

**SRC Executive Retreat
August 21, 2019
Sheraton Columbia Town Center**

In Attendance:

Anil Lewis, Chair	Marsha Legg, Co-Chair	Toni March
Scott Dennis	Jody Boone	Jean Jackson
Kim Schultz	Tom Laverty	Sue Schaffer
Brenda Isenock	Rene Averitt-Sanzone	Patrick Peto
Denise Carter-McCormick		

Welcome & Opening Remarks – Anil Lewis:

Anil Lewis, SRC Chair, welcomed everyone to the State Rehabilitation Council Executive Retreat Meeting. DORS staff and SRC introduced themselves.

911 Data Performance – Patrick Peto:

DORS submitted our 2nd full-year Federal Report, Program Year 2018. The following represents Individuals who began services under an Individualized Plan of Employment

<u>Participants served – 2018</u>		<u>Participants served – 2017</u>	
Total	16,572	Total	16,249
Open	12,876	Open	12,106
Closed	3,876	Closed	4,143

There was an Increase of 323 for 2018

4th Quarter – April – July 2018

Open 12,696
Closed 1,113
Total 13,800

There was an Increase of 660 for 4th Quarter 2018

There are 2 types of case types that are being looked at in the 911 Data Report:

1. VR – deemed eligible and has completed a plan
2. Potential Eligible – students in school or have not applied for services

DORS has 2 separate programs:

VR – Individuals that have a Plan for Employment (traditional services)
Pre-Employment – students in school (14-22 years old)

There are 5 Core Pre-ETS Services:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences
- Counseling on transition or postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training
- Instruction in self-advocacy

Pre-Employment Transitioning Services (Pre-ETS) – Quarter 4 2018

Total	162 (Job Exploration)
Potentially Eligible	106
VR Students	56
Work Based Learning	461
VR	276
Pre-ETS	185

There was an increase of 80 students receiving services in 2018.

In comparing 2017 4th Quarter and 2018 4th Quarter, we have seen an increase in all areas except Counseling on Employment Opportunities. This is the only category with no increase. Work Readiness Services have been provided to 257 individuals this Quarter; 141 of these are through the VR Program. Last year we provided the same service to 45 VR individuals.

DORS provided Work Based Learning Experience to over 1,000 students this past Summer, 2019.

Case Closures for 2017 – 839 - Successful Competitive Integrated Employment
Hourly Average Wage - \$13.36 per hour – working 28.26 hours per week

Case Closures 7/1/18 – 7/30/19 – 676 – Successful Competitive Integrated Employment
Hourly Average Wage - \$13.87 per hour – working 28.24 hours per week

Tracking Post Exit Wages – 2nd Quarter after exit

2017 – 496 individuals average quarterly wage - \$3,015; maximum wage - \$27,500

2018 (complete year) – 16,012 individuals average quarterly wage - \$3,952; maximum wage - \$33,125

4th Quarter – 806 – individuals average wage - \$3,927

DORS is in the last year of building data that is needed for next year, when we will begin negotiating our Performance Measures. RSA will use the last three years of data for their statistical analysis to say where we should be performing.

Services to Pre-Employment students continues to increase:

2016	418 served
2017	3,000 served
2018	4,400 served

Budget/Staffing – Scott Dennis:

In 2018 DORS fully expended our Pre-Employment funds as opposed to 2016 and 2017 where we needed to return funds not spent. As of today, we anticipate to spend 20% of 2019 funds.

State FY20 budget is in good shape and will we see an increase of ½ million dollars. The Governor has given us sufficient General Funds to meet our Match and Maintenance of Effort requirement. We have applied for re-allotment for Federal funds for the remainder of this year and also asked for an additional 2 million dollars – FY19 will end September 30, 2019. We are

in the process of submitting the 2021 Budget and are asking for additional contractual counselors to work with Pre-Employment students.

VR-Pre-ETS Case Loads – Scott Dennis/Jody Boone:

Due to the increase in referrals for Pre-ETS, DORS is working on a plan to help alleviate duplication of entering information into the AWARE Case Management System. We are in the process of revamping the online Referral. Once the consumer completes the referral, this information will automatically be entered in the consumer’s case thus eliminating duplication at application process.

There are a few new features on the online Referral:

- Consumer will choose what office they want to receive services
- Questions will be streamlined based on consumer’s disability

Staff turnover is a big concern especially with Transitioning Youth (TY) Counselors. The TY Counselor has the highest caseload in the state and they often carry Transitioning Youth, Pre-ETS and VR. Some counselors cover 8-10 high schools. We are working on ways to help reduce these caseloads. This is being done differently by each Region. Some examples include:

- Assign by age (14-17, 17-21, etc.)
- Dedicate one unit to serve Transition Youth and Pre-ETS only

There is one unit in Baltimore City that currently has a TY and Pre-ETS unit only and it works extremely well. Montgomery County is the next area to have a Transition Unit/Pre-ETS unit. We are in the process of developing the office with counselors and a supervisor.

Overview of Caseloads Statewide:

- 136 VR caseloads – average of 125 consumers per counselor
(15 assigned to Supervisors due to vacancies)
- 63 Pre-PETs caseloads – 94 average per counselor
(14 assigned to Supervisors due to vacancies)

16,700 VR consumers statewide
4,600 Pre-PETs consumers statewide

Consumers per Region:

<u>Region I</u>	<u>Region V</u>
2,100 VR	3,500 VR
560 Pre-PETs	1,000 Pre-PETs
<u>Region II</u>	<u>Region VI</u>
3,165 VR	4,400 VR
1,250 Pre-PETs	1,100 Pre-PETs
<u>Region III</u>	<u>OBVS</u>
2,500 VR	1,000 VR
650 Pre-PETs	50 Pre-PETs

There are several counselors that carry both VR and Pre-PETs which can total over 200 consumers on one caseload.

There are 140 counselors statewide with a 10-15% vacancy rate.

E-Faxing:

Effective August 1, 2019, DORS is requiring all Vendors to fax invoices and reports to the DORS office at which the Authorization originated. DORS has instituted the use of a secure e-faxing process to ensure the Consumer PII is protected to reduce the likelihood of lost/misplaced invoices and reports, and reduce the amount of printed materials. Requiring one avenue for invoice/report submission will support consistency for DORS vendors and offices across the state, which also increases internal controls for invoice processing. Additional information regarding e-faxing can be found on the DORS website.

Financial Need & Required Financial Contribution WTC Fee Scheduled Policy Change n-Jody Boone:

DORS is proposing a revision of our current policy – Financial Need & Participation of the Individual in Cost of Services. The SRC is being asked to review, comment and vote on the following changes:

1. Waive the Required Financial Contribution (RFC) for vocational and occupational training programs funded by DORS and provided at the Workforce & Technology Center (WTC) or by a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) when completion of the training program does not lead to obtainment of an industry-recognized credential.
 - a. The reduction of fees collected by WTC for vocational and occupational training program will be offset by the savings created when the staff person currently assigned to collect these fees has more time to handle other revenue-generating tasks, such as handling SSA reimbursements.
2. The following services are subject to a Required Financial Contribution (RFC), as applicable, in accordance with existing policy regarding Determination of Financial Need and the Financial Responsibility Scale.
 - a. Home modifications
 - b. Vehicle modifications
 - c. Rehabilitation technology
 - d. Higher education at any college or university
 - e. Education at a proprietary school for a vocational/occupational skills training program that leads to obtainment of an industry-recognized credential upon completion
 - f. Support services such as transportation and childcare (except when needed to participate in assessment services)

Jody will send an email to the SRC to review, comment and vote on the above proposed policy change with a response by September 11, 2019.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) – Brenda Isenock:

The first draft of the Statewide Needs Assessment was distributed for SRC Members to review, make additions and corrections. A brief overview was presented with discussion to follow.

DORS is required to conduct a triennial Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) to look at the needs of individuals with disabilities in Maryland. The last CNSA was completed in 2016. A team of 35 individuals began work on the CSNA in April of this year. The 35-member team consisted of DORS staff, including participants in the Agency's Leadership Exploration and Agency Program (LEAP) and consultation from MSRC. The Needs Assessment team collected and analyzed relevant existing data, conducted and analyzed findings of supplemental surveys, facilitated focus groups and key informant interviews, in order to ascertain the needs of individuals throughout the state.

- I. Comprehensive Assessment of the Vocational Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities in Maryland.
 - A. Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities, Including Their Need for Supported Employment Services:
 1. The Need of Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities for Supported Employment Services in Maryland.
 2. Individuals who are Blind/Visually Impaired and Deaf-Blind
 3. Individuals who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened
 4. Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disability, including Section 511 Considerations.
 5. Individuals with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness
 - B. Individuals With Disabilities Who are Minorities And Individuals With Disabilities Who Have Been Unserved or Underserved By The Vocational Rehabilitation Program:
 1. Individuals With Disabilities Who Are Minorities
 2. Individuals with Disabilities Who Have Been Unserved, Or Who Are Underserved By The Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
 - C. Individuals with Disabilities Served Through Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System.
 - D. Youth with Disabilities and Students with Disabilities.
- II. Assessment of the Need to Establish, Develop or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs within the State

Recommendations from the Focus Areas of the Needs Assessment Addressing the Required Elements:

1. Continue to monitor, strengthen, and foster relationships with the Department of Labor, Department of Health, and Maryland State Department of Education.
2. Evaluate staffing needs within DORS.
3. Provide continued opportunities for mutual training and collaboration between DORS and other workforce programs.
4. Enhance and expand the provision of Pre-ETS services statewide.
5. Improve information and referral services to American Job Centers and other workforce partners for individuals on the DORS waiting list.
6. Improve the variety of employment opportunities available to DORS consumers by increasing staff knowledge of current labor market trends.
7. Re-establish the Agency's Multicultural Access Committee
8. Promote comprehensive rehabilitation services for Deaf-Blind individuals.

9. Continue to examine the updated DORS policy regarding supported employment.
10. Expand employment services for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
11. DORS should explore a rate increase for DORS-approved community rehabilitation programs.
12. Enhance relationships with community rehabilitation programs
13. Continue to work with 14c certificate holders.

The report also contains information related to the impact of Federal funding and state government personnel actions on staff capacity.

Please refer to the distributed report for detailed information. Once the CSNA report is approved it will become part of the DORS Strategic State Plan. The CSNA report is due to RSA at the end of September.

Quality Assurance Review – Patrick Peto:

As of today, two rounds of Quality Assurance Reviews have been completed. This is a four-person team that review about 35-36 cases depending on the staff ratio in the office.

Service Status	2 cases
Closed Rehabilitated	2 cases
Closed Unsuccessfully	1 case
Currently in Employed	1 case

A total of 1,300 cases have been reviewed.

The following statistics show the type of cases reviewed:

35%	Service Status
30%	Closed Successful/Rehabilitated
15%	Closed Unsuccessful
15%	Employed Status

Counselors are doing a very good job with Eligibility and Disability Priority but need to work on Tracking Education Goals.

The second round of reviews were completed by region, with the regional office providing a training session at the end to address the issues the reports brought up. A few areas to be reviewed in the future include Pre-ETS and Financial.

DORS Agency Program Plan – Scott Dennis:

The DORS Planning Meeting will be held on October 1, 2019 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Baltimore Hunt Valley. MRC Council members are encouraged to attend.

Listed below are a few Performance Measures from the October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019 Plan that DORS accomplished:

- Quality Assurance Review Program
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- These Performance Measures will also be part of next year’s Plan.
- The Pre-Employment Agreement has been finalized with the Maryland State Department of Education.

- Agreement finalized with MSDE Special Education, DORS, and MD Department of Disabilities. Quarterly meetings are held. DORS will help facilitate in the area of Transitioning, and conduct joint training.

Open Discussion:

The DDS office is moving in November to a new location in Hunt Valley.

DORS is celebrating our 90th Anniversary this year. Activities will take place at the Maryland Rehabilitation Association Conference in November, 2019 and at the WTC Graduation in October 2019.

The Maryland Rehabilitation Conference will be held November 7th and 8th at Sheraton Baltimore North, Towson, MD. SRC Members are invited to attend.

The next SRC meeting will be held September 11, 2019 at the Workforce & Technology Center.

Respectfully Submitted
Sandy Bowser
MSRC Staff Support