumes, costs, and outcomes.

Annual Estimates

Beginning in October 2015, DSHS/DVR experienced significant increases in overall customer service volume and associated costs. Increased coordination with education agencies and workforce development partners as well as targeted outreach activities contributed to significant increases in applications received, eligibilities determined, new Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) written, and customers served.

Applications

In, FFY 2016 and FFY 2017 DSHS/DVR experienced significant increases in applications received. After five consecutive years of declining application volumes, FFY 2016 applications rose by 15.5% over the prior year. The 10,920 applications received by DSHS/DVR that year were the most in a federal year since FFY 2011. Applications continued to increase in FFY 2017, to a total of 11,173, and this trend is expected to continue through FFY 2019.

DSHS/DVR Applications: FFY 2014 - FFY 2019

| FFY | Applications | Percent Change from Prior Year |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2014 | 9,728 | -1% |
| 2015 | 9,450 | -2.9% |
| 2016 | 10,920 | +15.5% |
| 2017 | 11,173 | +2.3% |
| 2018 (projected) | 11,500 | +2.9% |
| 2019 (projected) | 12,200 | +6.0% |

Eligibility Determinations

The significant increase in applications observed in FFY 2016 (+15.5%) was met with a corresponding increase in eligibility determinations (+14.1%). Costs associated with this influx of new customers prompted DSHS/DVR to redirect nearly \$ 9,400,000 of carry-over funds toward purchased case services, depleting roughly one-third of DSHS/DVR carry-over reserves. These encumbered costs, as well as costs resulting from eligibilities determined in FFY 2017, obligated DSHS/DVR to implement an order of selection on November 1, 2017.

DSHS/DVR Eligibility Determinations: FFY 2014 - FFY 2019

| FFY | Eligibility Determinations | Percent Change from Prior Year |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2014 | 8,685 | 1% |
| 2015 | 8,616 | -1% |
| 2016 | 9,839 | +14.1% |
| 2017 (projected) | 10,014 | +1.8% |
| 2018 (projected) | 10,666 | +6.5% |
| 2019 (projected) | 11,297 | +5.9% |

2. The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

A. The VR Program;

Service Delivery under an Order of Selection

VR Eligibility, Service Volume, Wait List, & Cost Projections for FFY 2018

DSHS/DVR Eligibility, Wait List, Service, & Cost Projections: FFY 2018

| FFY 2018 | Eligibilities Determined | Wait List | New IPEs | Total IPEs | Total Case Service Costs |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|

| FFY 2018 | Eligibilities Determined | Wait List | New IPEs | Total IPEs | Total Case Service Costs |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Priority Category 1 | 4,480 | 0 | 2,760 | 5,740 | \$18,900,000 |
| Priority Category 2 | 3,616 | 3,025 | 590 | 2,673 | \$6,950,000 |
| Priority Category 3 | 2,110 | 2,230 | 0 | 1,214 | \$3,156,000 |
| Priority Category 4 | 300 | 320 | 0 | 173 | \$450,000 |
| Priority Category 5 | 160 | 180 | 0 | 130 | \$370,000 |

Priority Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 4,480
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 0
- New IPEs: 2,760
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 5,740
- Total Case Service Costs: \$18,900,000

Priority Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 3,616
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 3,025
- New IPEs: 590
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 2,673
- Total Case Service Costs: \$6,950,000

Priority Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 2,110
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 2,230
- New IPEs: 0
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 1,214
- Total Case Service Costs: \$3,156,000

Priority Category 4: Individuals with Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 300
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 320
- New IPEs: 0
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 173

- Total Case Service Costs: \$450,000

Priority Category 5: Individuals with Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 160
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 180
- New IPEs: 0
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 130
- Total Case Service Costs: \$370,000

VR Eligibility, Service Volume, Wait List, & Cost Projections for FFY 2019

DSHS/DVR Eligibility, Wait List, Service, & Cost Projections: FFY 2019

| FFY 2019 | Eligibilities Determined | Wait List | New IPEs | Total IPEs | Total Case Service Costs |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Priority Category 1 | 5,111 | 0 | 3,100 | 6,000 | \$20,000,000 |
| Priority Category 2 | 3,300 | 2,600 | 700 | 1,600 | \$4,200,000 |
| Priority Category 3 | 2,350 | 2,350 | 0 | 300 | \$1,000,000 |
| Priority Category 4 | 275 | 275 | 0 | 55 | \$143,000 |
| Priority Category 5 | 160 | 160 | 0 | 15 | \$40,000 |

Priority Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 5,111
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 0
- New IPEs: 3,100
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 6,000
- Total Case Service Costs: \$20,000,000

Priority Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 3,300
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 2,600 (5,625 cumulative from FFY 2018)
- New IPEs: 700
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 1,600
- Total Case Service Costs: \$4,200,000

Priority Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 2,350

- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 2,350 (4,580 cumulative from FFY 2018)
- New IPEs: 0
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 300
- Total Case Service Costs: \$1,000,000

Priority Category 4: Individuals with Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 275
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 275 (595 cumulative from FFY 2018)
- New IPEs: 0
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 55
- Total Case Service Costs: \$143,000

Priority Category 5: Individuals with Disabilities

- Eligibilities Determined: 160
- Customers Placed on a Wait List: 160 (340 cumulative from FFY 2018)
- New IPEs: 0
- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 15
- Total Case Service Costs: \$40,000

B. The Supported Employment Program; and

Supported Employment Estimates

While Title VI Supported Employment Grant funds are being eliminated in 2018, DSHS/DVR will continue to provide supported employment services under the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grant Fund. For 2017 - 2020, DSHS/DVR estimates between 1,450 and 1,600 customers will receive supported employment services through Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), resulting in 300 - 400 supported employment outcomes per year. At these levels, DSHS/DVR estimates serving approximately 6,100 supported employment IPEs and producing 1,400 supporting employment outcomes during the four-year period of this plan.

DSHS/DVR aligns Supported Employment services and resources with Priority Category 1 customers; only individuals with the most significant disabilities receive Supported Employment services. Therefore, DSHS/DVR does not anticipate that this amendment and order of selection implementation will affect the Supported Employment estimates established in the 2016 - 2020 DSHS/DVR State Plan.

C. Each priority category, if under an order of selection;

Please see Section VI.K.2.A.

3. The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

Please see Section VI.K.2.A.

4. The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

Please see Section VI.K.2.A.

L. State Goals and Priorities

The designated State unit must:

1. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

The goals and priorities established in this State Plan reflect DSHS/DVR's ongoing commitments to customer service, successful outcomes, staff development, organizational system improvement, strong partnerships, and business engagement. These goals and priorities were collaboratively developed by DSHS/DVR and leadership of the Washington State Rehabilitation Council.

2. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

Introduction

This section identifies the goals and priorities that DSHS/DVR intends to achieve throughout the 2017 - 2020 planning cycle. Activities described herein align with Washington's strategic plan for workforce development as well as the operational components of this Combined State Plan. This alignment is intended to realize the letter and intent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), to implement a coordinated service delivery system which supports the long-term labor market engagement of individuals with disabilities and improves services to businesses.

These goals and priorities also reflect analyses of DSHS/DVR's performance as well as the needs of individuals with disabilities in Washington. In FFY 2015, DSHS/DVR successfully passed six of the seven Standards and Indicators, failing one by a slim margin. However, DSHS/DVR has demonstrated consistent, measurable improvement across all Standards and Indicators. Preliminary analysis indicates that DSHS/DVR's performance will remain strong under WIOA Performance Accountability.

Goals & Priorities

Goal One: Improve Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities

Goal one reflects DSHS/DVR's focus on providing high-quality services that result in high-quality employment outcomes. Based on Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) findings and stakeholder input, this goal prioritizes the importance of supporting customers in high-quality employment which offers the pay and benefits that support financial independence.

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

1. Strengthen vocational assessment practices as the foundation for comprehensive services which meet customer needs, identify and address barriers to employment, and maximize outcomes.
2. Heighten outreach efforts to potential customers and coordinate and collaborate with system partners and other stakeholders to ensure that all Washingtonians with disabilities have access to services and supports needed to prepare for and obtain employment.
3. Increase business engagement to improve employment for individuals with disabilities in collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
4. Ensure DSHS/DVR customers get optimal benefit from the workforce development system by educating customers about other workforce development programs.

Goal Two: Improve the Quality of Customer Services

Goal two priorities reflect CSNA results and stakeholder input which challenge DSHS/DVR to provide better information on available services, improve service quality and timeliness, and increase the time customers spend with their counselors.

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

1. Improve timeliness of service and ensure adherence to policy and quality assurance standards.
2. Provide high-quality training and support, ensuring staff have the knowledge and skills needed to deliver high-quality vocational rehabilitation services.
3. Build an organizational culture of quality.

Goal Three: Promote DVR's role in advancing effective services for people with disabilities, as a leader in the Workforce Development System.

Goal three priorities will improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities served by Washington's workforce development system. As a core program, DSHS/DVR will contribute its value, expertise, and strengths to maximize outcomes for individuals with disabilities. These priorities align with the strategic and operational elements of this Combined State Plan and reflect the needs of individuals with disabilities served system-wide.

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

1. Work with local and statewide partners, to ensure the workforce development system is both accessible and beneficial for all individuals with disabilities.
2. Participate in the development of cross-program staff training, as experts in areas such as accessibility, disability culture and awareness, and vocational rehabilitation services.
3. Develop and implement integrated service delivery models in collaboration with WIOA core programs.

Goal Four: Improve DSHS/DVR's Systems and Performance

Goal four reflects DSHS/DVR's commitment to improving the systems and practices that support DSHS/DVR staff and, in turn, affect customer service.

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

1. Develop and implement a communication plan to provide consistent internal standards and methods for professional communication within DSHS/DVR.
2. Redesign data management systems and output reports to support WIOA implementation, leverage workforce development data, and strengthen data-driven decision making.

3. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

DSHS/DVR's goals and priorities are based on ongoing analyses of program performance, the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the feedback of customers and the Washington State Rehabilitation Council, findings of research activities, and preliminary evaluations of DSHS/DVR's performance under WIOA Section 116.

A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

The results of the 2014 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and subsequent updates contained in the Statewide Assessment description of this State Plan guided the collaborative development of DSHS/DVR's goals and priorities. DSHS/DVR's emphases on timely service delivery, high-quality employment outcomes, targeted outreach to unserved and underserved populations, and coordinated service delivery are directly based on CSNA findings.

B. The State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

DSHS/DVR's goals and priorities align with the strategic vision and the operational elements of this Combined State Plan. These goals and priorities promote improved employment retention, increased earnings, and strengthened educational progress for Washingtonians living with disabilities. The role of DSHS/DVR staff in coordinated business engagement and industry sector strategies is woven throughout this plan. By pursuing these goals and priorities, DSHS/DVR will deliver high performance on the performance accountability standards identified in Section 116.

C. Other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and finding and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

These goals and priorities were established based on the full range of DSHS/DVR's evaluation and research activities. The activities include ongoing internal monitoring, DSHS program performance reporting conducted by the Department of Social and Health Services, evaluation studies coordinated by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, ad hoc research and program evaluation activities, and customer forums and satisfaction surveys conducted by the Washington State Rehabilitation Council.

M. Order of Selection

Describe:

1. Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:

A. The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

Introduction

This section describes DSHS/DVR's plans, policies, justifications, and projected service and outcome goals for serving individuals with disabilities under an order of selection. Additional information is provided describing how an order of selection may affect students with disabilities and Pre-employment Transition Services.

This section was developed in partnership and consultation with the Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) and the Client Assistance Program (CAP). In August of 2017, DSHS/DVR provided public notice of its intent to amend the State Plan to implement an Order of Selection. Customers, partners, and stakeholders were invited to provide input regarding the implementation of an Order of Selection and the draft amendments to the State Plan. DSHS/DVR and WSRC received public comment throughout the months of September and October 2017. Three State Plan Public Forums were held online and at in-person locations across Washington on September 18, 2017. DSHS/DVR customers, staff, partners, and stakeholders reviewed the draft Order of Selection amendment, asked questions, and provided input and comment. The public comment process and resulting dialogue emphasized impacts on current DSHS/DVR customers, students with disabilities, and customers who need specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

Implementing an Order of Selection

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and its regulations, a designated state unit must implement an order of selection when there are insufficient resources to serve all eligible customers who apply for services.

Fiscal and case service studies project that DSHS/DVR will not have sufficient resources to serve all eligible individuals who apply for services in FFY 2018 and FFY 2019. Therefore, DSHS/DVR implemented an order of selection on November 1, 2017.

By implementing an order of selection, DSHS/DVR will ensure resources and services are prioritized for individuals with disabilities who need them most.

Priority Categories & Order of Selection

As part of every customer's eligibility determination process, a qualified DSHS/DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) will evaluate: 1) disability-related functional limitations; 2) anticipated number of needed services; and 3) whether services are anticipated to be needed over an extended period to time. The VRC will use these criteria to assign eligible customers to one of five priority categories, based on the severity of the customer's disability. Priority categories ensure that DSHS/DVR services are prioritized for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Priority Category 1: Individuals with a most significant disability

An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 1 if:

- The customer experiences serious functional limitations in four or more of the following areas in terms of an employment outcome: mobility, communication, self-care, cognition and learning (self-direction), interpersonal, work tolerance, and work skills; and
- The customer requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Priority Category 2: Individuals with a significant disability

An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 2 if:

- The customer experiences serious functional limitations in three of the following areas in terms of an employment outcome: mobility, communication, self-care, cognition and learning (self-direction), interpersonal, work tolerance, and work skills; and
- The customer requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Priority Category 3: Individuals with a significant disability

An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 3 if:

- The customer experiences serious functional limitations in two of the following areas in terms of an employment outcome: mobility, communication, self-care, cognition and learning (self-direction), interpersonal, work tolerance, and work skills; and
- The customer requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Priority Category 4: Individuals with a significant disability

An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 4 if:

- The customer experiences serious functional limitations in one of the following areas in terms of an employment outcome: mobility, communication, self-care, cognition and learning (self-direction), interpersonal, work tolerance, and work skills; and
- The customer requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Priority Category 5: Individuals with Disabilities

An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 5 if:

- The customer is determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services but does not meet the criteria for Priority Categories 1-4.

Priority categories will be assigned consistently, objectively, and with customer rights to review and due process. Consistent with federal regulations, DSHS/DVR will not consider duration of residency in Washington State, type of disability, age, sex, race, color, national origin, type of expected employment outcome, source of referral, particular service needs or anticipated service costs, individual or family income level, when assigning a priority of service category. In addition, applicable State law and DSHS/DVR policies regarding anti-discrimination apply to eligible customers who are assigned a priority of service category.

Selecting Eligible Customers for Services

Per federal regulations, DSHS/DVR will provide the full range of uninterrupted VR services to all existing customers with Individualized Plans for Employment as of November 1, 2017, regardless of the priority category to which they are assigned.

Under an order of selection, when sufficient resources are not available to serve all new eligible customers, new customers may be placed on a wait list for services. This wait list will be statewide and based upon customers' priority categories and application dates. As resources become available for DSHS/DVR to serve additional individuals, DSHS/DVR selects names from the waiting list in the priority category being served at the time. Within a priority category, the date the individual applied for VR services determines the order in which they are released from the waiting list. Individuals placed on a wait list will receive information and guidance about other federal or state programs that offer services to help them meet their employment needs, if available.

Should sufficient resources be available to provide the full range of VR services to both existing and new customers, DSHS/DVR will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 1 first. This ensures that services are prioritized for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Customers in Priority Category 1 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

If resources are available after all existing customers and all new Priority Category 1 customers are assured the full range of VR services, DSHS/DVR will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 2. Customers in Priority Category 2 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

If additional resources are available after all existing customers and new customers in Priority Categories 1 and 2 are assured the full range of VR services, DSHS/DVR will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 3. Customers in Priority Category 3 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

If additional resources are available after all existing customers and new customers in Priority Categories 1, 2 and 3 are assured the full range of VR services, DSHS/DVR will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 4. Customers in Priority Category 4 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

If additional resources are available after all existing customers and new customers in Priority Categories 1, 2, 3, and 4 are assured the full range of VR services, DSHS/DVR will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 5. Customers in Priority Category 5 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

Students with Disabilities & Pre-employment Transition Services

Students with disabilities can receive ongoing Pre-employment Transition Services while placed on an order of selection wait list, as long as they have participated in a Pre-employment Transition Service prior to eligibility determination for DSHS/DVR services. However, federal regulations prevent students with disabilities who apply first for DSHS/DVR services from subsequently receiving Pre-employment Transition Services while placed on an order of

selection wait list. Therefore, students, families, advocates, and educators are advised to carefully consider the potential risks of applying to DSHS/DVR before participating in a Pre-employment Transition Service. If a student applies and is found eligible prior to receiving a Pre-Employment Transition Service, federal regulations allow for a student to close their case, participate in a Pre-Employment Transition Service, and re-apply for services. This process, however, would result in a disruption of services. Therefore, DSHS/DVR recommends students participate in a Pre-Employment Transition Service before applying for DSHS/DVR services, in the event they are placed on the DSHS/DVR wait list.

Potentially eligible students with disabilities (i.e. students who only receive Pre-employment Transition Services and who do not apply for DSHS/DVR services) will not be affected by order of selection and will continue to receive uninterrupted Pre-employment Transition Services.

B. The justification for the order.

Beginning in October 2015, DSHS/DVR experienced a significant increase in the number of customers served under Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs). This rapid increase occurred after the drafting of the DSHS/DVR 2016 - 2020 State Plan. In October of 2015, when State Plan estimates were calculated, DSHS/DVR served 6,598 customers with IPEs. By the end of federal fiscal year 2017, this number had grown to 7,483, a 13% increase.

Increased service volumes led to corresponding increases in case service expenditures. Monthly average purchased service expenditures have increased steadily from \$2,493,912 in FFY 2015 to \$2,721,649 in FFY 2016, to \$2,833,130 in FFY 2017.

While service volumes and costs have increased, DSHS/DVR's funds have not increased to meet this demand. Because revenue streams remain consistent, DSHS/DVR directed carry-over funds to meet increasing service demands and costs. Consequently, carry-over funds have rapidly diminished. DSHS/DVR carried-over \$34,366,000 into FFY 2015, \$29,052,638 into FFY 2016, \$20,302,559 into FFY 2017 and \$14,391,272 into FFY 2018.

Had DSHS/DVR continued to expand services and costs at its former rate, DSHS/DVR would have overspent all revenue sources by late FFY 2018. Therefore, an order of selection was necessary to ensure services remained available for all customers with IPEs, without overspending available funds. In addition, DSHS/DVR projected that implementation on November 1, 2017 will allow Priority Category 1 to remain open, ensuring individuals with the most significant disabilities access to services without a wait list.

The FFY 2018 costs of serving existing IPE customers and new Priority Category 1 customers is projected to be \$33,000,000. This amount will require DSHS/DVR to direct an estimated \$7,500,000 of its carry-over funds to purchased services.

Current case service and budget projections indicate that DSHS/DVR's sustainable purchased service budget is between \$25,000,000 and \$26,000,000. FFY 2019 projections indicate this budget is sufficient to serve existing customers with IPEs, new Priority Category 1 customers, and between 600 - 800 Priority Category 2 customers who may be released from the wait list in small cohorts on a monthly basis.

DSHS/DVR is confident in the reliability of its case service and fiscal projection models. These models are based on 32 months of fiscal and case service data and include rigorous methods and data validations. However, baseline data were collected when DSHS/DVR was not operating

under an order of selection and, at the time of this update, order of selection has been in effect for less than three months. Due to these limitations, DSHS/DVR is closely monitoring the impact of order of selection

.C. The service and outcome goals.

Projected Service & Outcome Goals for FFY 2018

Projected Service & Outcomes Goals: FFY 2018

| FFY 2018 | Total IPEs | New IPEs | Average Annual Cost Per IPE | Total Case Service Costs | IPE Cases Closed | Rehabilitated Cases | Average Months Per IPE | Wait List |
|------------|------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Category 1 | 5,740 | 2,760 | \$3,300 | \$18,900,000 | 2,8000 | 1,624 | 15 | 0 |
| Category 2 | 2,673 | 590 | \$2,600 | \$6,950,000 | 1,794 | 984 | 15 | 3,025 |
| Category 3 | 1,214 | 0 | \$2,600 | \$3,156,000 | 829 | 456 | 15 | 2,230 |
| Category 4 | 173 | 0 | \$2,600 | \$450,000 | 118 | 65 | 15 | 320 |
| Category 5 | 130 | 0 | \$2,850 | \$370,000 | 115 | 63 | 11 | 180 |

Priority Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 5,740
- New IPEs: 2,760
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$3,300
- Total Priority Category 1 Case Service Costs: \$18,900,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 2,370
- Rehabilitated Cases: 1,390
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 0

Priority Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 2,673
- New IPEs: 590
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,600
- Total Priority Category 2 Case Service Costs: \$6,950,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 1,794
- Rehabilitated Cases: 984
- Average Months Per IPE: 15

- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 3,025

Priority Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 1,214
- New IPEs: 0
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,600
- Total Priority Category 3 Case Service Costs: \$3,156,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 829
- Rehabilitated Cases: 456
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 2,230

Priority Category 4: Individuals with Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 173
- New IPEs: 0
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,600
- Total Priority Category 3 Case Service Costs: \$450,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 118
- Rehabilitated Cases: 65
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 290

Priority Category 5: Individuals with Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 130
- New IPEs: 0
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,850
- Total Priority Category 3 Case Service Costs: \$370,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 115
- Rehabilitated Cases: 63
- Average Months Per IPE: 11
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 180

Projected Service & Outcome Goals for FFY 2019

Projected Service & Outcomes Goals: FFY 2019

| FFY 2019 | Total IPEs | New IPEs | Average Annual Cost Per IPE | Total Case Service Costs | IPE Cases Closed | Rehabilitated Cases | Average Months Per IPE | Wait List |
|------------|------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Category 1 | 6,000 | 3,100 | \$3,300 | \$20,000,000 | 2,800 | 1,620 | 15 | 0 |
| Category 2 | 1,600 | 700 | \$2,600 | \$4,200,000 | 900 | 493 | 15 | 2,600 |
| Category 3 | 300 | 0 | \$2,600 | \$800,000 | 288 | 158 | 15 | 2,350 |
| Category 4 | 55 | 0 | \$2,600 | \$143,000 | 50 | 28 | 15 | 275 |
| Category 5 | 15 | 0 | \$2,850 | \$40,000 | 12 | 7 | 11 | 160 |

Priority Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 6,000
- New IPEs: 3,100
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$3,300
- Total Priority Category 1 Case Service Costs: \$20,000,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 2,800
- Rehabilitated Cases: 1,620
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 0

Priority Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 1,600
- New IPEs: 700
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,600
- Total Priority Category 2 Case Service Costs: \$4,200,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 900
- Rehabilitated Cases: 493
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 2,600

Priority Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 300
- New IPEs: 0
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,600

- Total Priority Category 3 Case Service Costs: \$800,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 288
- Rehabilitated Cases: 158
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 2,350

Priority Category 4: Individuals with Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 55
- New IPEs: 0
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,850
- Total Priority Category 3 Case Service Costs: \$143,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 50
- Rehabilitated Cases: 28
- Average Months Per IPE: 15
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 275

Priority Category 5: Individuals with Disabilities

- Total Customers Served under an IPE: 15
- New IPEs: 0
- Average Annual Cost Per IPE: \$2,850
- Total Priority Category 3 Case Service Costs: \$40,000
- IPE Cases Closed: 12
- Rehabilitated Cases: 7
- Average Months Per IPE: 11
- Total Customers Placed on a Wait List: 160

D. The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

Please see section VI.M.1.C.

E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and

Please see section VI.M.1.A.

2. If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

In consultation with the Washington State Rehabilitation Council and the Client Assistance Program, DSHS/DVR has elected to serve eligible individuals who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment, regardless of an established order of selection. These services may be provided, without requiring the customer to wait for services per order of selection, if:

- The individual is at immediate risk of losing their job in a competitive integrated setting for reasons related to the individual's disability; and
- The individual requires specific services or equipment in the very near future that will enable the individual to keep their job.

N. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

1. Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

Supported Employment Goals & Title VI Funds

While Title VI Supported Employment Grant funds are being eliminated in 2018, DSHS/DVR will continue to provide supported employment services under the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grant Fund.

For 2017 - 2020, DSHS/DVR estimates between 1,450 and 1,600 customers will receive supported employment services through Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), resulting in 300 - 400 supported employment outcomes per year. At these levels, DSHS/DVR estimates serving approximately 6,100 supported employment IPEs and producing 1,400 supporting employment outcomes during the four-year period of this plan.

2. Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including:

A. The provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, allows designated state units to determine the length of time for which youth with the most significant disabilities can receive extended services up to 48 months.

B. How the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

Supported Employment Services

DSHS/DVR provides supported employment services primarily to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DSHS/DVR and its partners continue to pursue innovative

strategies to expand these services to other populations, as resources are often comparatively scarce.

The State of Washington has been granted a Medicaid waiver that will fund supported employment as a Medicaid service, expanding the availability of extended services to individuals who experience a wide array of significant disabilities.

Through continued collaboration, innovative approaches, and the use of natural supports, DSHS/DVR and its partners will be able DSHS/DVR will expand the availability, quality, and scope of extended services for all individuals who require supported employment.

O. State's Strategies

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

Introduction

DSHS/DVR has established four goals to assure that high-quality services are provided to both job seekers with disabilities and to Washington's businesses. The methods by which these services will be provided, and maximized within available resources, are described in this section.

These strategies reflect in-depth analyses of DSHS/DVR customer service data, statewide demographic data, Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) findings, research conducted by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB), and the ongoing input and recommendations from the Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC).

Duplication of activities, strategies, and methods in the sections which follow is intentional; the coordinated efforts of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs to improve services to job seekers with disabilities and Washington's business community are not mutually exclusive. As an active core partner, DSHS/DVR will fully leverage all available resources to maximize the labor market engagement, self-sufficiency, and independence of all Washingtonians with disabilities.

Strategies to Achieve Goals & Priorities

Goal One: Improve Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities

Goal One, Priority One

Strengthen vocational assessment practices as the foundation for comprehensive services which meet customer needs, identify and address barriers to employment, and maximize outcomes.

Goal One, Priority One: Strategies

- Utilize the new vocational assessment screen and process to improve service quality and to implement new WIOA requirements.
- Expand knowledge and use of labor market information to support industry sector strategies.
- Promote customer participation in training and career pathway programs, preparing them for high demand careers and helping businesses fill skill gaps.
- Refine vocational assessment practices and provide ongoing staff training on how to use new tools and resources.
- Examine current approach to the provision of Assistive Technology (AT) Services and ensure capacity to address customer needs by developing staff expertise and accessing available statewide Assistive Technology resources.

Goal One, Priority Two

Heighten outreach efforts to potential customers and coordinate and collaborate with system partners and other stakeholders to ensure that all Washingtonians with disabilities have access to services and supports needed to prepare for and obtain employment.

Goal One, Priority Two: Strategies

- Provide Pre-employment Transition Services designed to facilitate job exploration and other services, such as counseling and self-advocacy training, in the early stages of the transition from school to employment.
- Broaden the population of individuals with disabilities served by DSHS/DVR through outreach that increases the representation of underserved or unserved populations.
- Target outreach, education, and marketing to individuals with disabilities who are: currently employed, to retain or advance in employment; previous customers who may be unemployed and are seeking employment; students nearing completion of academic programs; individuals who have exhausted Unemployment Insurance benefits; and other underserved populations.

Goal One, Priority Three

Increase business engagement to improve employment for individuals with disabilities in collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards.

Goal One, Priority Three: Strategies

- Leverage affiliations, memberships, and strategic partnerships to promote the success of job seekers with disabilities (e.g. Memberships such as Society for Human Resource Management and local chambers of commerce and partnerships such as Microsoft's Specialisterne Project).
- Increase visibility in Washington's business community through methodical outreach and marketing, in collaboration with the WorkSource core partners.
- Develop and implement tools to quantify and track business engagement outcomes.
- Engage Business Specialists to work collaboratively with workforce system partners to develop and implement local-level industry sector strategies.

- Collaborate with local workforce development boards to target business services for federal contractors and subcontractors.
- Utilize Business Specialists to provide training for businesses on how to recruit, hire, retain, and advance skilled workers with disabilities.

Goal One, Priority Four

Ensure DSHS/DVR customers get optimal benefit from the workforce development system by educating customers about other workforce development programs.

Goal One, Priority Four: Strategies

- Develop and distribute informational materials to DSHS/DVR staff and customers that describe workforce development programs, highlighting services and eligibility criteria.
- Enhance information and referral resources for customers on the waiting list for services.

Goal Two: Improve the Quality of Customer Services

Goal Two, Priority One

Improve timeliness of service and ensure adherence to policy and quality assurance standards.

Goal Two, Priority One: Strategies

- Incentivize timely service delivery by implementing new performance measures for counselors, which ensure that 90% of eligibility determinations will be completed within 60 days of customers' application dates and that 90% of Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs) are developed within 90 days of customers' eligibility determination dates.
- Conduct case reviews to assess and advance compliance with policy and practice standards and quality of assessment services and vocational objectives.

Goal Two, Priority Two

Provide high-quality training and support, ensuring staff have the knowledge and skills needed to deliver high-quality vocational rehabilitation services.

Goal Two, Priority Two: Strategies

- Implement staff training focused on customer experience, cultural sensitivity, and best practices to identify and address barriers to employment.
- Provide training and professional development opportunities that use modern approaches, tools, and techniques.

Goal Two, Priority Three

Build an organizational culture of quality.

Goal Two, Priority Three: Strategies

- Strengthen core competencies of vocational rehabilitation practice, with emphasis on substantial counseling and guidance.
- Use performance measures and case reviews to identify specific areas in which additional guidance and training are required.
- Engage staff in Lean learning and problem solving to develop continuous improvement skills and practices.
- Implement staff recognition and appreciation throughout DSHS/DVR.
- Redesign tools needed by supervisors to deliver effective and ongoing coaching to staff, using structured monthly coaching and reports to DSHS/DVR Regional Administrators.

Goal Three: Promote DVR’s role in advancing effective services for people with disabilities, as a leader in the Workforce Development System.

Goal Three, Priority One

Work with local and statewide partners, to ensure the workforce development system is both accessible and beneficial for all individuals with disabilities.

Goal Three, Priority One: Strategies

- Target necessary improvements to the workforce development system’s physical and digital infrastructure, based on customer feedback, customer outcomes, and annual One-Stop center accessibility review findings.
- Commit staff and resources to each workforce development region to ensure that DSHS/DVR is represented and that services are accessible system-wide.

Goal Three, Priority Two

Participate in the development of cross-program staff training, as experts in areas such as accessibility, disability culture and awareness, and vocational rehabilitation services.

Goal Three, Priority Two: Strategies

- Develop and distribute informational materials for workforce development professionals which identify best practices in serving individuals with disabilities, including DSHS/DVR customers.
- Provide specific training for workforce development staff, based on customer feedback and annual One-Stop center accessibility review findings.

Goal Three, Priority Three

Develop and implement integrated service delivery models in collaboration with WIOA core programs.

Goal Three, Priority Three: Strategies

- Integrate DSHS/DVR services across workforce development programs, promoting quality customer services offered in-person and online.

Goal Four: Improve DSHS/DVR’s Systems & Performance

Goal Four, Priority One

Develop and implement a communication plan to provide consistent internal standards and methods for professional communication within DSHS/DVR.

Goal Four, Priority One: Strategies

- Establish an internal communication protocol which addresses the Who, What, Where, When and Why of all communication, including accountability, timelines, and follow-up.
- Increase capacity and use of communication technology (e.g. Sharepoint, video conferencing, video phones, and distance learning programs).

Goal Four, Priority Two

Redesign data management systems and reports to support WIOA implementation, leverage workforce development data, and strengthen data-driven decision making.

Goal Four, Priority Two: Strategies

- Acquire and transition to a new case management information system.
- Implement new reports and tracking systems which align with WIOA performance measures and are designed for staff use.
- Provide training on reports, performance measures, and tracking systems to support WIOA implementation.
- Enhance data analysis capacity and tools to support data-driven decision making.

2. How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

Throughout the rehabilitation process, DSHS/DVR counselors assess whether assistive technology (AT) services or devices are needed to address customers' barriers to employment. DSHS/DVR brochures and Customer Service Handbook provide in-depth information on AT services and devices. Full-time Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioners (ATAPs) provide specialized AT assessment, consult with staff and customers, coordinate with AT vendors, and disseminate information and resources.

DSHS/DVR will monitor AT service delivery in compliance with new WIOA requirements. In addition, DSHS/DVR will renew its commitment to being an organizational role model in effective utilization of AT as accommodations for individuals with disabilities including, but not limited to, individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing and individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

3. The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

DSHS/DVR continues to maintain active organizational relationships with a wide range of agencies and community groups that serve minority populations, and has formal liaison relationships to assure an ongoing referral stream of individuals with disabilities who identify as racial or ethnic minorities. Individuals with disabilities who identify as racial or ethnic minorities are consistently represented within the DSHS/DVR population at rates at or above respective representation within the statewide population of individuals with disabilities. An in-depth analysis of this representation is provided in the Statewide Assessment section of this plan.

4. The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

DSHS/DVR has developed a Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with DSB and Washington's state education agency to promote communication and collaboration with state and local education agencies; outreach to identify potentially eligible students who may benefit from Pre-employment Transition Services; coordinated transition planning and services between local education agencies and DSHS/DVR; assessment of service gaps; and shared training materials and events. DSHS/DVR provides Pre-employment Transition Services to potentially eligible youth directly and through contracts and partnerships with CRPs, regional educational agencies, community colleges, and workforce agencies. The services provide a continuum of services between school and adult life, providing students with disabilities the services and experiences necessary to enjoy meaningful employment, independence, and quality of life. Policy and guidance revisions, as well as new staff training, support these services. An in-depth description of the significant changes to DSHS/DVR's services to students with disabilities is described in the Coordination with Education section of this plan.

5. If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

DSHS/DVR will establish a workgroup of DSHS/DVR staff and Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) representatives to focus on improving service delivery partnerships. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening communication and coordination between local DSHS/DVR offices and CRPs and developing strategies to inform CRPs of changes or updates in DSHS/DVR policies and procedures which affect service delivery. A full description of DSHS/DVR's plans to improve its CRP partnerships is included in the Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations section of this plan.

6. Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

DSHS/DVR will employ strategies to improve customers' employment retention, long-term labor market engagement, earned wages, education credential attainment, and vocational skill progress. Additional strategies will target improved services to businesses, as DSHS/DVR implements a dual-customer model, serving Washington's businesses as well as job seekers with disabilities.

DSHS/DVR will implement the following strategies to improve performance under WIOA Performance Accountability:

- Support customers in developing vocational goals and training objectives which align with labor market demand as well as customers' skills, abilities, interests, and informed choice.
- Leverage the labor market exchange, labor market research tools, and industry sector strategies to ensure that customers' vocational goals are aligned with in-demand occupations to the greatest extent possible.
- Integrate and align DSHS/DVR services and career pathways programs.
- Increase use of Post-Employment Services to support customers in maintaining, regaining, or advancing in employment through better communicating these services and their benefits.
- Provide training and technical assistance to businesses on best practices for recruiting and retaining employees with disabilities.
- Support apprenticeships, paid internships, and on-the-job training opportunities to enhance customers' employability, in partnership with LWDBs and the business community.
- Utilize the results of the new comprehensive vocational assessment to evaluate customers' skills, abilities, interests, as well as potential barriers to successful participation in, or completion of, training programs.
- Complete required meetings at the end of every post-secondary term to review grades, progress, and support needs of customers participating in associate's, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs.

DSHS/DVR will utilize the following strategies to improve its services to businesses:

- Engage Business Specialists in the development and implementation of LWDB industry sector strategies and cross-program business engagement activities.
- Collaborate with LWDBs to provide services to federal contractors and subcontractors, linking these contractors to the skilled job seekers with disabilities they seek.
- Provide training for business on how to recruit, hire, retrain, and advance skilled workers with disabilities.
- Increase visibility in Washington's business community through a methodical outreach and marketing plan which includes participation in local boards of commerce, membership in professional organizations (e.g. the Society for Human Resource Management), representation at career and recruitment fairs, and the provision of business training (e.g. Americans with Disabilities Act and reasonable accommodation trainings).

7. Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

DSHS/DVR plays significant roles on the state Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and local workforce development boards which contribute to strategies and activities that assist partners in serving individuals with disabilities. These roles will strengthen under WIOA. To coordinate and align workforce development services at the local level, DSHS/DVR and the

Washington Workforce Association (WWA) have created and signed a Shared Vision, Values, & Principles of Collaboration document which outlines how DSHS/DVR and LWDBs will provide integrated services to individuals with disabilities.

8. How the agency's strategies will be used to:

A. Achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

The goals, priorities, and strategies outlined in this Combined State Plan align with both the findings of DSHS/DVR's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and the strategic vision of Washington's workforce development system. Within the description of each goal, and the priorities and strategies which support it, is a description of supporting CSNA findings.

B. Support innovation and expansion activities; and

DSHS/DVR will continue to fund the following innovation and expansion activities:

- Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) and Washington State Independent Living Council (WASILC) operations.

C. Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

DSHS/DVR has identified Goal One, Priority Two strategies and activities to specifically target equitable access for unserved and underserved populations. The activities include, but are not limited to: enhanced outreach to students with disabilities in partnership with OSPI, the Center for Change in Transition Services, and local education agencies; collaboration with other DSHS programs to improve access to services and supports for customers; and new business partnerships which provide career pathways for highly skilled adults living with an autism spectrum disorder in Washington's technology industry. When served, these populations will experience equitable access to services and resources, including Supported Employment services, needed to achieve competitive employment outcomes within integrated settings.

P. Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals

Describe:

1. An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

Introduction

This section provides an evaluation of DSHS/DVR’s implementation of the goals and priorities established in the previous state plan, the FFY 2015 DSHS/DVR State Plan. This evaluation includes data analysis, performance and activity summaries, and descriptions of performance challenges and their effects on DSHS/DVR progress. Special consideration is given to Supported Employment services. Lastly, a description of funded innovation and expansion activities is included.

FFY 2016-2017 Evaluation: Goals, Strategies, & Barriers

DSHS/DVR services rehabilitated 3,013 customers in FFY 2017 and 3,049 in FFY 2016, supporting these individuals with disabilities in achieving gainful employment. Though fewer individuals obtained employment in these years than in FFY 2015, the number of rehabilitations over the FFY 2016-17 period was slightly higher than the average over FFY 2014-15.

Annual applications for DSHS/DVR services increased by 18% from FFY 2015 to FFY 2017, from 9,450 in FFY 2015 to 10,930 in FFY 2016 and 11,173 in FFY 2017. This led to a similar growth trend in the number of individuals determined eligible for services, which increased from 8,615 in FFY 2015 to 9,837 in FFY 2016 and 10,014 in FFY 2017. The number of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) completed in FFY 2017 was 5,978, an 8% increase over FFY 2016 (5,568 IPEs) and 21% increase from FFY 2015 (4,947 IPEs).

When the 2016-2020 State Plan was developed, DSHS/DVR had initiated outreach efforts to address declining numbers of applications and eligible individuals. By the end of FFY 2015, this trend began to reverse, indicating that these outreach activities were successful.

The average cost of a rehabilitation closure increased by 2.4% from FFY 2015 for FFY 2017. The increase in average rehabilitation costs has been a consistent trend for more than five years, although the rate of increase has lessened. Since FFY 2014, average costs per closed-rehabilitated case have increased by \$375; since FFY 2011, average costs have risen by \$1,346.

The combination of the growth in number of new eligibilities and IPEs, as well as increasing costs per case necessitated the decision made in FFY 2017 to enter an order of selection. DSHS/DVR continues to closely monitor its fiscal resources to assure maximum case service capacity is maintained.

DSHS/DVR Average Closed-Rehabilitated Case Costs: FFY 2011 - FFY 2017

| FFY | Average Closed-Rehabilitated Case Costs | Percent Change from Prior Year |
|------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2011 | \$5,727 | 6.1% |
| 2012 | \$6,101 | 6.5% |
| 2013 | \$6,775 | 11.1% |
| 2014 | \$6,698 | -1.1% |
| 2015 | \$6,910 | 3.2% |

| FFY | Average Closed-Rehabilitated Case Costs | Percent Change from Prior Year |
|------|---|--------------------------------|
| 2016 | \$6,890 | -.3% |
| 2017 | \$7,073 | 2.7% |

Goal One: Improve Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities

Priorities & Evaluation

Goal One Priority One

Strengthen vocational assessment practices as the foundation for comprehensive services which meet customer needs, identify and address barriers to employment, and maximize outcomes.

Evaluation:

- Offered refresher training in FFY 2016 on use of the vocational assessment screen and WIOA changes.
- Developed apprenticeship programs and services for youth to expand skilled career options.

Goal One Priority Two

Heighten outreach efforts to potential customers and coordinate and collaborate with system partners and other stakeholders, to ensure that all Washingtonians with disabilities have access to services and supports needed to prepare for and obtain employment.

Evaluation:

- Established Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) contracts with community colleges, workforce development councils, and educational service districts for potentially eligible students and contracts with CRPs for Pre-ETS for eligible customers.
- Held three forums with stakeholders regarding an outreach process for students and families.
- Conducted extensive outreach and coordination with the State's Juvenile Justice Program to provide information to potential applicants in the detention system and obtain referrals and applications for DSHS/DVR services prior to offender exiting incarceration.
- Hired transition consultants to increase capacity to provide Pre-ETS services directly and through coordination and collaboration with community partners.
- Continued coordination with Center for Change in Transition Services to coordinate DSHS/DVR and school-based transition services.
- Continued school-to-work contracts with county developmental disabilities programs.
- Continued to participate in outreach activities that increase representation of underserved or unserved populations. Offices throughout the state have dedicated tribal liaisons who collaborate with tribal VR programs and work with Juvenile Rehabilitation to serve

justice-involved youth. DSHS/DVR worked with DSHS Community Service Division to implement a “warm hand-off” process to improve access to TANF and Workfirst programs.

- Increased representation in local WorkSource offices and maintained marketing materials to offer VR services to individuals who are seeking employment or have exhausted unemployment benefits.

Barriers: DSHS/DVR has experienced significant challenges to development and implementation of its Pre-ETS program. The need to create infrastructure for service delivery without sufficient time to plan resulted in a fragmented approach in the early stages of the program. Service delivery had to begin simultaneously with assessment of needs and service gaps; coordination and planning with education, workforce, and other stakeholders; changes to internal systems for managing contracts, case information, and funds; and staff training. Staff and contractors had to adapt to new ways of doing business. Other obstacles have included limitations on uses of funds, distinguishing between what services are provided under IDEA versus VR, and engaging businesses to provide work-based learning experiences.

Goal One Priority Three

Increase business engagement to improve employment for individuals with disabilities, in collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards.

Evaluation:

- DSHS/DVR is involved with Microsoft’s Autism Project, Amazon’s Sort Center and Amazon Prime projects and is expanding into Microsoft Corporation, Amazon Corporation, Starbucks, and Boeing.
- Made strides in job placements with Wells Fargo, HomeStreet Bank, and Lowes, many in cooperation with WorkSource centers, particularly the Veteran representatives.
- Held three reverse job fairs with WorkSource that led to successful hires.
- Improved collaboration with local workforce development boards.
- DSHS/DVR business specialists have joined the Society for Human Resource Management and chambers of commerce in their area.
- Revised business specialist job description to align with the priority of outreach and services to businesses.
- Created a monthly productivity report and an Excel tool to track business engagement activities.

Barriers: Relationships with local workforce development boards are critical but difficult to achieve in some areas. Training for business specialists, including curriculum development, is needed for staff to learn how to train businesses.

Goal One Priority Four

Ensure DSHS/DVR customers get optimal benefit from the workforce development system by educating customers about other workforce development programs.

Evaluation:

- DSHS/DVR's co-located WorkSource liaisons are offering the full scope of DSHS/DVR services, as well as assisting other WorkSource staff to provide services to individuals with disabilities.
- Co-located staff also provides resources and information to DSHS/DVR staff regarding workforce development programs in their local areas.

Goal Two: Improve the Quality of Customer Services

Priorities & Evaluation

Goal Two Priority One

Improve timeliness of service and ensure adherence to policy and quality assurance standards.

Evaluation:

- Eligibility determination and IPE timeliness reports and performance targets have been implemented and communicated throughout the organization.
- Monthly case reviews and case management reviews are completed by supervisors to ensure quality services are provided to customers and according to policies and procedures. These tools are used by supervisors to provide coaching and support to vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs). A case management review tool, used to coach VRCs and counseling staff, has improved case movement and documentation of procedures for moving cases in a timely manner, consistent with WIOA guidelines. Timeliness reports indicate improvement in this area.

Barrier: Statewide case reviews were postponed to FFY 2018, due to preparations for and implementation of an order of selection in November 2017.

Goal Two Priority Two

Provide high-quality training and support, ensuring staff have the knowledge and skills needed to deliver high-quality vocational rehabilitation services.

Evaluation:

- Developed more than 20 classes for DSHS/DVRs new training program, Rehab University. The multi-modal training approach provides online foundational training and face-to-face cohort training with practice scenarios. 20 additional courses are planned for development in the next 6 months.
- Revised policies related to staff completion of required training, tuition reimbursement, and developing new or updated training modules.
- Submitted 12 courses to the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification for CEUs.
- 7 staff completed trainings in Lean tools and techniques.

Goal Two Priority Three

Build an organizational culture of quality.

Evaluation:

- Changes in organizational structure have elevated local office and Regional Administrator (RA) participation in problem-solving and decision-making. For example, supervisors provide input in setting the agenda for management meetings and RA's facilitate the meetings.
- Planning, Performance, and Policy unit staff completed Lean Learner training.
- Case management tool and timeliness tools are in the process of being redesigned.

Goal Three: Promote DSHS/DVR's Role in advancing effective services for people with disabilities, as a leader in the Workforce Development System

Priorities & Evaluation

Goal Three Priority One

Work with local and statewide partners, to ensure the workforce development system is both accessible and beneficial for all individuals with disabilities.

Evaluation:

- Each Workforce Development Area (WDA) developed a local advisory group to provide recommendations, solutions, and identification of barriers that prevent targeted populations (including individuals with disabilities) from accessing the full range of services provided in their local WDA. DSHS/DVR staff is taking leadership roles in many of the 12 local advisory groups.
- DSHS/DVR now has a representative on the Board of each of the 12 Workforce Development Councils to advocate for individuals with disabilities to access resources throughout the workforce development system. DSHS/DVR also established IFAs to support co-location of 18 staff in WorkSource offices.

Goal Three Priority Two

Participate in the development of cross-program staff training, as experts in areas such as accessibility, disability culture and awareness, and vocational rehabilitation services.

Evaluation:

- This priority will be addressed in the remaining two years of the Plan.

Barriers: Relationships with local workforce development boards are critical but difficult to achieve in some areas. Training for business specialists, including curriculum development, is needed for staff to learn how to train businesses.

Goal Three Priority Three

Develop and implement integrated service delivery models in collaboration with WIOA core programs.

Evaluation:

- Continued to collaborate with system partners to develop a common intake process.
- Co-located 16 staff in WorkSource locations to increase availability of VR services through the statewide system.
- Committed resources through IFAs to support co-location of services.

Goal Four: Improve DSHS/DVR's Systems & Performance

Priorities & Evaluation

Goal Four Priority One

Develop and implement a communication plan to provide consistent internal standards and methods for professional communication within DSHS/DVR.

Evaluation:

- Developed communication plans for specific initiatives, such as order of selection, and designated internal communications liaisons.
- Increased video tele-conferencing capabilities by adding VTC systems to three additional offices. This has reduced the need for staff to travel to meetings and increased their availability for meetings and trainings.
- Updated video phone capability for deaf and hard of hearing staff. All DSHS/DVR state cell phones are video capable.
- Video conferencing system has allowed for DSHS/DVR to provide more distance learning opportunities. DSHS has made Lynda.com available for online training, which has the potential to improve staff capacity to use information systems, project management tools, and effective business practices.

Goal Four Priority Two

Redesign data management systems and output reports to support WIOA implementation, leverage workforce development data, and strengthen data-driven decision making.

Evaluation:

- Initiated report redesign and dashboard development for performance monitoring and management.
- Prepared projections and expenditures analyses to inform decision-making regarding Pre-Employment Transition Services and Order of Selection implementation.
- Hired new staff devoted to performance management and other data analyses.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Performance Barriers: Performance barriers are addressed in the Evaluation section above (P.1.A).

2. An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

Supported Employment Evaluation: Goals, Strategies, & Barriers

Priorities & Evaluation

DSHS/DVR’s goal in is to serve approximately 1,500 customers in supported employment and to achieve 300-400 successful rehabilitations annually. This goal was exceeded by achieving 682 supported employment rehabilitations in FFY 2016 and 610 in FFY 2017.

Effective Strategies

- Continued use of a model of service delivery in partnership with county developmental disability programs and community rehabilitation programs
- Continued active marketing of customers to local businesses

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Performance Barriers

DSHS/DVR did not experience significant performance barriers in achieving these goals and priorities.

3. The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

DSHS/DVR Performance on WIOA Indicators

To establish performance targets for program years 2017 and 2018, DSHS/DVR analyzed customers’ quarterly earnings and job retention outcomes. Washington’s Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board supported this process by analyzing education outcomes and provided DSHS/DVR with aggregate results. These data resources have been utilized to report DSHS/DVR performance on the Performance Accountability indicators established in WIOA Section 116.

DSHS/DVR Performance on WIOA Section 116 Performance Accountability Indicators

| WIOA Measure | PY 2014 | PY 2015 | PY 2016 | PY 2017 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Employment Two Quarters after Exit | 46.81% | 52.44%* | 57.85% | 48.34%** |
| Employment Four Quarters after Exit | 45.23% | 53.36% | 52.06%** | 51.08%*** |
| Median Wage Two Quarters after Exit | \$ 3,072 | \$ 3,077* | \$3,260 | \$ 3,300* |
| Credential Attainment | unavailable | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> |

| WIOA Measure | PY 2014 | PY 2015 | PY 2016 | PY 2017 |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Skill Gains | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> |
| Business Engagement | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> | <i>unavailable</i> |

*Data available for three quarters of PY

**Inconsistencies in employment rates based on Jan-Mar 2017 wage data suggest errors in the data or data match.

***Data available for first quarter of PY only

4. How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

Funded Innovation and Expansion Activities

During FFY 2017, DSHS/DVR reserved funds for the Washington State Rehabilitation Council and Washington State Independent Living Council. Additional funded innovation and expansion activities are listed below.

- Invested in the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) comprehensive series of web-based, on-demand training modules for CRP Supported Employment Specialists to support CRP staff development. CRP staff attrition is very high and frequently new Supported Employment specialists are hired with little or no experience. This significantly slows service delivery and often reduces successful outcomes. This training partnership, which includes the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER), DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration, DSHS Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration, and other supported employment partners, provides a suite of on-demand training modules which supports CRPs in retaining highly-trained staff.
- Continued support for tools widely used by staff around the state that help customers select suitable vocational goals. These include WOIS and World of Work assessment tools and WorkStrides career exploration workshops.
- Contracted with the University of Washington to provide technical assistance to field staff in assistive technology.

Q. Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services.

Include the following:

1. The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

Supported Employment Partners & Agreements

DSHS/DVR primarily provides supported employment services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and individuals with mental health disabilities. Of these two customer groups, individuals with developmental disabilities represent the majority of supported employment outcomes.

DSHS/DVR's success in serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities is based on a long-standing relationship with the DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration (DSHS/DDA). DSHS/DDA is committed to funding extended services for all of its clients who achieve a supported employment outcome through DSHS/DVR.

Substantial resource reductions within the DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR), DSHS/DVR's supported employment partner for customers with mental health disabilities, has limited State capacity to provide extended services to this population. Diligent efforts continue to address these reductions. DSHS/DVR continues its collaboration with DBHR, the Mental Health Employment Consortium, and the Washington Community Mental Health Council to expand the availability of extended services through alternative resources and innovative approaches. These efforts intend to establish cooperative agreements with all Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs) responsible for county-level delivery of community mental health services.

DSHS/DVR continues to promote the use of Ticket to Work as a potential income source for developmental disability, mental health, and traumatic brain injury service providers to build their capacity for providing extended support services.

During the 2017 - 2020 planning cycle, DSHS/DVR will collaborate with DBHR to leverage the strong state-level partnership to facilitate local-level agreement development. In addition, DSHS/DVR will collaborate with the DSHS Aging and Long Term Support Administration to explore funding of extended services to be provided for individuals with traumatic brain injuries and other significant disabilities who require supported employment.

Many individuals with disabilities would benefit from supported employment, yet do not have access to a long term funding source for extended services. In response, DSHS/DVR has encouraged supported employment providers to focus on developing natural supports within customers' workplaces.

DSHS/DVR strategies for expanding the availability of supported employment services:

- Participate in an interagency service committee which supports initiatives and increased employment outcomes for persons living with developmental disabilities, mental health disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and traumatic brain injuries.
- Train staff and partners on Social Security Work Incentives, Plan to Achieve Self Sufficiency, and other work incentives to identify optional funding sources.
- Provide technical assistance on the use of natural supports in the workplace.
- Coordinate cross-program training opportunities on innovative supported employment strategies.

Supported Employment Goals & Title VI Funds

While Title VI Supported Employment Grant funds are being eliminated in 2018, DSHS/DVR will continue to provide supported employment service under the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grant Fund. For 2017 - 2020, DSHS/DVR estimates the Title VI Supported Employment Grant will fund between 1,450 and 1,600 customers who receive supported employment services through Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), resulting in 300 - 400 supported employment outcomes per year. At these levels, DSHS/DVR estimates

serving approximately 6,100 supported employment IPEs and producing 1,400 supporting employment outcomes during the four-year period of this plan.

Supported Employment Services

DSHS/DVR provides supported employment services primarily to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DSHS/DVR and its partners continue to pursue innovative strategies to expand these services to other populations, as resources are often comparatively scarce.

The State of Washington has been granted a Medicaid waiver that will fund supported employment as a Medicaid service, expanding the availability of extended services to individuals who experience a wide array of significant disabilities.

Through continued collaboration, innovative approaches, and the use of natural supports, DSHS/DVR and its partners will be able DSHS/DVR will expand the availability, quality, and scope of extended services for all individuals who require supported employment.

2. The timing of transition to extended services.

DSHS/DVR customers receiving Supported Employment services transition from ongoing support services to extended services when stable, satisfactory job performance is achieved. The timeframe for this transition is within 24 months of customers beginning employment, unless a longer timeframe has been specified in the IPE. WIOA amends the Rehabilitation Act to permit DSHS/DVR to fund extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities for a period not to exceed four years. DSHS/DVR will fund extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities on a case-by-case basis.