

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired State Plan for Fiscal Year 2014 (submitted FY 2013)

Preprint - Section 1: State Certifications

1.1 The *Vermont Agency of Human Services* is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [1] and its supplement under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act [2].

1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the *Vermont Agency of Human Services* [3] agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan [4], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations [5], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.

1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan [6], the Rehabilitation Act and all applicable regulations [7], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan. *Yes*

1.4 The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement. *Yes*

1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement. *Yes*

1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law. *Yes*

1.7 The (enter title of state officer below) *Yes*

Secretary Vermont Agency of Human Services

... has the authority under state law to receive, hold and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement.

1.8 The (enter title of state officer below)... *Yes*

Secretary Vermont Agency of Human Services

... has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.

1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. *Yes*

State Plan Certified By

As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf>) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

Signed?*Yes*

Name of Signatory*Doug Racine*

Title of Signatory*Secretary-Vermont Agency of Human Services*

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)*06/28/2013*

Assurances Certified By

At the request of RSA, the designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s), in addition to those contained within Section 2 through 8 below, in connection with the approval of the State Plan for FY *2014No*

Section 1 Footnotes

[1] Public Law 93 112, as amended by Public Laws 93 516, 95 602, 98 221, 99 506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.

[2] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

[3] All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[4] No funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 361.

[5] Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85 and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.

[6] No funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[7] Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

Preprint - Section 2: Public Comment on State Plan Policies and Procedures

2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))

(a) Conduct of public meetings.

The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.

(b) Notice requirements.

The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council.

(c) Special consultation requirements.

The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

Preprint - Section 3: Submission of the State Plan and its Supplement

3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)

(a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Rehabilitation Act.

(b) The state submits only those policies, procedures or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.

(c) The state submits to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:

1. comprehensive system of personnel development;
2. assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
3. innovation and expansion activities; and
4. other updates of information required under Title I, Part B, or Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act that are requested by the commissioner.

(d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Rehabilitation Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

3.2 Supported Employment State Plan supplement. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

(a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B, of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.

(b) The Supported Employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

Preprint - Section 4: Administration of the State Plan

4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))

(a) Designated state agency.

1. There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.
2. The designated state agency *is a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section (Option B was selected/Option A was not selected)*
3. In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

(b) Designated state unit.

1. If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section, the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division or unit that:
 - A. is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
 - B. has a full-time director;
 - C. has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
 - D. is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.
2. The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is

Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired

4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

(a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission that

1. is responsible under state law for operating or overseeing the operation of the vocational rehabilitation program in the state and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
2. is consumer controlled by persons who:
 - A. are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - B. represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated state unit under the direction of the commission is the state agency for individuals who are blind;
3. includes family members, advocates or other representatives of individuals with mental impairments; and

4. undertakes the functions set forth in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4).

(b) The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17

(c) If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c) provides a summary of the input provided by the council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

(Option B was selected)

4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan. (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.21)

The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

(a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;

(b) personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;

(c) providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;

(d) the director of the Client Assistance Program; and

(e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.

4.4 Nonfederal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state or, if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15)

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. *No*

If "Yes", the designated state agency:

(a) ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and

(b) develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with the State Plan.

4.6 Shared funding and administration of joint programs. (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. *No*

If "Yes", the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

- (a) a description of the nature and scope of the joint program;*
- (b) the services to be provided under the joint program;*
- (c) the respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and*
- (d) the share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.*

4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

This agency is *not* requesting a waiver of statewideness.

- (a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.*
- (b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:*
 - 1. nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization or individual;
 - 2. services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and
 - 3. state, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in Attachment 4.7(b)(3) a waiver of the statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:
 - A. identification of the types of services to be provided;
 - B. written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;
 - C. written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
 - D. written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

(c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

4.8 Cooperation, collaboration and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

- (a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide work force investment system.*

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide work force investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the

designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide work force investment system.

(b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

1. cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide work force investment system;
2. coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
3. establishment of cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
4. efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

1. Attachment 4.8(b)(2) describes the plans, policies and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.
2. The State Plan description must:
 - A. provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and
 - B. include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:
 - i. consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to postschool activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
 - ii. transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
 - iii. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
 - iv. procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(d) Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(e) Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.

1. There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations. *No*
2. If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act:
 - A. strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
 - B. procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - C. provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (b))

(a) In general.

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the plan and 34 CFR 361.

(b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(c) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Rehabilitation Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations implementing these laws.

4.10 Comprehensive system of personnel development. (Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

Attachment 4.10 describes 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. The description includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

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

1. Qualified personnel needs.
 - A. The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
 - B. The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
 - C. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in five 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.
2. Personnel development.
 - A. A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
 - B. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
 - C. 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.

(b) Plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel.

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for 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 in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) Personnel standards.

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national- or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.
2. To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the state plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the time lines for taking each step.
3. The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:
 - A. specific strategies for retraining, recruiting and hiring personnel;

- B. the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);
- C. procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and
- D. the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) Staff development.

Policies, procedures and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

- 1. 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.
- 2. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) Personnel to address individual communication needs.

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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.

4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports.

(Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.

- 1. Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every three years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a council). The assessment describes:
 - A. the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:
 - i. individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - ii. individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and
 - iii. individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide work force investment system.
 - B. The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

2. For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

(b) Annual estimates.

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

1. number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the plan;
2. number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
3. costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

(c) Goals and priorities.

1. Attachment 4.11(c)(1) identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
2. The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.
3. Order of selection.
If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - B. provides a justification for the order; and
 - C. identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
4. Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds.
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(d) Strategies.

1. Attachment 4.11(d) describes the strategies, including:
 - A. the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;
 - B. outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;

- C. as applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing or improving community rehabilitation programs;
 - D. strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
 - E. strategies for assisting other components of the statewide work force investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
2. Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:
 - A. address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);
 - B. support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the plan; and
 - C. overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) Evaluation and reports of progress.

1. The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.
2. Attachment 4.11(e)(2):
 - A. provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3) were achieved;
 - B. identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;
 - C. describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;
 - D. assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
 - E. provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

(a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the:

1. development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a) and goals and priorities of the state identified in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3); and
2. support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).

(b) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.

(c) Attachment 4.11(e)(2) describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

(a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.

(b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

Preprint - Section 5: Administration of the Provision of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

25035

kschelle

5.1 Information and referral services. (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide work force investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

(a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services. Yes

(b) If No:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
2. Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - B. provides a justification for the order of selection; and
 - C. identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
3. Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits. (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

(a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.

(b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:

1. assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
2. counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act;
3. referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide work force investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;
4. job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
5. rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices; and
6. post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.

(c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:

1. progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
2. an immediate job placement; or
3. provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.

(d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Rehabilitation Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide work force investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

(a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, and is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.

(b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals or, as appropriate, their representatives are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

5.8 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938. (Section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

(a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:

1. who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or
2. whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.

(b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for two years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative) to determine the interests, priorities and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.

(c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.

(d) The individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation and, through signed acknowledgement, attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:

(a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for that fiscal year.

(b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Rehabilitation Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.

(c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

(a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.

The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit agencies and organizations.

(b) Cooperative agreements with private nonprofit organizations.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Preprint - Section 6: Program Administration

Section 6: Program Administration

6.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))

The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

6.3 Quality, scope and extent of supported employment services. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))

Attachment 6.3 describes the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.

6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

6.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

6.7 Reports. (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B, of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 7: Financial Administration

25035

kschelle

7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))

The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

7.2 Use of funds in providing services. (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))

(a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.

(b) Funds provided under Title VI, Part B, are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.

(c) Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 8: Provision of Supported Employment Services

8.1 Scope of supported employment services. (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))

(a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).

(b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.

(c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities. (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))

The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.

8.3 Individualized plan for employment. (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))

(a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.

(b) The individualized plan for employment:

1. specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
2. describes the expected extended services needed; and
3. identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.

(c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

Attachment 4.2(c) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required annually by all agencies except those agencies that are independent consumer-controlled commissions.

Identify the Input provided by the state rehabilitation council, including recommendations from the council's annual report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other council reports. Be sure to also include:

- the Designated state unit's response to the input and recommendations; and
- explanations for the designated state unit's rejection of any input or recommendation of the council.

The SRC met as a full Council 5 times and the Executive Committee met 5 times since the last State Plan was submitted. Each of the SRC committees also met throughout the year. The SRC and DBVI are pleased to report positive results from combined outreach efforts that have resulted in an increase in the number of applications. Also, all of the policies and procedures were reviewed, revised, and approved jointly. The membership committee created a mentoring program for new members that will be fully implemented in the fall.

Each SRC meeting included an update from the DBVI Director, the Special Services Library, and the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The Council is fully aware and updated about services throughout the state.

The SRC and DBVI were very active in working together to review the projects of the division and updates were given at each meeting. The projects reviewed included assessment/goals/strategies, progress on DBVI's Consumer-Centered Culture initiatives, and preparing for the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) monitoring visits, which involved several pre-visit phone conferences. The RSA review took place in February and the areas reviewed were financial, organizational structure, and transition. The SRC Chair was interviewed and provided input for the report.

The SRC provided input as DBVI prepared for several all-day transition workshops that included peer workshops and outside experts. The purpose was to bring together DBVI customers throughout the state to learn about higher education and work preparation.

In February the SRC provided input for the design of a DBVI "Welcome Packet." They answered the question that a successful Welcome Packet:

Results in...

- A clear understanding of scope/better understanding of resources/well-informed consumer/clear service expectations
- Understandable language
- Engaging the person/client satisfaction
- Examples of success of others
- What the agency provides/a better understanding of DBVI

Does not result in...

- Frustration

- Misunderstanding
- Ambiguity

Is...

- Accessible
- Mission-driven
- Understandable/clearly-written/jargon/acronym-free
- Client-centered
- Engaging/Inviting/Welcoming
- Comprehensive
- Empowering
- Informative

DBVI agrees with these attributes and will work hard to include these in the final product.

The SRC requested an agenda for the April meeting that included the theme of job development. The meeting included a panel discussion with 3 DBVI job developers who gave presentations about their work and then a time for questions and discussion. Each job developer discussed their role and some of their challenges and successes. The SRC members responded with some questions and ideas. The SRC feels strongly that there is a definite need to educate the public and businesses about the abilities of people who are blind. The job developers and DBVI staff agree and brainstormed some ideas. All agree that sharing success stories using a variety of media is a great way show people demonstrating their skills at work.

Last June, the DBVI and the SRC had an all-day combined meeting. During this meeting, we discussed customer-centered culture, needs assessment and goals and strategies. We also discussed how DBVI has on-going collaboration with the general Vocational Rehabilitation division regarding customers that have multiple disabilities. One example included working with VR, the Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to provide adaptive equipment training for a person who is deaf-blind to use Braille interface technology for communication.

The SRC Chairperson attended quarterly meetings with the Vermont Secretary of Human Services and the Commissioner of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL). He also attended a two-day workshop on Customer-Centered Culture sponsored by DBVI for its staff and partners. The Chair represented the SRC by working with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI) to be a spokesperson for the program in schools to teach students about blindness.

Results of Public Meeting—DBVI State Plan (held June 20, 2013)

DBVI did receive comments from Rene Pellerin who attended the public hearing to make comments related to Support Service Provider (SSP) services for people who are deaf-blind. Mr. Pellerin is frustrated that Vermont does not have a program to pay for SSP services on an on-going basis. Here are some of his direct comments:

- Developing a SSP program in Vermont is a long, frustrating process. We've been talking about this for at least 5 years, and deaf people are isolated without SSP's. We have training money but no funding for direct service. I suggest DBVI and Vermont Center for Independent Living work together to go to the Gov's office to get funding for 2014.
- We need an advocacy group for deaf-blind. We are probably talking 6-8 people and support staff. Deaf-blind people are all over the state and we need a support group to address their issues.

The DBVI response from Fred Jones, DBVI Director, was a suggestion to follow-up with another meeting in order to create a plan for how to move forward and include more partners. Fred explained that SSP services are currently paid for by DBVI when a person is "open" and seeking employment. The challenge is to explore options to find funding for SSP services for people who are not "open" in a VR or Independent Living program. Fred explained that DBVI has taken steps to build capacity of community providers for SSP services in Vermont by providing a grant to train people to become SSP's which resulted in 20 newly trained SSP's. DBVI does provide SSP services when included in a client's Individual Plan for Employment. Fred and Rene have agreed to meet in July to explore ways to bring-in other partners to explore options for a program to pay for SSP services for people who need them and are not "open" in a VR or Independent Living program.

DBVI Response to SRC Input

- DBVI and the SRC worked collaboratively to revise the policies and procedures. The language was revised in a way that all can support the final version.
- The SRC and DBVI agree that educating the public about blindness is very important. Together we will begin to explore the best ways to share success stories.
- The SRC gave direct input about specific attributes they would like to see in the new DBVI "Welcome Packet." The attributes are described above and DBVI will work hard to include them in the final product. DBVI is also developing measures and will report results to the SRC.

This screen was last updated on Jun 21 2013 3:33PM by Fred Jones

Attachment 4.7(b)(3) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

This agency **has not** requested a waiver of statewideness.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 11:47AM by savtlangleys

Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment 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 investment system with respect to

- Federal, state, and local agencies and programs;
- if applicable, Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; and
- if applicable, state use contracting programs.

Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System

At this time DBVI has no cooperative agreements with agencies of this description.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 1:49PM by savtlangleys

Attachment 4.8(b)(2) Coordination with Education Officials

- Describe 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 vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.
- Provide information on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to
 - 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;
 - transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
 - roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
 - procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

DBVI works closely with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired to serve youth in transition in the school system. VABVI uses state education funding to provide the services on a school by school basis. VABVI keeps DBVI abreast of individual student progress and is a part of assisting DBVI as each student creates an IPE by age 16. VABVI is aware of all students who are blind or visually impaired and in school. In this way DBVI is assured of being aware of all eligible individuals and is able to create an IPE at age 16 or at least before they leave school. If DBVI is not able to sit in on an IEP the VABVI teacher gives updates. This year DBVI entered into an agreement with the General Voc Rehab agency to make use of their statewide system of in-school Transition Counselors. Transition Counselors will not provide intensive services in most cases (services provided by the DBVI Counselor) but can sit in on the occasional IEP meeting, act as a liaison to the school, keep DBVI counselor abreast of school and regional resources and be there as a possible resource for students. DBVI's transition caseload is small and it was thought there could be better statewide coverage this way versus contracting for a single, part-time coordinator. DBVI counselors check in as part of the Core Transition Teams made up of education staff and community/adult agency representatives. DBVI counselor have regular check ins with the Transition Counselor in their area.

DBVI is also fortunate to have two DOE representatives (both in the special education area) attending SRC meetings, allowing good contact and information exchange.

Interagency Agreement with

Vermont Department of Education and

Vermont Agency of Human Services

Pursuant to Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

June 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....	2
MISSION/GUIDING PRINCIPLES	2
AREAS OF AGREEMENT.....	3
COORDINATION OF SERVICES	3

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY 9

DISPUTE RESOLUTION RELATIVE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT..... 13

QUARTERLY REVIEW 13

NON-DISCRIMINATION 13

AMENDMENTS OR MODIFICATIONS 13

TERM..... 14

2 of 14

PURPOSE

This agreement promotes collaboration between the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and the Department of Education (DOE) in order to ensure that all required services are coordinated and provided to students with disabilities, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and policies. As required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the agreement delineates the provision and funding of services required by federal or state law or assigned by state policy. The areas covered by this agreement include coordination of services, agency financial responsibility, conditions and terms of reimbursement, and resolution of interagency disputes.

This interagency agreement outlines the provision of services to students who are eligible for both special education and services provided by AHS and its member departments and offices including Department of Health (VDH), Department for Children and Families (DCF), Department of Disability, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), Department of Corrections (DOC), and Office of Vermont Health Access (OVHA). It is intended that the agreement will provide guidance to human services staff and school personnel in the coordination and provision of services for students with disabilities.

MISSION/GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The DOE, the local education agencies (LEA) and AHS work together to assure that children and youth with disabilities, ages 3-22, receive services for which they are

eligible in a timely and coordinated manner. Ultimate responsibility to ensure a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities lies with DOE and responsibility to provide a FAPE lies with the LEA. AHS is responsible for supporting students and their families toward successful outcomes in their broader functioning consistent with federal law including 32 CFR §300.1421 as well as state law. These agencies will work together to assure the needs of eligible students with disabilities are met, services are coordinated and integrated, funds are efficiently used, and a dispute resolution process is in place to resolve interagency policy and funding disputes when a conflict occurs.

In recognition of the importance of providing a smooth transition from education to adult life, transition services for eligible students will be community-driven, involve a comprehensive system including AHS, DOE, employers, the workforce system and youth and their families. These services will be provided with the intent to increase the number of youth with disabilities entering employment, further education, and independent or supported living.

1 All statutory and regulatory citations in this agreement are to those in effect at the date of execution of the agreement and as amended thereafter from time to time. The statutory and regulatory citations in this agreement will be updated to reflect the IDEIA of 2005 and its implementing regulations.

3 of 14

AREAS OF AGREEMENT

I. COORDINATION OF SERVICES

A. General

The Department of Education and the Agency of Human Services and its member departments are committed to assuring that students with disabilities, ages 3-22, receive integrated services which allow them to receive a free and appropriate education and to grow and develop and reach their goals. The intent of this section is to extend, by agreement and by procedure, the provisions of 33 V.S.A. §§ 4301-4303

and 4305, to all children and youth who meet eligibility requirements under IDEA, who also are eligible for disability-related service delivery and coordination by at least one AHS department.

1. Coordinated Services Plan

Eligible children and youth are entitled to receive a coordinated services plan developed by a service coordination team including representatives of education, the appropriate departments of the Agency of Human Services, the parents or guardians, and natural supports connected to the family. The coordinated services plan includes the Individual Education Plans (IEP) as well as human services treatment plans or individual plans of support, and is organized to assure that all components are working toward compatible goals, progress is monitored, and resources are being used effectively to achieve the desired result for the child and family. Funding for each element of the plan is identified.

Special consideration needs to be given to transition-age youth. Specific transition planning must begin at the age required by federal and state law. (See page 4 for definition of transition services.) The LEA is responsible for identifying each child or youth in need of a transition plan and arranging for appropriate team meetings. Also, the LEAs will collaborate with AHS on the annual survey which identifies students who will be graduating and may be in need of long-term supports.

Each child or youth and family has a lead service coordinator who assures that the plan is regularly reviewed and serves as the agreed upon contact person if the “coordinated services plan” needs to be adjusted.

If a team has not been formed or is not functioning, if a coordinated services plan is not satisfactory, if there is no lead service coordinator, or if a plan is not being implemented satisfactorily, the family or individual

or another involved party may request a meeting of the Local Interagency Team (see below) to address the situation.

When a team believes that a child or youth requires highly intensive services in residential care or intensive wrap-around services, the plan

4 of 14

shall be reviewed and approved by the Case Review Committee (see below), except as otherwise required by federal or state law.

2. Infrastructure

a. State Interagency Team

The DOE and the AHS commit to the existence and ongoing support of a State Interagency Team (SIT). The SIT includes a high level manager from the following departments and divisions within state government: DOE, Division of Mental Health(DMH), Division of Disabilities and Aging Services (DDAS), Division of Family Services (DFS), Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and AHS Field Services as well as other units as determined by the Secretary of AHS. A family consumer representative will also be a core member of the SIT. The SIT is responsible for overseeing the development and maintenance of the system of care to address the needs of children with eligible disabilities, for assuring the consistent development of coordinated services plans, and to be part of the dispute resolution process outlined below.

b. Local Interagency Team

The DOE and the AHS commit to the existence and support of a system of Local Interagency Teams (LIT) in each of the 12 AHS regions in Vermont. Each LIT includes a special education director

selected by the districts in that region, the local children's mental health director, the Family Services director, a family consumer representative, high level local leaders from developmental services and substance abuse, and a VR representative. Other AHS programs are represented as needed. The LIT supports the creation of a local system of care and assures that staff are trained and supported in creating coordinated services plans. They also play a role in dispute resolution as outlined below. The AHS Field Director and a designated DOE staff person assure that the region has a highly functional team and is responsible for working with the team to solve funding issues. The Field Director is the key conduit to a High Risk Fund, managed through the Field Services Division.

LITs will assure that there is a structure to focus on the particular needs of transition-age youth to support transition from school to adult life. Adult agency providers would be included as needed including high level local leaders from adult mental health programs (CRT) and the Department of Employment and Training (DET).

Likewise, special attention must be taken to assure an appropriate process to address the needs of children ages 3 to 6. Such a process must include the Child Development Division.

5 of 14

c. Case Review Committee (CRC)

The SIT shall establish a Case Review Committee that will include representatives of the Family Services Division, DMH, DDAS, DOE, and a parent representative. Other units of AHS will be included as appropriate. The CRC meets regularly to review the recommendations of service coordination teams for intensive services including

residential care and high-level wrap-around services. The purpose of the review is to determine if a child's needs require the proposed level of service. The CRC serves both as a control to assure the appropriateness of high cost placements in the least restrictive environment, and also as a consulting body for local teams, helping identify appropriate services and approaches for eligible children and youth with the highest level of need.

B. VR Transition Service Coordination for Students with Disabilities in Vermont's High Schools

1. VR Services for Students with Disabilities

VR is committed to the successful transition of young adults with disabilities from school to work or further education or training. VR is required under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, see 29 U.S.C. §720 et seq. and pertinent federal regulation, see 34 CFR §361.22; the IDEA, and pertinent federal regulation, see 34 CFR §§300.347 (b) and 300.348; and the Assistive Technology Act of 2004, see 29 U.S.C. §3001 et seq., to coordinate policies and procedures with education officials that facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the VR agency.

"Transition services" are defined as a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that (a) is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including

supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; b) is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and (c) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

6 of 14

2. Early Identification and Follow-Along

A VR staff member will maintain at least annual contact with school personnel in each area school to ensure early identification of students in special education who may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. This early identification occurs at the age required by federal and state law and includes formal VR involvement in IEP/Transition Team meetings. VR will provide brochures to schools to be shared with students with disabilities and their families. Additionally, local Core Transition Teams will provide the VR Counselor with a forum to discuss projections of numbers of students who will need transition services from VR.

Outreach activities by VR, such as visits with guidance counselors, will include ways to identify out-of-school youth and students at risk for dropping out of school. Outreach activities may also include meeting with families and students at their homes (or other settings at the choice of families and students).

The VR Counselor's role in this early identification is primarily counseling, guidance and assistance during the IEP/transition planning process. The Counselor may assist the individual, family members, and school transition team members in long-term planning for adult life. This

planning may focus on post-secondary education, a job, a place to live after graduation and participation in the community.

Although VR's primary focus is to assist with vocational preparation, VR staff also serves as a resource for area schools regarding local community services and long-term supports.

3. Referrals to VR

Consultation should intensify when a student is four years from graduation. VR should initiate formal intake at least 18 months before the student is scheduled to graduate or exit from high school. Students at risk for dropping out or students with complex needs may be considered for earlier intake.

VR will not serve persons under age 18 without the permission of a parent, guardian, or legal representative unless they are emancipated.

7 of 14

Services may include counseling and consultation around the development of the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) that is coordinated with the IEP. Services also may include assessment, job development, training and other paid services.

The IPE must be developed and written before the student leaves school.

4. Purchased Services

The VR Counselor shall make the IEP/Transition Team aware of the scope of VR services available, including financial assistance for post-secondary education.

As determined on an individual basis, VR may provide for assistive technology, (AT), services and devices for a VR-eligible student within 12 months of exiting school. The AT services must meet the following criteria: a) they are part of an IEP with coordinated transition goals, b)

they are part of an approved IPE, and c) they are necessary to accomplish a successful transition to employment, post-secondary education or training.

During the student's Transition Year (nine months before exiting school), VR may support Employment Specialist services on a job site, which is expected to continue post-graduation. VR may pay for an Employment Specialist for up to twelve (12) months if ongoing supports have been negotiated with a long-term services provider (e.g., mental health agency, DDAS, private provider, or through the use of natural supports).

As determined by the Counselor and the VR Regional Manager, services may be provided prior to the last year in school if essential to the IPE goals and/or their development and there are no other funding options. As determined by the Counselor and the VR Regional Manager, other timelimited services may be purchased consistent with the comparable services and benefits requirement of 34 CFR §361.53. Examples include on-site job assessments, driver education evaluations or physical restoration services.

5. VR Transition Counselors

VR Transition Specialty Counselors work with many high schools in Vermont. At least one counselor is based on-site, serving one of the largest high schools in the state and the remaining counselors are on-site in schools multiple times per month. General VR Counselors serve adults as well as young adults in transition in the remaining high schools. VR school counselors who exclusively serve youth in transition provide a higher level of service and offer a higher level of expertise on transition issues and requirements.

6. Bridges to Self Sufficiency – Youth Benefits Counseling Program

It is often the accepted wisdom of high school special education staff, transition professionals and family members that youth with disabilities put their cash benefits and healthcare at risk by working. What is generally not well understood, is that there are some excellent work incentives built into these public benefit programs for youth who want to work and attend post-secondary education.

The Bridges Project makes benefits planning and other assistance available to every student with a disability of transition age in Vermont and provides accurate information to youth and their families on the impact of employment on all the federal and state benefits they receive. Benefits Counselors, located in each of the AHS district offices, are in the schools in their district on a regular basis, work with Special Education staff and attend transition planning/IEP meetings at the request of the student, family or school personnel. They conduct training for educators, students and families on benefits and work incentives. About half of Vermont's high schools routinely use the benefits counselors' expertise to assist students and their families. Benefits Counselors receive referrals from VR, community mental health agencies, community developmental services agencies, family services agencies, consumer advocates and families.

7. JOBS Program

The JOBS Program offers vocational services and intensive case management to high-risk youth with emotional behavioral disabilities in 11 of 12 AHS districts through a partnership between VR and the Division of Mental Health, the Division of Family Services and the Department of Corrections. The program serves high school drop-outs and those at high

risk of dropping out and engages youth in non-stigmatizing employment services while providing a bridge to more intensive mental health and case management services.

8. Vermont Assistive Technology (AT) Project

The AT Project provides services to schools and students through the Assistive Technology Act of 2004 and through a formula grant from the Vermont DOE. Two certified staff provide the following AT services across the state as requested by school personnel: a) assistive technology evaluations, consultation and technical assistance to children with disabilities, enrolled in public schools; b) additional children's AT services are provided on a case-by-case basis, depending on level and need and intervention required; c) outreach, information and referral and tryout of equipment; and d) training and technical assistance to students, educators, other service providers and family members as teams.

9 of 14

II. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

A. General Statement

The Vermont DOE and AHS are committed to meeting financial responsibilities as required by law. The secretary of AHS and the commissioner of DOE will periodically review the financial responsibilities enumerated below, identify areas for improved programmatic and financial efficiencies, and develop strategies to meet financial responsibilities, including joint appropriations requests from the state legislature and negotiations with federal agencies.

1. Specific Funding Provisions for State-placed Students

In the circumstances listed below, financial responsibility for services otherwise considered special education and related services shall be as set forth in federal law, Vermont law, and/or existing memorandum of

understanding as described below:

a) Services provided to state-placed students in residential facilities with approved schools or tutorial program, as defined in 16 V.S.A.

§ 11(28), with payment as described:

i. DCF, Family Services – Pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 2950(b)(1) and 33 V.S.A. § 310, when a child is in the custody of the DCF, and

DCF has agreed to the child's placement in a 24-hour residential facility with an approved educational program, the Commissioner of Education shall pay the education costs and the Commissioner of DCF shall arrange for the payment of the remainder of the costs.

Except for short-term emergency or evaluation placements, prior approval of payment must be provided by authorized

representatives of DCF and DOE for its respective portions.

ii. VDH, DMH, Child, Adolescent and Family Unit – Pursuant to

16 V.S.A. § 2950(b)(2), when a child is placed in a 24-hour

residential facility by a designated community mental health

agency and that placement has been approved by the Division, the

Commissioner of DOE shall pay the education costs and DMH

shall arrange for payment of the remainder of the costs. Except for

short-term emergency or evaluation placements, prior approval of

payment must be provided by authorized representatives of DMH

and DOE for its respective portions.

iii. VDH, ADAP – For individuals placed by a licensed alcohol and

drug counselor of a designated community mental health agency or

substance abuse agency in an approved 24-hour residential

substance abuse treatment facility located within Vermont, and

who meet the DSM-IV criteria or its successor for substance

abuse/dependence and the American Society of Addiction

10 of 14

Medicine Level III criteria for residential treatment, DOE will pay for both general and special education tutorial services; ADAP, or its sub- grantee will pay for treatment, room and board. (Note: Substance abuse is not an IDEA-covered disability; this provision pertains to students otherwise IDEA-eligible who enter a substance abuse treatment residential program.)

b) Services provided to children residing in their homes and communities with payment as described:

i. DAIL, DDAS– DAIL, DDAS, serves children with developmental disabilities as defined in 18 V.S.A. §8722 and provides services pursuant to 18 V.S.A. §8725. DAIL, DDAS, pays for the developmental home or shared parenting placement for children who:

(a) are under 18 years of age and “grandfathered, following a regulatory change in 2001, and

(b) are at risk of entering a psychiatric institution and in which case, DAIL pays the state share.

In these instances where the child is receiving educational services in a district other than the district of the parent’s residence, the costs for those services will be paid by the DOE pursuant to VSBE Rule 2366.7.2(1).

Prior approval of payment must be provided by authorized representatives of DAIL for its respective portion.

ii. VDH, DMH, Child, Adolescent and Family Unit

Local community mental health agencies provide mental health

supports to children who would benefit from such services within available resources. Community mental health agencies receive funding on an annual basis from the DMH which pays for a portion of the costs associated with the provision of care to children with mental health disabilities. Depending on the type of service, the community mental health agency may fund the appropriate and necessary mental health services; to the extent that such services may also be considered “related services” pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.24, such services shall be provided consistent with 34 C.F.R. §300.142(b)(ii).

iii. VDH, Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) program

Eligible children who meet program requirements may receive medically necessary services provided at the CSHN Clinic consistent with 42 U.S.C. § 1396b(c). Upon enrollment in CSHN, a CSHN team evaluates the child and issues a report that is sent to the child’s family who in turn may send the report to the child’s

11 of 14

school. The report may also be used at the LIT and SIT meetings.

Pursuant to Vt. Code Rules 13 140 CVR 048, Cost-Share for Patients of AHS/VDH/CSHN Programs, all families with children enrolled in the CSHN program are subject to cost sharing, as specified in the rule. For any service specified in an IEP, the school district may not require parents to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim for services specified in an IEP pursuant to 34 C.F.R. 300.142(e) and (g)(2).

a) Vocational Rehabilitation - For eligible students, VR will pay for

services to the extent that funds are available at the time the services are needed, including assistive technology services and devices, that are identified in an approved IPE in keeping with VR's order of selection for services that:

i. are consistent with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and implementing regulations including but not limited to 34 C.F.R. §361.53; the IDEA, including but not limited to 34 C.F.R. §§300.5, 300.6, 300.347(b), and 300.348; the Assistive Technology Act of 2004, PL 108-364; and Vermont State Plan; and

ii. promote or facilitate the accomplishment of vocational rehabilitation goals and any intermediate rehabilitation objectives identified in the student's IPE to ensure the student's successful transition to employment, post-secondary education, or training within 12 months of the student's exit from school.

b) Medicaid – School-based Program – Financial responsibility for the School-based Medicaid program will be consistent with the “Interagency Agreement between AHS and DOE for School-Based Health Services” of November 2004 or any subsequent agreements replacing it. Pursuant to the IDEA, related services do not include services that must be performed by a physician, other than services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes.

c) Medicaid – OVHA – OVHA will pay for Medicaid-covered services to eligible individuals consistent with 42 U.S.C. §1396b(c) of the Public Health and Welfare law, and 34 C.F.R. §300.142(b)(1)(ii) of the IDEA. However, for the purposes of a 42 U.S.C. §1396n waiver, “habilitation services” shall not include special education and related services. For any service specified in an IEP, the school district may

not require parents to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim

2 Order of selection does not consider whether a student is on an IEP or not.

12 of 14

for services specified in an IEP pursuant to 34 C.F.R. 300.142(e) and (g)(2). Pursuant to the IDEA, related services do not include services that must be performed by a physician, other than services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes.

d) Community High School of Vermont (CHSVT), DOC – For students enrolled in CHSVT, the Department of Corrections’ and the DOE’s financial responsibility shall be assigned in accordance with 28 V.S.A. §120 and other relevant state and federal laws. A separate memorandum of understanding for CHSVT will be developed and signed by the commissioners of corrections and education to be incorporated into this agreement.

e) Woodside – For students who are in DCF custody and placed at the Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, DCF will pay for all costs of treatment, room and board, and education, including services required in an IEP, as required by 16 V.S.A. § 2948(n).

2. Other Funding Obligations

For all other services that may be considered special education and related services, financial responsibility will be assigned consistent with federal law including 34 C.F.R. § 300.142, state law and the following understanding:

- a) DOE shall be responsible to ensure a FAPE to students with disabilities and LEAs shall be responsible to provide a FAPE.
- b) The DOE will work with LEAs to maximize receipt of federal Medicaid dollars available for reimbursement of medically related

services provided to Medicaid-eligible students.

c) The DOE will identify best practices concerning cost containment and the provision of FAPE consistent with 16 V.S.A. §2959b. DOE will provide technical assistance in this area to LEAs.

d) The IDEA does not limit the responsibility of non-educational agencies from providing or paying for some or all of the costs of FAPE to children with disabilities. However, this shall not be construed to expand or otherwise alter state and/or federal law requirements imposed on any non-education agency.

3. Conditions and Terms of Reimbursement

If a non-educational agency fails to provide or pay for services for which they are responsible and which are also considered special education and related services, the LEA (or state agency responsible for developing the child's IEP) shall provide or pay for these services to the child in a timely manner. The LEA or state agency may then claim reimbursement for the services from the non-educational agency that was responsible for the provision of the services and failed to provide or pay for these services and that agency shall reimburse the LEA or state agency in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

13 of 14

Pursuant to this provision, the AHS and DOE will develop joint procedures for reimbursement.

III. DISPUTE RESOLUTION RELATIVE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT

Where the LIT is unable to resolve any of the issues pursuant to this agreement, a referral may be made to the SIT for resolution.

Where the SIT is unable to resolve a dispute among the various agencies, it shall inform all participating parties of the right to an appeal process. The Secretary of AHS and

Commissioner of DOE may resolve the issues and render a written decision or may arrange for a hearing pursuant to Chapter 25 of Title 3.

If a hearing is held, it shall be conducted by a hearing officer appointed by the Secretary of the AHS and the Commissioner of Education. The Secretary and the Commissioner may affirm, reverse, or modify the proposals of the hearing officer.

Nothing in this agreement shall be construed to limit any existing substantive or procedural protections of state or federal law or regulations.

IV. QUARTERLY REVIEW

The Commissioner of DOE and the Secretary of AHS or their designees will meet at least quarterly to review existing data and evaluate the implementation of this agreement in order to improve the results for eligible children with disabilities and the operations of local and regional teams of educators and human services providers. Local and/or state teams may be asked to assist state agencies through provision of data on coordinated services plans and financial resources. The input of parents and other stakeholders may be solicited and considered. DOE and AHS will develop a plan for coordinated data sharing. This evaluation will be used to improve policies, procedures and planning and development activities.

V. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The parties shall comply with all applicable state and federal non-discrimination laws and regulations including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Vermont's Public Accommodations Act.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR MODIFICATIONS

Any provision in this agreement may be rendered null and void by changes in federal or state law that prevent either or both parties from fulfilling the terms of the agreement. If this circumstance should arise, each party agrees to notify the other as soon as reasonably possible.

During the term of the agreement, either party that is a signatory to this agreement may submit a written request to amend or modify this memorandum. When such a request is made, the parties shall meet without unnecessary delay to consider the proposed amendment.

VII. TERM

This agreement in its present form or as modified shall be effective as of the date of signing and shall remain in effect for five years. The agreement shall be reviewed annually by the parties and may be extended by the mutual written agreement of the parties. Prior to the expiration of the agreement the parties shall meet to negotiate and execute a successor agreement. In the event a successor agreement is not in place when this agreement is due to expire, this agreement will remain in effect until a successor agreement is concluded.

Michael Smith, Secretary Richard H. Cate, Commissioner

Agency of Human Services Department of Education

Date_____ Date_____

Approved as to Form:

Assistant Attorney General

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 12:23PM by savtlangleys

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

DBVI maintains agreements and contracts with two non-profit organizations and CRPs in particular. VABVI provides direct teaching and rehabilitation training to Vermonters who are visually impaired. They are the only other organization in Vermont providing services to the blind. Due to the close working nature and cooperation there are no duplication of services. DBVI also works closely with VABIR to provide job development and soft skills training for consumers.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 12:01PM by savtangleys

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Describe the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- supported employment services; and
- extended services.

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

The VT DBVI chooses to send the majority of its funding (\$30,000 of \$36,000) for supported employment to support the system of the General VR Supported Employment coordinator. In this fashion DBVI has access to all the agreements for Supported Employment services agreed to by VR, such as agreements with the Division of Disability and Aging Services, TBI services, the Division for Mental Health and the local CRTs.

Because of its small size and the fact that it serves a low incidence population DBVI feels that it can serve the few individuals seeking supported employment best in the above manner. Most individuals who qualify for supported employment and are visually are served by other agencies as their primary disability has identified as other than vision impairment. The small pot of dollars that DBVI does keep can be used to support job coaches and similar services in the rare cases that are on DBVI's caseload.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 12:02PM by savtangleys

Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

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

- the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state 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.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development -- DBVI

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

- the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state 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.

The Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) operates in the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) in the Agency of Human Services (AHS). DBVI employs 10 full time positions and one half time position.

DBVI is organized to allow a structure that allows for advancement based on increased skills and job responsibilities. This originally occurred in response to changes that were made four years ago to reduce the number of paid VermontState employees. Qualified seasoned DBVI employees added to their job responsibilities to fill the gap of positions that were eliminated. The director of DBVI met with the State of Vermont Agency of Human Resources for a Request for Review (RFR) resulting in significant changes within DBVI's job structure. DBVI was successful in meeting the goal to set up a career ladder within the job series recognizing increasing levels of expertise and responsibility. In addition to the changes that were made previously to create positions for Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, DBVI set up a step system for the Rehabilitation Associate position that is based on increased levels of job responsibility. This change is a positive move for DBVI as it more accurately recognizes job duties and skill level. DBVI continues to operate under a structure that allows for increased professional abilities, improved services and knowledgeable management by recognizing the individual skills within. This move has taken DBVI in a positive direction for implementing new management strategies that are being implemented (Customer Centered Culture and Individual Development Plan).

At this time we have sufficient VR counselor capacity to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation clients. Each of the four regional offices has one counselor and one rehab associate. The four regional offices are Burlington, Montpelier, Rutland, and Springfield. The director of DBVI and the administrative assistant work out of the central office, that is temporarily located in Williston. The Central office was moved to Williston after severe flooding that occurred in the summer of 2011. The assistive technology trainer works out of the Rutland office and provides services for the entire state.

Under the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, DBVI collaborates with the Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for: Human Resources Management, Transition Services, Benefits Counseling, Supported Employment, and the business office.

In FFY 2013 DBVI Counselors served an average of 90 consumers annually. With FFY 2014 over half- complete it appears that DBVI will serve a similar average of consumers annually per Counselor. Counselors have an average caseload of about 70 consumers at any given time. At this time DBVI has maintained a high level of performance. Staffing levels are sufficient.

Four rehabilitation counselors provide direct client services for vocational rehabilitation services in the four regions in the State of Vermont. Each Counselor works with and supervises a rehabilitation associate. Presently DBVI has 3 (.5 FTE each) job developers for three of the four regions. This service is contracted through Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation. Technology services are provided by the assistive technology trainer and a contracted professional rehabilitation technology expert. Overall supervision is provided by the division director.

Presently all DBVI positions are filled by qualified professionals. It is expected that a DBVI rehabilitation associate will be leaving her position within the next few months. It is expected that this position will be filled by a qualified individual. This individual will receive extensive training to help them learn and understand services for visually impaired individuals and the implication caused by visual loss. DBVI will use the same training model that was used for a recently hired rehabilitation associate in the Montpelier office. Training provided will focus around meeting with other highly trained vision professionals both within DBVI and from our sister agency, The Vermont Association for the blind and Visually Impaired. All new employees receive training with a qualified rehabilitation therapist, a low vision therapist and orientation and mobility instructor. In addition they are scheduled to meet with our rehabilitation technology specialist to learn about how adaptive equipment can enhance job opportunities. They will meet with professionals from Vermont Association of Business Rehabilitation and Industry to learn about job placement. The performance of the newly hired rehabilitation associate is meeting all the expected standards established for the position. DBVI is confident that we will be able to fill any future vacancies through recruitment as there are many qualified individuals looking for employment in the State of Vermont. It is expected that DBVI will be able to recruit and hire highly trained professionals within the Agency of Human Resources for future job vacancies.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Blind Services Director	1	0	0
2	Administrative Assistant	.5	0	0
3	Senior Rehabilitation Counselor	2	0	0
4	Rehabilitation Counselor	2	0	0
5	Rehabilitation Associate	2	0	0
6	Rehabilitation Associate II	2	0	0
7	Assistive Technology Trainer	1	0	0

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1		0	0	0
2		0	0	0
3		0	0	0
4		0	0	0

5		0	0	0
6		0	0	0
7		0	0	0
8		0	0	0
9		0	0	0
10		0	0	0

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

- a list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- 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.

In the State of Vermont the local institutions of higher education that offer professional training for DBVI and DVR are Johnson State College and Springfield College. Assumption College work closely with DBVI and DVR to develop programs for vocational rehabilitation counselors to meet the educational requirements needed to become CRC eligible.

The state of Vermont remains without a rehabilitation training program at the graduate level. Presently, DBVI has one rehabilitation counselor that is attending the University of Massachusetts Boston. He is enrolled in the Rehabilitation counseling, MS program. This is a fully accredited program that prepares individuals to be highly qualified counselors. Required

classes cover core VR requirements (i.e., a) Medical or Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities, b) Delivery of Rehabilitation Services or Community Resources, c) Vocational Assessment and Evaluation, d) Job Placement or Occupational Information.

To maintain training and skill levels, DBVI constantly seeks and distributes information and training opportunities for staff at the regional and national level. DBVI maintains current educational material through journals, Internet sites and information gathered at conferences and trainings. DBVI works with the Human Resources Manager at VR to ensure inclusion in opportunities offered by educational institutions for vocational rehabilitation professionals. Opportunities for on-line and distance learning are also available.

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	U-Mass	1	1	0	0

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by	Graduates sponsored by	Graduates from the
-----	--------------	-------------------	------------------------	------------------------	--------------------

			agency and/or RSA	agency and/or RSA	previous year
1		0	0	0	0
2		0	0	0	0
3		0	0	0	0
4		0	0	0	0
5		0	0	0	0

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development (updated on an annual basis) 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.

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development (updated on an annual basis) 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 and Retention: It is DBVI's intention to develop and implement a solid plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel. Our goal is to recruit professionals whom have an expertise in rehabilitation with knowledge of visual diagnosis and the implications of visual disability. In addition DBVI will recruit personnel and individuals with disabilities and minority backgrounds to ensure a diverse qualified professional staff. DBVI constantly checks its caseload for interested and appropriately skilled individuals to provide services to Vermonters with vision impairments. DBVI ensures a high standard of qualified personnel with training directed toward an expertise for working with people with visual impairment. This is done through close collaboration with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. New staff participate in a training program that covers the implications of visual loss and services such as orientation and mobility, rehabilitation teaching and low vision service. In addition training and consultation occurs with our rehabilitation technology consultant on an ongoing basis. Rehabilitation Associates are recruited with a strong preference given to those with Bachelor's degrees and a strong commitment to blind services. Through flexible work schedules and approved time-off DBVI makes it as convenient as possible to pursue degrees and education. DBVI will continue to support staff members who want to further their relevant education, as this will benefit the whole staff through projects and shared information. DBVI supports the staff and its professional development through public recognition and opportunities for job advancement through a newly developed career ladder within the division.

Personnel Standards

Describe the state agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and

2. to the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, institutions of higher education, and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

Be sure to include the following:

- specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards;
- procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period;
- the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards;
- the identification of a plan for training newly hired personnel who do not meet the established standards to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

Personnel Standards:

DBVI will follow the same standard used by Vocational Rehabilitation to be in compliance with Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992. This requires State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to establish qualified personnel standards for rehabilitation personnel. This addresses the qualifications necessary to meet the highest standards which are required in the State of Vermont. In addition DBVI intends to develop a system of personnel development which will ensure retention and individual plans for professional development.

Rehabilitation Counselors that obtain Masters Degrees in counseling or related fields, or are pursuing an undergraduate and Masters Degree, will be required to take a graduate level course in each of the following areas:

- a) Medical or Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities
- b) Delivery of Rehabilitation Services or Community Resources
- c) Vocational Assessment and Evaluation
- d) Job Placement or Occupational Information

Under the Vermont State Employees Association contract, staff are allowed eight hours of educational leave with pay per two week pay period. This policy will also be in force for programs that are held via distance learning.

All efforts are made to hire new Counselors into this standard. When this is not possible, new hires are required, by written agreement, to attain the standard in a reasonable amount of time. The availability of on-line course work should allow any new hires to reasonably take the four "core" courses or any other course work they would need to reach this standard.

DBVI has a standard of Bachelor's degree for new Rehabilitation Associates. This standard lays the groundwork for moving Associates into graduate programs, helping to assure DBVI of maintaining qualified staff.

DBVI allows for a flexible working schedule, makes training assistance available, supports state, regional and national learning options and is strongly supportive of the time, effort, and commitment expended by each staff member to attain educational standards.

DBVI encourages the use of training funds for staff to use to attain and maintain professional standards and to maintain and enhance their professional capabilities.

With a small staff that includes four Rehabilitation Counselors, when fully staffed, DBVI can easily assess training and staff development needs.

Staff Development

Describe the state agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

1. 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; and
2. procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

Staff Development:

The main objective in staff development at the Division for the Blind will focus on assessment, vocational counseling, job placement and rehabilitation technology in relation to visual impairment. Training for counselors will focus on the essentials of a comprehensive vocational assessment. This will address aspects of how a person with a visual impairment can access independence and achieve a high standard of independence. Our mission to “support Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired in their efforts to achieve or sustain their economic independence, self reliance, and social integration to a level consistent with their interests, abilities, and informed choice”.

This year each DBVI employee will receive an IDP (Individual Development Plan) package that will contain tools to address how each employee can contribute to DBVI's; goals and strategies, improve customer satisfaction, support policies, philosophy, competencies and future vision. In addition, the purpose of the IDP is to ensure that each DBVI employee receive appropriate and adequate training to meet their professional standards and requirements of their position

DBVI staff will be asked to evaluate strengths and weakness, and develop a plan of activities that will improve professional capacities. Each employee will have long and short term educational and professional development goals to improve skills. Tools provided will allow each employee to address goals for professional development. The plan will be self evaluating using the “Smart” goal model to ensure that their plan is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely. This will give employees and opportunity to identify their career ladder. DBVI staff will be given opportunities to take on higher level duties backed by participation in education and training programs. This can lead to a higher step grade as determined by the VT Department of Human Resources.

DBVI has a partnership with the vocational rehabilitation Human Resource Manager. DBVI meets with the HR manager bi-monthly to advise DBVI on upcoming trainings available within the Agency of Human Resources and to work with DBVI on goals as outlined in the five year Vermont VR-Blind in-Service Training Grant. The HR manager will facilitate and address trainings that meet the RSA standards set by TACE. The HR manager will advise DBVI on trainings that are required and relevant continuing educational opportunities. Needed trainings will be determined through IDP developed by DBVI staff. DBVI staff will be encouraged to participate in training opportunities to increase leadership, partnering and collaboration skills that will lead to increasing employment opportunities for people who are blind and visually impaired.

DBVI's five year training grant will support:

- Ongoing training requirements to ensure all rehabilitation counselors have a Masters Degree with CSPD/CRC eligibility.
- In partnership with DVR, DBVI participated in training for access and analysis of current labor market information, presented by, Dr. Paul Harrington from the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University and the VT Department of Labor. This training provided counselors with information and skills to match the needs of their consumers with the needs of the local labor market. Training enhanced counselor's ability to interpret labor market information to assist their consumers to make informed career decisions and effectively work as a team with job placement staff. Counselors are better able to identify training and post secondary education options that are in demand in the local labor market.

- In partnership with DVR and AHS, DBVI purchased distance education learning tools for video conferencing. These tools will allow increased training opportunities, and increase the availability of statewide meetings while cutting the cost of travel and time.

- DBVI will work with a marketing agency to develop training materials/a welcome packet for outreach and marketing. This packet will identify a clear understanding and scope of what DBVI can do to ensure that DBVI customers are well informed. It will be accessible, comprehensive, empowering, understandable and informative. This tool will be used during the initial interview and for outreach to customers, family members, medical professionals and service providers.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) approved DBVI's comprehensive plan for staff development. This plan outlines DBVI's intent to comply with federal regulations and its professional development objectives.

Through needs assessments, staff input and advice from the SRC, the Human Resources Manager develops programs, funded through the five year Training Grant that meet staff development needs. The current Training Grant began in October of 2010 and has the following objectives.

Objective 1.1: Develop a training model and set of tools that will enable DBVI Counselors to better understand today's labor market.

Objective 1.2: Provide ongoing training to staff on the curriculum and training models developed by Dr. Harrington.

Objective 1.3: Develop training options for high wage, high demand, and high growth jobs.

Objective 2.1: Train staff in DBVI and DVR and across all departments in AHS.

Objective 3.1: To develop an outreach and marketing plan to improve the referral rate of patients with low vision being treated by Vermont and neighboring health care providers.

Objective 3.2: Deliver training modules to DBVI staff.

Objective 3.3: Develop capacity for ongoing technical assistance in outreach.

Specific Staff training-Updated

Customer Centered Culture-Over the past year DBVI has continued our work on creating and enhancing a Customers Centered Culture. This model was developed by Robin Lawton. Under his guidance and consultation DBVI continues the process of looking at customer satisfaction and organizational performance. When using this method of management it helps us to identify the "voice of the customer". Over the past year DBVI has been working to incorporate this model of management into our service delivery. DBVI has met with small groups of consumers from the community. Training has been provided to our SRC, the Vermont Association for the Blind and visually impaired and the DBVI staff. The main dimensions of the model are: Focus on the customer, Eliminate ambiguity, Include customer priorities, Empower the end user, Define success, Reduce ambiguity of language, Link customer and operational priorities, Integrate and leverage existing initiatives, Focus on improvement, Address outcome first, process last, Satisfy strategic objectives as well as operations, Improve knowledge products first, Emphasize sustainability of new practices, and Challenge traditional assumptions. Using this model will help to improve customer satisfaction as it will decrease ambiguity and improve communication. It allows a method to measure successful outcome based on the "voice of the customer".

This approach to customer service is being used in the development of DBVI's strategic planning. The information is used to increase communication and clarity by finding a common language. After collecting data provided by customers, a small focus group was developed. Presently the group is working on a Welcome Packet to give to customers. This group will gather information that is accessible, comprehensive, empowering, understandable and informative. Our goal at this time is to ensure that our customers are well informed and feel like they are being heard. DBVI will work closely with our customers and the SRC to determine the needs. Training and consultation provided by Robin Lawton allows DBVI staff to improve a method for providing quality customer satisfaction and a higher level of performance

Motivational Interviewing-DBVI has partnered with VR for providing training in Motivational Interviewing. This method of counseling was originally developed by William Miller and Stephen Rollnick. It is an effective evidenced-based approach to

overcoming the ambivalence when participating in a rehabilitation process. This training is designed to develop techniques and skills to work successfully with our most challenging populations. This technique is used to assist consumers to take responsibility for change. DBVI staff attended the initial training session. In cooperation with VR and coordinated by the HR manager a series of trainings on this topic will be offered for DBVI to enhance skills.

Co-Training for DBVI/VT, DBVI/NH, and Veterans Administration staff- This training was designed specifically for staff who work with clients who are visually impaired. The focus of the presentation was to learn about new technology and low vision aids. Presentations were given by Chris Fields, OD, Geoff Howard, Technology Consultant, and the Perkins School for the Blind.

Great Expectations-Voices and Choices for the Future-DBVI sponsored two seminars for staff and consumers. This is a project in a series of seminars that will address the needs of younger people who are visually impaired. The first seminar presented on November 1, 2012 included sessions on technology, job readiness, a panel discussion on inspiring stories and a round table discussion. The second seminar included a panel discussion on overcoming difficulties, Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports, client driven interest groups, low vision and self advocacy. As a result of these seminars, client driven interest groups have been formed to address technology support, social needs, vocational support, and public education. These seminars will continue into next year

A variety of other trainings were attended by staff to enhance skills. Staff attended:

- Harnessing Mindfulness-Tailoring the Practice
- Ethic in VR
- Management and Conflict Resolution
- Domestic Abuse
- Microsoft Office 2010 and Windows 7
- How to Communicate with Tact and Professionalism
- Rehab Associate Training Modules
- Deaf/Blind Training with VABVI
- Knowledge Wave for new Windows

DBVI staff will continue to participate in trainings on relevant assessments needed for persons with visual impairment. These trainings will be presented by qualified vision professionals. Training will address new and relevant assistive technology for people who are blind and visually impaired and job analysis used to determine the need for a technology assessment and training. Ongoing consultation is available for staffs overall basic understanding of adaptive technology and how it can enhance an individuals job performance. Coordination and communication with low vision optometrists to enhance visual function in an employment situation is ongoing.

DBVI will consult with the VR HR Manager to plan relevant trainings. The HR manager is working with Neil McNeil from TACE to arrange for trainings that will meet 1X per month for 2-3 hours. Training will addresses multiple disabilities (i.e., deaf /blindness), maintaining good case management skills, review of standards and ethics for rehabilitation, coaching skills, motivational interviewing, personality disorders and medical and psychological disorders.

DBVI's principals are aimed at a staff development plan that will enhance job skills, job satisfaction and the development of job opportunities for Vermonters with impaired vision. The strategies that will direct our focus over the next year are:

* Collaboration with other agencies, especially the Division for Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Vermont Association for the Blind and visually Impaired.

*Cultural Diversity outreach to underserved populations and increased access to services by all eligible individuals.

*Increase the use of distance education.

* Informed Consumer Choice- offering consumer's resources and information so that they may direct their vocational rehabilitation plan.

* Early Intervention- Offering individual's services and adjustment counseling at an early phase to improve success rates.

*Counselor autonomy- Allowing professionals to have local decision-making power to allow for a much faster rehabilitation process.

*A "Customer Centered Culture"-That will increase clarity of services and decrease ambiguity for consumers, staff and our partners in rehabilitation.

DBVI staff receives ongoing training through local and regional in-state programs to stay current on: The National Library Services, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resources, Diversity and numerous others. DBVI staff is especially diligent about perusing pertinent journals and research and disseminating relevant articles and information via the internet, at monthly staff meetings and through in-person collaborations. The DBVI central office maintains subscriptions to several noted journals in the field (e.g., Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness).

Through attendance at combined meetings, in-service training, and direct staff contact DBVI continues to seek ways to improve and enhance collaboration with other agencies. Many DBVI trainings are in collaboration with the general Vocational Rehabilitation agency in the Department of Disabilities Aging and Independent Living (DAIL). DBVI has greatly enhanced its collaboration with other organizations to the benefit of this division, In particular, the LEAP program for summer youth employment is a model of cooperation. This involves DBVI (provider of consumers, funding), Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (infrastructure, staff), ReCycle North (jobs, staff), Linking Learning to Life (follow-up, e-mentoring), VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IL training, transition staff) and the Gibney Family Foundation (funding). This is a unique residential program providing youth with vision impairments a summer employment opportunity, a community service experience and an independent living experience in an urban setting and a new option for a wilderness setting. DBVI's director is on the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, staff members belong to local Chambers of Commerce as well as other organizations where collaboration has provided opportunities for information sharing and dissemination.

DBVI will continue to implement tools used in Franklin Covey's the 7 Habits of highly Effective People Interactive Edition. This is a three hour on-line training and multi rater assessment that allows team members to provide input on work skills. These tools help individuals to enhance team building skills.

DBVI is active with the Job Development Coalitions throughout the State of Vermont because of our work with Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation (VABIR). Recently VABIR hired Business Account Managers. Their job is to improve relationships with employers in each community. VABIR staff set up trial work experiences and on the job trainings. They explain financial incentives and ADA information. This program helps to provide a service to employers for long lasting job matches.

Other organizations that DBVI works in close cooperation with are: The LEAP program for summer youth employment, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, Resource Vermont, Linking Learning to Life e-mentoring, VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Vermont Center for Independent Living, and the Gibney Family Foundation. DBVI's director is a member of the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities. Staff members attend local Chambers of Commerce meetings as well as other organizations where collaboration has provided opportunities for information sharing and dissemination.

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 the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

The Division for the Blind operates under the State of Vermont Agency of Human Services. The Agency of Human Services has clear policy regarding access to programs as needed to ensure meaningful access to persons with limited English proficiency. Information regarding policy can be accessed at:

<http://www.intra.ahs.state.vt.us/limited-english-proficiency>

This policy applies to all Agency Departments, offices and employees. It is the policy of the Agency of Human Services to provide language assistance as may be needed to ensure meaningful access to our programs. Each department and offices will take steps to provide assistance so that persons seeking services may communicate effectively with program providers and with Agency and department staff.

Departments must take steps to ensure persons seeking services are able to understand which services and benefits are available to them, and how they may best receive them.

The LEP information provides resources and links to resources dealing with written, face-to-face and over the phone communication with individuals for whom English is not the primary language. DBVI is also able to use an agency contract for phone and written translation of almost any language in the world. DBVI makes use of an on-line contact for interpreters of ASL for those consumers who are deaf.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

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 Improvement Act.

At this time DBVI is working to update a cooperative agreement with the new Agency of Education. DBVI has maintained cooperative agreements with the Department of Education, VABVI and the Department of Labor. These agreements are meant to work toward a system of comprehensive and unduplicated services for youth and adults with vision impairments in Vermont. These agreements also provide for cross training among the staffs of the various organizations. Areas covered include employment, education and disability. In this way DBVI and the other partners work to ensure that all partner programs are accessible and available to DBVI consumers. DBVI is in constant contact with the staff of VABVI who has been working with a contract from the Vermont Department of Education to provide services under IDEA. DBVI counselors are in close communication with VR transition counselors. Together DBVI and VR collaborate in training and outreach for disabled students.

This screen was last updated on Jun 24 2013 12:04PM by Fred Jones

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
- individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and
- individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Summary Outline of CSNA Methods, Results, Gaps, and Implications for State Plan

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 1998, requires each state to conduct a statewide needs assessment every three years. The current triennial needs assessment, is statewide and jointly conducted by The Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The activities for the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) were completed during the spring of FY 2011. The following summary of the CSNA is being used to develop many of our goals and strategies for FY 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Introduction

The goals of this needs assessment are to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired including:

- Individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?
- Minorities?
- Individuals who are blind or visually impaired who have been underserved or underserved by DBVI?
- Individuals who are blind or visually impaired served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system? And;
- The need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Methodology

Information gathering included the use of:

- Existing disability population statistics including the Cornell Study;
- Disability population estimates from available data including the American Foundation for the Blind;
- Population projections and economic forecasts from federal and state data; DOL projections by state;
- Existing DBVI data, studies and experience; 911 data, type of service, cost, whether people currently served by DBVI are representative of the racial and ethnic minority distribution of people with disabilities within the state; data provided by CRPs; Counselor input;
- State level statistics from other federal programs; Social Security,

- State and local data and reports;
- Stakeholder input: Surveys, focus groups, SRC meetings, interviews, Town Meetings, C3 Focus Groups, and public hearings.

Participants included DBVI Staff, State Rehabilitation Council, VABVI Staff, and individuals who are blind or visually impaired from around the state.

Dissemination plans included group meetings and individual interviews.

Results

Estimates of number of individuals who are blind or visually impaired in the state potentially eligible for DBVI services include:

- In FFY 2010 DBVI had 129 applicants and served a total of 384 people.
- In FFY 2011 DBVI had 88 applicants and served a total of 352 people.
- Individuals who are blind or visually impaired and who are minorities included 5 people in FFY 2011 and all received services.
- Estimates show there is a potential for 17 people who are minorities statewide based on 5% of 352.
- Vermont schools show 6.8% minority enrollment (2009-2010). We expect future increases as these students graduate over the next 10 years.
- Overall estimates of individuals who are blind or visually impaired include 6,024 individuals age 18-64 statewide who even with correction are not able to easily read the newspaper.

The Cornell Study Shows:

2008- Percentage with a visual disability (all residents) 2.5%

All- 15,100

16-64 6,900

21-64 6,700

2009- Percentage with a visual disability (all residents) 1.7%

All- 10,400

16-64 5,500

21-64 4,900

2010 Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss--American Foundation for the Blind

Total

Gender

Male

Female

Age

Under 5

5-17
 18-34
 35-64
 65-74
 75 and older

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system (other than the DBVI program) include seven transition age youth who participated in the summer Learn, Earn, and Prosper (LEAP) program through the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps who utilize WIA summer youth employment to support part of the program.

DBVI is in the process of developing a data collection method using the new case management system to better track people served through other parts of the WIA system. We discovered through conversations with the Department of Labor (DOL) that they do not track services by disability specific categories. They do indicate if someone has a disability but not the disability type. DOL makes sure that DBVI is directly involved with customers who are blind or visually impaired.

Data from National Sources about Vermont (American Community Survey):

Total population

	625,960
One race	615,645
Two or more races	10,315

One race

	615,645
White	597,325
Black or African American	6,564
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,542
Cherokee tribal grouping	N
Chippewa tribal grouping	N
Navajo tribal grouping	N
Sioux tribal grouping	N
Asian	7,813
Asian Indian	935
Chinese	1,683
Filipino	296
Japanese	316
Korean	850
Vietnamese	1,668
Other Asian	2,065
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	186
Native Hawaiian	N
Guamanian or Chamorro	N
Samoan	N
Other Pacific Islander	N
Some other race	2,215
Two or more races	10,315
White and Black or African American	3,018
White and American Indian and Alaska Native	3,725
White and Asian	2,393
Black or African American and American Indian and Alaska Native	0

OCCUPATION

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	322,432
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	124,286
Service occupations	58,365
Sales and office occupations	74,107
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	32,864
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	32,810

INDUSTRY

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	322,432
--	---------

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	8,753
Construction	21,830
Manufacturing	33,484
Wholesale trade	6,865
Retail trade	39,223
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	9,795
Information	5,145
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	15,303
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	29,406
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	89,040
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	32,562
Other services, except public administration	15,054
Public administration	15,972

INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2010 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)

Total households	256,922
Less than \$10,000	18,357
\$10,000 to \$14,999	15,868
\$15,000 to \$24,999	30,049
\$25,000 to \$34,999	27,897
\$35,000 to \$49,999	37,511
\$50,000 to \$74,999	51,005
\$75,000 to \$99,999	32,931
\$100,000 to \$149,999	27,304
\$150,000 to \$199,999	8,898
\$200,000 or more	7,102
Median household income (dollars)	49,406
Mean household income (dollars)	63,768
With earnings	204,818
Mean earnings (dollars)	62,429
With Social Security	76,576
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	15,970
With retirement income	41,619
Mean retirement income (dollars)	18,721
With Supplemental Security Income	12,879
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	9,132
With cash public assistance income	12,609
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	4,100
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	33,981

Information about DBVI agency resources:

- DBVI currently has a total of 10 staff including four Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.
- DBVI currently collaborates with CRPs including The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired and The Vermont Association for Business, Industry, and Rehabilitation; and Supported Employment programs (i.e. Developmental Services programs, Mental Health and JOBS programs).

Information about the services provided by DBVI agency including type, percentage, and cost of services provide directly by the agency to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Instances where the percentage of agency total in FFY 2010 is higher than the national average:

- Assessment, counseling, guidance, and placement provided by DBVI personnel is 49% (\$787,863) and the national average is 34%. Job placement through VABIR is included in these figures.
- Assessment (purchased--\$33,839) both state and national average at 2%.
- Transportation (\$17,366) both state and national at 1%.
- Personal assistance, reader, or interpreter services (\$6,898) both state and national less than 1%.
- Total expenditures on services provided to individuals at 96% (\$1,530,274) with the national average at 89%.
- 17% were spent on Rehabilitation Technology but there are no national averages for comparison.
- People over 65 represented 20% while the national average is 5%.

Instances where the percentage of agency total in FFY 2010 is lower than the national average:

- Treatment of physical and mental impairments at 6% (\$93,655) with national average at 8%.
- Postsecondary education at 4% (\$63,228) with national average at 5%.
- Other training and education at 14% (\$226,316) with national average at 23%.
- Assistance with living expenses at 1% (\$12,662) with national average at 2%.
- The special population of Transition Age students in FY' 10 was 9% as compared to the national average of 14%.
- SSI recipients represented 16% with a national average of 23%.
- SSDI recipients represented 32% with the national average of 33%.

The type, percentage, and cost of services provided by CRPs to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and who are minorities.

- DBVI contracts with the Vermont Association for Business, Industry, and Rehabilitation to provide job development services for DBVI customers in all four regions of the state (\$70,000 annually).
- DBVI customers have access to supported employment services through an agreement with the General VR agency to access those programs as needed. DBVI now directly receives \$6,000 and the remaining \$30,000 is in the grant directly to General VR as part of the agreement. In 2010, four DBVI customers participated in supported employment programs.
- DBVI contracts with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired for Low Vision, Rehabilitation Teaching, and Orientation and Mobility services (\$125,000 annually).

Information about DBVI agency performance including the average number and type of disability served over past three years:

Standards and Indicators for FFY 2009:

- 1.1 How many more or fewer individuals achieved employment?
Standard Met (8 more than previous year)
- 1.2 Of the individuals whose cases were closed after receiving services, what percentage achieved employment?
Standard Met (71.23% with national average at 68.90%)
- 1.3 Of the individuals who achieved employment, what percentage achieved competitive employment?

Standard Met (64.74% with national average at 35.40%)

- 1.4 Of the individuals who achieved competitive employment, what percentage had a significant disability?

Standard Met (97.03% with national average at 89.00%)

- 1.5 What is the ratio of the average hourly wage of individuals who achieved competitive employment to the average hourly wage of all employed individuals in the state?

Standard Met (0.806 with national average at 0.590)

- 1.6 What was the increase or decrease in the percentage of individuals who achieved competitive employment who had their own income as a primary source of support at closure compared to the percentage who had their own income as a primary source of support when they applied for DBVI services?

Did Not Meet (16.83 with national average at 30.40)

- Standard 2.1--Shows the ratio of the minority population served by the DBVI program compared to the ratio of the nonminority population served by the DBVI program.

Did Not Meet (Fewer than 100 minority applicants exited the program—with the national average at 0.80)

- Indicator 2.1: Minority Ratio: $1.0000/0.8958 = 1.12$; National = 0.80

Service Rate

- Minority with service = 5
- Minority without service = 0
- Non-Minority with Service = 8
- Non-Minority without Services = 10
- Total: Minority = 5; Non-Minority = 96
- Minority Service Rate: $5/5 = 1.0000$
- Non-Minority Service Rate: $86/96 = 0.8958$
- Minority Ratio = $1.0000/0.8958 = 1.1163$ Standards and Indicator FY 2009

Employment/Rehabilitation Rate of Persons Served over the past three years:

- Rehab Rate in FY 2010 was 73% with the national average of 63.7%.
- Rehab Rate in FY 2009 was 70% with the national average of 65.0%.
- Rehab Rate in FY 2008 was 77% with the national average of 68.9%.
- Mean Hourly Wage FY 2010 was \$17.43 with the national average of \$14.26
- Mean Hourly Wage FY 2009 was \$12.65 with the national average of \$13.37
- Mean Hourly Wage FY 2008 was \$13.67 with the national average of \$13.08.

Closure Data

	Served	Rehabs
2008	355	73
2009	377	75
2010	384	81
2011	352	69

Customer Satisfaction Data—Key Findings and Discussion:

A complete customer satisfaction survey was completed and prepared by Market Decisions in April 2011. The sample included active cases, cases closed successfully, and cases closed unsuccessfully. The sample included all cases that were active at any time during the year prior to the initiation of data collection. That is, cases active at any time from January 2010 through January 2011. A total of 320 people responded to the survey for 91% Respondent Cooperation Rate.

Services received by Clients:

- The most common services received are low vision aids and adaptive equipment.
- The largest percentage indicated that adaptive equipment and low vision aids were the most helpful services they received.

Measures of Overall Satisfaction

- 92% were very satisfied or satisfied with the Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired's program.
- 92% of clients indicated that they were satisfied with the services they received.
- 89% of clients indicated that the services provided met their expectations.
- 90% of clients indicated that the services provided through the Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired compared favorably to the services offered through their ideal program.
- Among all clients, the consumer satisfaction index was 85 in 2011.
- 98% percent of clients would tell their friends with similar disabilities to go to the Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired for help.

Evaluation of Specific Aspects of the Agency and the Services Provided

- 93% of clients were very satisfied or satisfied with their control and involvement in the vocational rehabilitation experience.
- 93% of clients were very satisfied or satisfied with their choice of a vocational goal.
- 92% of clients were very satisfied or satisfied with the choice of services available.
- 90% of clients were very satisfied or satisfied with the choice of service providers.
- 88% of clients were very satisfied or satisfied with the information they were given about the choices they had.
- 87% of clients were very satisfied or satisfied with the time it took counselors to answer their questions or address their concerns.
- 90%, of clients found completing the application for vocational rehabilitation services very or somewhat easy.
- 95% of clients indicated that the staff were very or somewhat helpful in helping them to achieve their vocational rehabilitation goals.
- 96% of clients indicated that it was very or somewhat easy to contact their vocational rehabilitation counselor.

- 95% of clients found the agency office very or somewhat accessible to someone with their type of disability.
- 71% of clients indicated that the services they received helped them become more financially independent.
- 99% of clients indicated that the Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired staff treated them with dignity and respect.
- 84% of clients indicated that the agency helped them reach their job goals.

DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Services Needs of:

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including their need for supported employment.

These needs are identified through Town Meeting focus groups, staff interviews, SRC input, and relevant journal articles.

The most critical service needs of people who are blind or visually impaired (Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness -- August 2008—Volume Number 8--Critical Issues Confronting the Blindness Field: Can Providers and Consumers Agree?—By Carl R. Augusto) are:

- Safe and easy travel,
- Access to information and the environment,
- Access to assistive technology,
- Employment in accordance with one's interests and qualifications, an
- Society's reaction to blindness.
- The major barriers to employment are:
- Employers' attitudes,
- Transportation,
- Fear of Blindness,
- Lack of High Quality Job Training,
- Individual adjust to blindness,
- Lack of job-ready skills, and
- Fear of losing benefits.

In addition, many important employment related needs (Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness-- Overcoming Barriers to Employment: Strategies of Rehabilitation Providers—By Adele Crudden, William Sansing, and Stacy Butler) include:

- Ensuring that customers fully understands how working will have a positive impact on his or her finances and benefits status and makes a decision that it is worthwhile to engage in employment.
- Creating job clubs for promoting appropriate work behavior and increasing knowledge about employment options.
- Promoting peer support as a powerful force in assisting DBVI customers through the training and employment process.
- Making sure DBVI customers are competent in discussing their skills, qualifications, and visual impairment with employers.

- Providing high-quality training in adaptive skills and assistive technology are vital aspects of preparation for employment.
- The need for a transitional period to full-time employment during which they engage in progressive employment including volunteer work, part-time work, work experiences, or on-the-job training.
- Educating employers about visual impairment and how it affects functioning.
- Creating opportunities for increased contact between employers and persons who are visually impaired.
- Sharing testimonials and newspaper articles of success stories.
- Doing presentations each month to describe the whole process and the benefits of hiring a blind person.
- Offering training about the Americans with Disabilities Act to employers
- Finding ways to keep valued older employees.
- Providing community education days.
- Facilitating educational activities particularly targeted for October because it is National Disability Awareness Month.
- Taking tours and publicly recognizing businesses that employ visually impaired persons.
- Facilitating employer mentoring programs and breakfast meetings.
- Developing long-term relationships with employers, particularly those with large businesses.
- Sharing success stories about competent blind people on the job and publicize them many ways. Include consumer organizations in these efforts.
- Providing on-the-job training programs and job coaches to promote positive integration into the workplace.
- Making sure everyone has practice interviews so the person is ready.
- Encouraging job seekers to volunteer information about how they perform specific activities and their transportation options. Answering the unasked question is important because what the employer is imagining probably is not accurate.
- Participating in efforts to improve the overall transportation system.
- Providing consumer's transportation expenses for at least 60 days after the Customers are employed.
- Encouraging customers to relocate (when needed) and network with co-workers and community agencies to hire drivers.
- Encouraging customers to car pool, meet somebody, post messages on bulletin boards, run an ad in the newspaper and try to find somebody in community.
- Involving the employer in advocating for the creation, modification, or expansion of transportation programs. Systems change when employers also advocate for more transportation options.

DBVI has a need for continued access to Supported Employment programs within the state. Each DBVI region identifies individuals who can benefit from this service and works directly with the General VR agency and the community providers to make sure individual needs are met. DBVI has an agreement that the majority of DBVI Supported Employment finding goes directly to the General VR agency and DBVI customers have access to those services as needed. This arrangement has been very successful for many years.

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired and are minorities

The key service needs for reaching out to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and who are minorities (Strategies for Reaching Out to Minority Individuals With Disabilities—By Fabricio E. Balcazar, Ph.D., Principal Investigator Developing the Capacity of Minority Communities to Promote the Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)—University of Illinois at Chicago) are:

- Making sure your agency can provide the services they need.
- Utilizing a diverse research team or diverse staff to deliver services to the target population.
- Building personal relationships with members of the target community.
- Becoming a part of the local network.
- Building consumers' strengths.
- Being persistent and do not let consumers go when they fail to comply.
- Being willing to listen. If we want to reach out, we should be able and willing to listen.
- Utilizing members of the target community in outreach efforts.
- Meeting people where they are instead of waiting for them to come to you.
- Utilizing multiple channels of communication to disseminate information in the target community.
- DBVI has identified the need to continue outreach and to extend 5-hours/week for the job developer in Burlington to expand these efforts.
- DBVI is also collaboration with the statewide Creative Workforce Solutions network to outreach to minority groups.

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired and have been unserved and underserved by the DBVI program.

- Through public meetings a need for Support Service Providers for people who are deaf-blind has been identified. The SSPs are an essential service needed to access employment and the community.
- DBVI data shows a need to increase the percentage of transition age students that receive services.
- The key predictors of employment success for transition age youth (Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness—Predictors of Employment for Youths with Visual Impairments: Findings from the Second National Longitudinal Transition Study—By Michele Capella McDonnell) include the importance of:
 - Early successful paid work experiences.
 - Many different work experiences that the youth find on their own.
- DBVI's Learn, Earn, and Prosper (LEAP) summer employment program is designed to create a positive paid work experience for nineteen blind and visually impaired youth in Vermont over the past 5 years.

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system (other than the DBVI program), as identified by such individuals and personnel assisting such individuals through the components.

- There is a need to better collect data showing blind or visually impaired customers receiving services through other components of the WIA system. Discussions with counselors indicate many instances of collaboration with the Department of Labor; however, neither organization tracks data in this way. Involvement is documented in case notes but we do not collect that information in a data base. DOL does not track by specific disability.

What are the needs to establish, develop, or improve Community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) in the state?

- DBVI has identified a need to establish specific goals with CRPs. For example, DBVI has identified a need to establish outcome targets with the Vermont Association for Business, Industry, and Rehabilitation for the number of job placements in a year through job developers.
- DBVI has identified and need to work with Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired to establish Customer Satisfaction targets in the areas of timeliness, accuracy, and usefulness of services toward employment.

Gaps between service needs and current services provided to:

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired and who are minorities.

- Build personal relationships with members of the target community.
- Become a part of the local network.
- Build on customers' strengths.

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

- The need to improve communication and expectations.
- The need to make paperwork more user friendly.
- The need to provide peer support opportunities.
- The need to fully understand customer expectations.
- The need for more support to meet employment goals.
- The need for more detailed information.
- The need for transportation to DBVI regional offices.
- The need to evaluate (unsuccessful 28) closures.
- The need to expand employer outreach and marketing efforts.
- The need to increase consumer earnings.
- The need to streamline and automate case work for DBVI staff and customers.
- The need to create a biannual staff satisfaction survey.
- The need for consumer driven events.

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired and served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system (other than the VR programs)

- The need to better collect data showing blind or visually impaired customers receiving services through other components of the WIA system.

Town Meeting Results—Summary—Spring 2011:

Outcomes expected from work experiences and employment related activities:

- **Achieve higher work skills that are more sellable**

- Connection to a nearby workplace where consumer might find a job
- Access to employment opportunities
- Networking connections
- Work readiness
- Understanding of how to use updated training
- Education about self-employment, Tax laws, and viable home based self-employment
- Increase employer understanding/learning so that they show respect (treat like a person, don't talk down or loud)
- Peak work readiness from technology
- Easy and ready access to ongoing training
- Updates on technology – training on updates
- Easy and ready support resources
- Easy and ready understandable guides and manuals
- Competitive skills in current technologies used in workplace
- Increased desire of some people to work
- Realistic expectations/understanding at work and work options
- Known information regarding technology, advocacy, problem solving
- Increased use of services by underserved population through awareness and connection through community leaders.

Transition outcomes expected:

- Experience
- Participation in world
- Obtaining skills necessary to live independently
- Help with setting up a network for a satisfying social life
- Opportunity to meet people
- Experience new events
- Awareness of activities and ability to access
- Obtain skills necessary to communicate with others
- Interpersonal skills-ability to interact
- Communicate needs
- Develop communication skills in regards to employment-communicate with co-workers, etc.
- Obtain necessary skills to self-advocate

- Necessary to obtain accommodations
- Knowledge to support independence
- Ideas of career path-give direction on what comes after high school
- Continued support around career planning
- Support with housing
- Support with paperwork
- Reduced Stress
- Sense of inclusion, part of a group, group info sharing
- Networking with employers
- Support in continued education.
- Set up peer support groups
- Help customers feel a part of a group
- Help customers communicate with each other/expressing frustration or needs
- Support with career planning

Education & Outreach outcomes expected:

Employer and general public understanding of:

- Spectrum of visual impairment
- Types of accommodations
- Work environment issues
- Liability insurance
- Incentives
- Recognition of diversity of population with great diversity of needs skills
- Common view that employing disabled consumers is normal, not unusual
- Employers are reached in their organizations (Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
- Need to educate employers to hire people with disabilities. Many do not understand accommodations necessary or abilities of a blind and visually impaired customer/employee.
- Educate employers so that blind and visually impaired customers have equal opportunity.

Gaps Identified by SRC:

- Timeliness of technology and training – when needed.
- More counselors, technology trainers, and staff.

- Educate Employers.
- Allow longer work experiences.
- Create social networking opportunities.
- Create soft skill and job readiness trainings.
- More employment assessments – assessing clients interests and abilities that match with employment.
- Higher wage jobs.
- Work more with colleges.
- Work more with VR.
- Work with Tech Ed to find more opportunities.
- Do goal setting with community partners (VABVI, VABIR, etc.) – show community partners DBVI goals and have them help us through collaboration.
- Increase transportation options.
- Create career building workshops.
- Reach people in their 50-60's who want to work.
- Increase strategies to reach people in the NorthEastKingdom.
- PR Campaign (could be strategy) – combination of letting customers know that DBVI is here and available as well as letting employers know who DBVI is. For example being visible in the community to both consumers and employers. Boost visibility. Possible adding a staff person.
- Collect success stories.
- Find out what businesses need and train people to do the work.
- Expand opportunities in Randolph Shepherd Program.
- Create opportunities for staff to attend conferences.

Implications for the State Plan:

See Attachment 4.11(c)(1) --State Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program.

DBVI has identified the following strategies to implement goals and priorities.

See Attachment 4.11(d)--State's Strategies.

Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates

- Identify the number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services.
- Identify the number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds under:
 - Part B of Title I;
 - Part B of Title VI;
 - each priority category, if under an order of selection.
- Identify 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.

Working Age Adults

Using numbers from the 2010 Prevalence report from the American Foundation for the Blind, DBVI estimates that there are approximately 6,024 Vermonters of working age (18-64) who are blind or severely visually impaired (meaning even with correction they are not able to easily read the newspaper). DBVI provides RSA defined services to approximately 6.4 % of these individuals annually (384 in FFY11).

Caseload Activity and Cost of Services:

Total number of Individuals and Expenditures for Services (from RSA 2):

FFY 2011—373 individuals received purchased services for cost of \$556,959 (Excludes Post Employment)

FFY 2012--384 individuals received purchased services for cost of \$692,733 (Excludes Post Employment)

FFY 2013--380 individuals (estimate) purchased services for cost of \$685,000 (Estimate)

New Applications (RSA 113):

FFY 2011—88

FFY 2012—111

FFY 2013—106 (76 through 6-6-13)

Services Provided by DBVI Personnel (from RSA 2):

Assessment, Counseling, Guidance, and Placement

FFY 2011--\$784,571

FFY 2012--\$805,115

FFY 2013—\$800,000 (estimate)

Number of Employment Plans Developed (RSA 113):

FFY 2011—83

FFY 2012—106

This screen was last updated on Jun 28 2013 11:38AM by Fred Jones

Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- 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.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
 - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
 - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

Attachment 4.11(c)(1) --State Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program

These goals and priorities were developed from the latest statewide needs assessment and were jointly developed and agreed upon by DBVI and the SRC. DBVI also took into account the latest standards and indicators (greatest area of concern is loss of successful closures) and recommendations from the last monitoring session with RSA (particularly around transition and the need to increase quality job placements while lowering Homemaker closures).

Based on the 2012 DBVI/SRC Needs Assessment findings, DBVI and the SRC determined that the Goals and Priorities established in the FFY 2011 State Plan needed to be updated. DBVI and the SRC have made some changes as follows:

- The format has been changed for better ease of use.
- The targets for the FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities have been adjusted based on data collected since FFY 2011.

State's Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs.

FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities	FFY 2013 Measures	FFY 2013 Targets
1. Consumer satisfaction with DBVI services will increase. Continue to create a Customer-Centered Culture.	Triennial consumer satisfaction survey.	DBVI will maintain overall consumer satisfaction at or above the 92% level in 2011 survey in the 2014 survey.
2. Consumer earnings will increase beyond the rate of inflation.	RSA Performance Indicator 1.5: DBVI wages compared to state average, and 1.6: own income as primary source of support.	1.5: DBVI consumer wages will increase from 80% in 2010 of state average to 82% of state average in 2013. 1.6: DBVI will increase the percentage of consumers achieving self support from 17% in 2010 to 20% in 2013.

FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities	FFY 2013 Measures	FFY 2013 Targets
3. More customers will be employed.	<p>RSA Performance Indicator 1.2: Percentage of DBVI consumers achieving an employment outcome.</p> <p>Increase rehab rate.</p>	<p>1.2: DBVI consumers achieving an employment outcome will increase from 71% in 2010 to 73% in 2013.</p> <p>DBVI rehab rate will increase from 73% in 2010 to 77% in 2013.</p>
4. Serve more transition age students.	Percentage of DBVI caseload	DBVI will increase the transition age population served from 9% in 2010 to 14% in 2013.
5. DBVI employees will be satisfied with their jobs.	Results from biennial DAIL/DBVI staff satisfaction survey.	DBVI staff satisfaction will be maintained at (2011 rating) or higher.
6. All DBVI staff will have the skills and competencies to do their jobs.	Feedback from staff on biennial DBVI staff satisfaction survey.	In 2011 90% of staff said they had enough information to do their jobs. This will be maintained at (2011 rating) or higher.
<p>7. Increase capacity to serve un-served or underserved populations; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Deaf-Blind · Minority · Individuals who are transition age (14-24). 	Implementation of services targeted at underserved populations.	<p>Partner with the VermontCenter for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to establish a Support Service Provider (SSP) program in Vermont.</p> <p>Increase the % of transition age youth served to 14%.</p> <p>Increase the number of individuals served who are minorities from 5 in FFY 2011 to 10 in FFY 2013.</p>
8. DBVI will work in collaboration with Creative Workforce Solutions and the DOL to ensure people who are blind or visually impaired have access to services through progressive employment opportunities and the state workforce investment system.	As indicated on the DBVI tracking database (105-R)	By the end of FFY 2013 DBVI will have a total of 8 customers who are served by DBVI and DOL together.
9. DBVI will work to improve the outcomes of community supported employment providers serving individuals with developmental disabilities.	<p>Number of 26 closures achieved through the supported employment programs.</p> <p>Total number of people who are blind or visually impaired and have developmental disabilities employed</p>	In Federal Fiscal Year 2011 DBVI served or collaborated with General VR for a total of 4 people who were working in supported employment programs. This will increase to 6 by Federal Fiscal Year 2013.

FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities	FFY 2013 Measures	FFY 2013 Targets
<p>10. DBVI will work to improve the outcomes of community providers serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired.</p>	<p>with supports.</p> <p>Number of 26 closures achieved with assistance of VABIR and VABVI services.</p> <p>Number of 26 closures achieved with assistance of VABIR and VABVI services.</p>	<p>In Federal Fiscal Year 2011 a total of 50 people received services from VABIR and 20 successfully achieved a 26 closure (Rehab Rate=40%).</p> <p>This will increase to a rehab rate of 50% by Federal Fiscal Year 2013.</p> <p>In State Fiscal Year 2011 a total of 100 people received services from VABVI and 40 successfully achieved a 26 closure (Rehab Rate=40%).</p> <p>This will increase to a rehab rate of 50% by Federal Fiscal Year 2013.</p>

This screen was last updated on Jul 24 2012 3:21PM by David Wachter

Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection

- Identify the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify the justification for the order.
- Identify the service and outcome goals.
- Identify the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection.

This screen was last updated on Jun 29 2009 2:17PM by savtlangleys

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

Specify the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

DBVI realizes that it serves customers with significant disabilities who at times require vocational support beyond the scope of DBVI's standard services. It is for this reason that DBVI maintains a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). This MOU describes how funds will be utilized and services provided in the area of supported employment. Thus consumers who may require intensive services, beyond vision impairment issues, to acquire or maintain employment can be provided with the needed support.

This MOU provides \$30,000 of Title VI, Part B funds to DVR's Supported Employment Program. In exchange DBVI is able to have consumers avail themselves of a comprehensive and established program providing statewide coverage and the expertise of supported employment providers.

Because of the multiple barriers that some DBVI consumers face, the DVR Supported Employment Coordinator helps to determine the most appropriate agency for those with multiple disabilities. DVR may be the more appropriate agency for DBVI consumers in cases where multiple disabilities are present. This coordinator, with extensive knowledge of statewide resources, particularly in areas of psychiatric and developmental disability services, can provide technical assistance and the ability to provide to DBVI staff and consumers the best combination of resources.

DBVI has a separate grant award of \$6,000 of Title VI, Part B funds to provide short-term support services to qualified consumers. This allows the provision for a contract with a support person, job coach on the job site, or enrollment in a specific program to obtain job skills.

This screen was last updated on Jun 24 2013 11:37AM by Fred Jones

Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies

This attachment should include 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 vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs. (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Act and Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)).

Describe the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

Attachment 4.11(d)--State's Strategies

This attachment includes strategies about 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 vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs.

Strategy 1: DBVI will collaborate with Creative Workforce Solutions to find employment in accordance with the customer's interests and qualifications.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 3 and 8

Actions:

- Establish clear goals with VABIR staff to increase the number of Employment Outcomes, Work Experiences, OJT, and Volunteer Opportunities as tracked in the CWS database. Expand opportunities in the Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program.
- Work with State to hire more people who are blind or visually impaired.

Strategy 2: DBVI will promote employment by educating employers and providing opportunities for increased exposure to people who are blind or visually impaired. This will address "Societies reaction to blindness."

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 3

Actions:

- Create a video of people working at their job.
- Find opportunities to show the film "Going Blind" to employer groups at Chambers, Rotary's, and public libraries.
- Find opportunities to teach employer groups about assistive technology.
- Encourage employers to visit the DBVI website.
- Explore the idea of connecting employers through discussion group.
- Work closely with GCEPD to promote employment of people with disabilities.
- Create educational activities for White Cane Day and Disability Awareness Month in October.
- Create a PSA from employed individual and company.
- Offer Simulations to demonstrate—"what is it like to be blind?"

Strategy 3: DBVI will create Consumer Driven Events to assist individuals as they prepare for employment.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 1, 2, and 3

Actions:

- Create networking events.
- Opportunities to practice interview and job readiness skills.
- Create peer mentoring opportunities for adjustment to blindness and technology.
- Create opportunities for youth to have adult mentors.
- Peer support through groups for employment focus.
- Create a job club.

Strategy 4: DBVI will create opportunities for access to information.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 2 and 3

Actions:

- DBVI will continue to expand the information on the website and will work with the SRC for ideas.
- Use Customer-Centered Culture to determine “what types of information customers really want?”

Strategy 5: DBVI will address transportation challenges.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 3

Actions:

- Participate in system level planning.
- Assist VABVI to increase the number of volunteer drivers—build data base.
- Promote the option for DBVI to pay for the first 60 days of a ride to the job.

Strategy 6: DBVI will improve communication with customers regarding expectations for DBVI services.

Goal and Priority Areas Addressed: 1

Actions:

- DBVI will develop a consistent statewide orientation to DBVI services which will be implemented in all four regional offices.
- DBVI will work within the principles of Customer-Centered Culture to make sure we are answering the question: “What do the really want?”
- DBVI will continually evaluate timeliness, accuracy, and ease of obtaining services. DBVI will establish an ongoing closure survey. Results will be shared and evaluated with the SRC on an ongoing basis.
- Ask customers to evaluate DBVI products using the Customer-Centered Culture model.
- Implement a closure survey that can be sent to all closed cases in FFY 13.

Strategy 7: DBVI will increase communication within DBVI through implementation of videoconferencing in all four regions and central office.

Goal and Priority Areas Addressed: 5 and 6

Actions:

- DBVI will implement videoconferencing technology in all four DBVI district offices and central office. This technology will be used for staff meetings and trainings.

Strategy 8: DBVI will increase capacity to serve underserved populations through the implementation of special projects.

Goal and Priority Area: 7

Actions:

- Create and support Deaf-Blind SSP project.
- Coordinate with VR Transition Counselors, and the Teachers of the Visually Impaired to increase the number of transition students served. Create some documents that explain what DBVI can offer.
- Create a statewide system to track all visually impaired students as the graduate high school.
- Add 5-hours/week to the job developer position in Burlington to expand outreach efforts.

Strategy 9: DBVI will continue to become an administratively efficient organization by finding efficient and user friendly ways to complete paperwork for staff and customers.

Goal and Priority Areas: All

Actions:

- DBVI and DVR will continue efforts to create an automated case management system to be completed in FFY 2013.

Strategy 10: DBVI will systematically recognize exemplary staff performance using an evaluation system based on core competencies and development of SMART goals.

Goal and Priority Areas: 5 & 6

Actions:

- DBVI supervisors will work with each staff member to create SMART goals connected to the DBVI strategic plan.
- DBVI supervisors will work with each staff member to establish development opportunities for the 5 DBVI Core Competencies.

Strategy 11: DBVI will explore outreach strategies to increase applicants and diversify the DBVI caseload.

Goal and Priority Areas: 3 and 7

Actions:

- Each DBVI region will create an outreach plan for the year.
- The job developer in Burlington will use an additional 5-hours/week to build relationships with community groups of minority populations.

Strategy 12: DBVI staff will have the tools to deliver services quickly to DBVI customers.

Goal and Priority Areas: 1

Actions:

- DBVI will explore the use of purchasing laptops for staff to do their job more efficiently.
- DBVI will explore professional development opportunities with the TACECenter.

Strategy 13: DBVI will implement strategies designed to enable DBVI customers to access higher wage employment through short-term training.

Goal and Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, & 8

Actions:

- Evaluate the impact of progressive employment on outcomes.
- Track education and training opportunities that lead to degrees or credentials.
- Establish working relationships with Vocational Tech Centers and track participation.

Strategy 14: DBVI will implement activities designed to reduce the number of individuals who are closed in a status 28 (not employed).

Goal and Priority Areas: 1, and 3

Actions:

- DBVI will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of status 28 closures to identify any specific trends or issues that DBVI needs to address.

Strategy 15: DBVI will partner with the Vermont Department of Labor to provide employment training options for dual DBVI/DOL customers.

Goal and Priority Areas: 3 & 8

Actions:

- DBVI will establish a system for tracking participation of DBVI customers who utilize DOL services and training.
- DBVI will work with CWS local teams and DOL to obtain employment needs of companies and then match DBVI customers with specific training.
- DBVI will invite DOL to a staff meeting to discuss collaboration ideas.

Strategy 16: DBVI will provide technology training for people who need to prepare for a job or succeed at a current job.

Goal and Priority Areas: 2 & 3

Actions:

- DBVI will problem solve to make job sites accessible through technology training. Use a team approach for a given situation including customer, job developer, counselor, job site technology evaluation, and training.
- DBVI will increase the number of people who use the training service to make the crossover to Windows 7 and Office 2010 using Tandem and Go-To-Manage as a training tool.
- DBVI will educate customers about Tandem and Go-To-Manage by putting training examples on the website including an mp3 recordings and success stories.
- DBVI will assist customers to continuously improve work related technology skills like using the internet, Microsoft Office, M312, and Adobe documents so they can do their job in the most efficient way.
- DBVI will create a system for establishing technology training goals that are adjusted quarterly as necessary.

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

Please refer to Strategy 16 above.

Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities; and what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

Please refer to Strategy 8 and 11 above.

If applicable, identify plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Please refer to Strategies 1 and 5 above.

Describe strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators.

Please refer to Strategies 1 and 13 above.

Describe strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

Please refer to Strategy 15 above.

Describe how the agency's strategies will be used to:

- achieve goals and priorities identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1);
- support innovation and expansion activities; and
- overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program.

Innovation and Expansion activities have been focused on the transition age youth as part of the Learn, Earn, and Prosper (LEAP) summer employment program. Here is a summary of activities from 2011. This past summer (2011) signified the fifth year of the LEAP program and it was a great success. Each season the program expands and this past summer Corps Members spent seven weeks learning, growing, and creating new friendships! The program was packed with field trips, numerous educational opportunities at the workplace and on the weekends, strong job training, teambuilding opportunities, and great partners. Since the inception of the LEAP Program, 19 youth with visual impairments have enrolled, and many have participated in both the ReSource Job Training and the Conservation Trail Crews. This summer, four corps members successfully completed the four weeks of ReSource Job Training and five corps members completed the three week LEAP Conservation Trail crew. All of these corps members developed new skills in communication, leadership, independent living, and career development, resume writing, aspects of business operations at ReSource from small appliance repair to data entry and trail building techniques for sustainable trail development. A wonderful video was created by Linking Learning to Life that shows photos from the crew this past summer and shares some testimonials of past corps members and partner organization. It has been uploaded to YouTube and can be accessed through the VAVBI website or directly at www.youtu.be/AwDeUP0Sed8. Corps members, be it through this video or as captured in the words below, continually share testimonials about their positive experiences in the program. "This was an amazing experience that pushed me physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The VTCC has helped me recognize my strengths and weaknesses and encouraged me to become the person I want to be." (2011 Corps Member) This program's success in providing personal and professional development reinforces our belief that the job training and important life skills made possible through all VYCC programs should be available to visually impaired youth throughout the Northeast.

This screen was last updated on Jul 24 2012 3:21PM by David Wachter

Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE) Goals

1. Clearly identify all VR program goals consistent with the goals described in the FY 2012 Attachment 4.11(c)(1), including an evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities	FFY 2013 Measures	FFY 2013 Targets
1. Consumer satisfaction with DBVI services will increase. Continue to create a Customer-Centered Culture.	Triennial consumer satisfaction survey.	DBVI will maintain overall consumer satisfaction at or above the 92% level in 2011 survey in the 2014 survey.
2. Consumer earnings will increase beyond the rate of inflation.	RSA Performance Indicator 1.5: DBVI wages compared to state average, and 1.6: own income as primary source of support.	1.5: DBVI consumer wages will increase from 80% in 2010 of state average to 82% of state average in 2013. ***2011--increased to 82% of the state average*** 1.6: DBVI will increase the difference between percent self-supporting at closure and application from 16% in 2010 to 20% in 2013. ***2011--increased to a difference of 18% self-supporting at closure***
3. More customers will be employed.	RSA Performance Indicator 1.2: Percentage of DBVI consumers achieving an employment outcome. Increase rehab rate.	1.2: DBVI consumers achieving an employment outcome will increase from 71% in 2010 to 73% in 2013. ***2011—increased to 75%*** DBVI rehab rate will increase from 73% in 2010 to 77% in 2013. ***2011—increased to 77%***
4. Serve more transition age students.	Percentage of DBVI caseload	DBVI will increase the transition age population served from 9% in 2010 to 14% in 2013. ***2011—increased to 15%***

FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities	FFY 2013 Measures	FFY 2013 Targets
5. DBVI employees will be satisfied with their jobs.	Results from biennial DAIL/DBVI staff satisfaction survey.	DBVI staff satisfaction will be maintained at (2011 rating) or higher.
6. All DBVI staff will have the skills and competencies to do their jobs.	Feedback from staff on biennial DBVI staff satisfaction survey.	In 2011 90% of staff said they had enough information to do their jobs. This will be maintained at (2011 rating) or higher.
7. Increase capacity to serve un-served or underserved populations; specifically: · Deaf-Blind · Minority · Individuals who are transition age (14-24).	Implementation of services targeted at underserved populations.	Partner with the VermontCenter for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to support training of Support Service Providers in Vermont. ***2011--DBVI provided a grant to VCDHH to provide training to build the capacity to provide SSP services in Vermont. The VT Coalition for Disability Rights made this a platform item to request state general fund to pay for this service.*** Increase the % of transition age youth served to 14%. ***2011—increased to 15%*** Increase the number of individuals served who are minorities from 5 in FFY 2011 to 10 in FFY 2013. ***2012—the number of individuals served was 4. The minority service rate was 80%***
8. DBVI will work in collaboration with Creative Workforce Solutions and the DOL to ensure people who are blind or visually impaired have access to services through progressive employment opportunities and the state workforce investment system.	As indicated on the DBVI tracking database (105-R)	By the end of FFY 2013 DBVI will have a total of 8 customers who are served by DBVI and DOL together.
9. DBVI will work to improve the outcomes of community supported employment providers serving individuals with developmental disabilities.	Number of 26 closures achieved through the supported employment programs.	In Federal Fiscal Year 2011 DBVI served or collaborated with General VR for a total of 4 people who were working in supported employment programs. This will

FFY 2013 Goals and Priorities	FFY 2013 Measures	FFY 2013 Targets
	Total number of people who are blind or visually impaired and have developmental disabilities employed with supports.	increase to 6 by Federal Fiscal Year 2013. ***2012—Four individuals received supported employment services through a designated agency***
10. DBVI will work to improve the outcomes of community providers serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired.	<p>Number of 26 closures achieved with assistance of VABIR and VABVI services.</p> <p>Number of 26 closures achieved with assistance of VABIR and VABVI services.</p>	<p>In Federal Fiscal Year 2011 a total of 50 people received services from VABIR and 20 successfully achieved a 26 closure (Rehab Rate=40%).</p> <p>This will increase to a rehab rate of 50% by Federal Fiscal Year 2013.</p> <p>***2012-- a total of 27 cases closed where the individual had received services from VABIR, and 22 of these cases successfully achieved a 26 closure (Rehab Rate= 81 %)***</p> <p>In State Fiscal Year 2011 a total of 100 people received services from VABVI and 40 successfully achieved a 26 closure (Rehab Rate=40%).</p> <p>This will increase to a rehab rate of 50% by Federal Fiscal Year 2013.</p> <p>***2012--a total of 52 cases closed where the individual had received services from VABVI, and 40 of these cases successfully achieved a 26 closure (Rehab Rate= 84 %)***</p>

Indicates updated information

Strategy 1: DBVI will collaborate with Creative Workforce Solutions to find employment in accordance with the customer's interests and qualifications.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 3 and 8

Actions:

- Establish clear goals with VABIR staff to increase the number of Employment Outcomes, Work Experiences, OJT, and Volunteer Opportunities as tracked in the CWS database.
- Expand opportunities in the Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program.

- Work with State to hire more people who are blind or visually impaired.

Strategy 2: DBVI will promote employment by educating employers and providing opportunities for increased exposure to people who are blind or visually impaired. This will address “Societies reaction to blindness.”

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 3

Actions:

- Create a video of people working at their job.
- Find opportunities to show the film “Going Blind” to employer groups at Chambers, Rotary’s, and public libraries.

***Update: The film was shown at Putney and Brattleboro Public Library, and Brattleboro Arts Museum.

- Find opportunities to teach employer groups about assistive technology.

***Update: The DBVI assistive technology trainer made a power point presentation to the Rutland Rotary Club about ways people use technology to succeed in the workplace.

***Update: June 11th 2013 Springfield event for Employers.

- Encourage employers to visit the DBVI website.

***Update: Table at Employment Fair at Elks in Montpelier in April 2013.

- Explore the idea of connecting employers through discussion group.
- Work closely with GCEPD to promote employment of people with disabilities.
- Create educational activities for White Cane Day and Disability Awareness Month in October.

***Update: Peg TV in Rutland

***Update: Radio show on WTSA in Brattleboro

- Create a PSA involving an employed individual and company.
- Offer Simulations to demonstrate—“what is it like to be blind?”

***Update: Lamoille County Annual Career and Job Fair

Sept 20, 2012 and Green Mt Tech Center

(307 attendees, 125 youth) where local businesses set-up information tables.

DBVI set up an information table with examples of adaptive equipment, simulators and information about our program.

***Update: Central Vermont Job Fair April 4, 2013 at the Montpelier Elks Club which included 40 vendors from the business community and 800 attendees/Clients. DBVI set up an information table with examples of adaptive equipment, simulators, information about program.

***Update: Rutland presentations to several community groups.

***Update: Recognition breakfast in Rutland in April. The Ann Clark Inc. Cookie Company was recognized as an exemplary employer.

Strategy 3: DBVI will create Consumer Driven Events to assist individuals as they prepare for employment.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 1, 2, and 3

Actions:

- Create networking events.

***Update: Great Expectations (Two Main Events and many sub group meetings)

- Opportunities to practice interview and job readiness skills.

***Update: Regularly through CWS.

- Create peer mentoring opportunities for adjustment to blindness and technology.

***Update: Great Expectations Technology Group

- Create opportunities for youth to have adult mentors.

***Update: Great Expectations

***Update: Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports formally and informally

- Peer support through groups for employment focus.

***Update: Great Expectations.

- Create a job club.

***Update: Great Expectations signed-up for it

Strategy 4: DBVI will create opportunities for access to information.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 2 and 3

Actions:

- DBVI will continue to expand the information on the website and will work with the SRC for ideas.

***Update: Hired consultants to update for new features.

- Use Customer-Centered Culture to determine “what types of information customers really want”?

Strategy 5: DBVI will address transportation challenges.

Goal and Priority Area Addressed: 3

Actions:

- Participate in system level planning.
- Assist VABVI to increase the number of volunteer drivers—build data base.
- Promote the option for DBVI to pay for the first 60 days of a ride to the job.

Strategy 6: DBVI will improve communication with customers regarding expectations for DBVI services.

Goal and Priority Areas Addressed: 1

Actions:

· DBVI will develop a consistent statewide orientation to DBVI services which will be implemented in all four regional offices.

>Welcome Packet

· DBVI will work within the principles of Customer-Centered Culture to make sure we are answering the question: “What does the consumer really want?”

- DBVI will continually evaluate timeliness, accuracy, and ease of obtaining services. DBVI will establish an ongoing closure survey. Results will be shared and evaluated with the SRC on an ongoing basis.
- Ask customers to evaluate DBVI products using the Customer-Centered Culture model.
- Implement a closure survey that can be sent to all closed cases in FFY 13.

***Update: DBVI has contracted with a provider to conduct the surveys.

Strategy 7: DBVI will increase communication within DBVI through implementation of videoconferencing in all four regions and central office.

Goal and Priority Areas Addressed: 5 and 6

Actions:

- DBVI will implement videoconferencing technology in all four DBVI district offices and central office. This technology will be used for staff meetings and trainings.

Strategy 8: DBVI will increase capacity to serve underserved populations through the implementation of special projects.

Goal and Priority Area: 7

Actions:

- Create and support Deaf-Blind SSP project.
- Coordinate with VR Transition Counselors, and the Teachers of the Visually Impaired to increase the number of transition students served. Create some documents that explain what DBVI can offer.
- Create a statewide system to track all visually impaired students as they graduate high school.
- Add 5-hours / week to the job developer position in Burlington to expand outreach efforts.

Strategy 9: DBVI will continue to become an administratively efficient organization by finding efficient and user friendly ways to complete paperwork for staff and customers.

Goal and Priority Areas: All

Actions:

- DBVI and DVR will continue efforts to create an automated case management system to be completed in FFY 2013.

Strategy 10: DBVI will systematically recognize exemplary staff performance using an evaluation system based on core competencies and development of SMART goals.

Goal and Priority Areas: 5 & 6

Actions:

- DBVI supervisors will work with each staff member to create SMART goals connected to the DBVI strategic plan.
- DBVI supervisors will work with each staff member to establish development opportunities for the 5 DBVI Core Competencies.

***Update: Working on IDP for every staff. Contributions to the division and strengths and weaknesses.

Strategy 11: DBVI will explore outreach strategies to increase applicants and diversify the DBVI caseload.

Goal and Priority Areas: 3 and 7

Actions:

- Each DBVI region will create an outreach plan for the year.

***Update: Rutland has a plan. Use Rutland model. Seizing opportunities.

- The job developer in Burlington will use an additional 5-hours/week to build relationships with community groups of minority populations.

Strategy 12: DBVI staff will have the tools to deliver services quickly to DBVI customers.

Goal and Priority Areas: 1

Actions:

- DBVI will explore the use of purchasing laptops for staff to do their job more efficiently.
- DBVI will explore professional development opportunities with the TACECenter.

Strategy 13: DBVI will implement strategies designed to enable DBVI customers to access higher wage employment through short-term training.

Goal and Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, & 8

Actions:

- Evaluate the impact of progressive employment on outcomes.
- Track education and training opportunities that lead to degrees or credentials.
- Establish working relationships with Vocational Tech Centers and track participation.

***Update: Montpelier region had a client get a nursing certificate thorough Lamoille Voc Center.

***Update: We will set-up database of people who obtain certificates.

Strategy 14: DBVI will implement activities designed to reduce the number of individuals who are closed in a status 28 (not employed).

Goal and Priority Areas: 1, and 3

Actions:

- DBVI will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of status 28 closures to identify any specific trends or issues that DBVI needs to address.

Strategy 15: DBVI will partner with the Vermont Department of Labor to provide employment training options for dual DBVI/DOL customers.

Goal and Priority Areas: 3 & 8

Actions:

- DBVI will establish a system for tracking participation of DBVI customers who utilize DOL services and training.
- DBVI will work with CWS local teams and DOL to obtain employment needs of companies and then match DBVI customers with specific training.

***Update: CWS meets regularly with DOL.

- DBVI will invite DOL to a staff meeting to discuss collaboration ideas.

Strategy 16: DBVI will provide technology training for people who need to prepare for a job or succeed at a current job.

Goal and Priority Areas: 2 & 3

Actions:

- DBVI will problem solve to make job sites accessible through technology training. Use a team approach for a given situation including customer, job developer, counselor, job site technology evaluation, and training.
- DBVI will increase the number of people who use the training service to make the crossover to Windows 7 and Office 2010 using Tandem and Go-To-Manage as a training tool.
- DBVI will educate customers about Tandem and Go-To-Manage by putting training examples on the website including mp3 recordings and success stories.
- DBVI will assist customers to continuously improve work related technology skills like using the internet, Microsoft Office, M312, and Adobe documents so they can do their job in the most efficient way.
- DBVI will create a system for establishing technology training goals that are adjusted quarterly as necessary.

Indicates updated information

2. Identify all supported employment program goals consistent with the goals described in Attachment 4.11(c)(4), including an evaluation of the extent to which the supported employment program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

See Attachment 4.11(c)(4) for DBVI's strategy on SE funding.

3. Provide an Assessment of the performance of the VR program on the standards and indicators for FY 2012.

Standards and Indicators- DBVI met 4 of the 6 indicators in Standard 1 and met all the Primary indicators. The Indicators not met were 1.1 and 1.6. Indicator 1.1 measures the number of successful closures in a two year period compared to the average for the prior 2 year period. The number of closures declined by 6 (150 current year as compared to 156 previous year). This also included a decline in Homemaker closures from 35% the previous year to 25% . The overall decrease of 6 closures was part of DBVI's effort to close fewer Homemaker cases.

Indicator 1.6 measures the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services. This is the same standard missed the prior year. DBVI believes our lower percentage this year is based on two factors. One reason is that many customers are beginning self-employment. Many people have turned to this option due to the tough economic climate and limited number of jobs. The other reason is the high percentage of job saves again this year. DBVI has a strong commitment to working with customers who are currently employed so that they won't lose their jobs as they experience vision loss. As the economy improves and as small businesses begin to turn more profit in upcoming years this standard will be met.

4. Provide a report on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized in FY 2012.

Innovation and Expansion activities have been focused on the transition age youth as part of the Learn, Earn, and Prosper (LEAP) summer employment program. Here is a summary of activities from 2012.

This summer saw many great successes with the LEAP program. The four participants in the LEAP crew spent four weeks together exploring Burlington, learning job skills, and developing independent living skills. The crew also enjoyed nightly and weekend educational activities such as visiting Echo, taking a cooking class, and rock climbing at Petra Cliffs. This combination of purposeful activities and fun exploration facilitated profound personal growth for each individual in the program.

In September representatives from ReSOURCE, Linking Learning to Life and the VYCC met with TVIs and DBVI counselors with the sole purpose of sharing the successes of the students from this past summer. This was an important meeting as it identified areas where individual participants need ongoing support to build on all they learned and accomplished in the LEAP Program. A quick overview of these transitions plans are summarized below.

- DS is currently looking for a job in the western area of Vermont and after this summer he has new skills such as using a cash register that should help him as he seeks employment. ReSOURCE personnel shared that there is an opening in the ReSTORE for a full time position and DS would be a very strong applicant.
- NR is pursuing her desire to work with children by working part time at a local day care. At the daycare she is able to continue working on her self-advocacy while developing more job skills. NR's Grandmother, also attended the meeting and talked with DBVI staff about other options for additional employment or educational opportunities.
- ES is in his junior year of high school and someone has volunteered to act as a mentor for to help him continue on the path towards independence that was started this summer. ES's grandmother also attended the meeting, and has agreed to take a more active role in ES's life and help him seek more independence.

Several meeting were held after the session last summer and it was determined that the following will be implemented for the summer 2013 LEAP Crew.

During each session in 2013 the crew will:

- Live in an apartment and work at ReSOURCE three days per week, learning important job skills.

- Work as a group at the Farm at VYCC one and a half days per week. The Farm at VYCC will provide a different environment to develop job skills and learn about teamwork and communication.
- Work with Navicate in half day workshops one morning each week to learn about local businesses, job interests, resume development and interviewing.
- Explore Burlington on nights and weekends (with leaders) to develop independent living skills.

This screen was last updated on Jun 28 2013 11:44AM by Fred Jones

Attachment 6.3 Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

- Describe quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Describe the timing of the transition to extended services

Please see Attachment 4.11 (c)(4) for DBVT's report on Supported Employment services.

This screen was last updated on Jun 29 2009 2:52PM by savtlangleys