



## Indiana (IN) WIOA Matrix

### Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program (EFSLMP)

Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (IN-APSE): BRS and IN-APSE share a common mission in that competitive, integrated employment should be the first and preferred option for all individuals with disabilities. BRS participates in IN-APSE events including the annual IN-APSE conference, and BRS staff regularly participate in planning as well as presenting at the conference. The IN-APSE statement on Employment First is based on several underlying principles including a presumption that all work age adults and youth with disabilities can work in jobs fully integrated with the general workforce, earning minimum wage or higher; and that employees with disabilities, as with all other individuals, require assistance and support to ensure job success and should have access to adequate, long term supports necessary to succeed in the workplace. These underlying principles are very much in line with BRS priorities, especially in light of WIOA and enhanced requirements to ensure that individuals receiving counseling, information and referral regarding alternatives to subminimum wage employment. (Page 164)

VR in collaboration with the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) established a Statewide Transition Alliance to identify and address the barriers that continue to impact students, and develop and implement strategies and services to make the transition successful for students and youth with disabilities. The Transition Alliance will establish a work plan with the basis of the work plan created using the Transition to Careers Subcommittee Chapter recommendations (one of the four created by the full Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (ACICIEID)). The Statewide Transition Alliance includes representation from a wide range of key partners and stakeholders, including the following: VR, DOE, local educational agencies' school personnel and administrators, Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education, the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS), the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Corrections, Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Education, Center for Education & Career Innovation, Community Mental Health Centers, First Steps, Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (INAPSE), Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF), Indiana Institute of Disability and Community (IIDC), parent representation, the Arc of Indiana, INSOURCE, and other family advocacy groups. (Page 167)

### Customized Employment

In the fall of 2015, VR staff and staff of community rehabilitation programs (CRP) were surveyed as to their training needs. Surveys were received from 622 individuals – 60% were from CRP personnel and 28% from VR staff.

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The top five General Employment needs were identified as:

- Discovery process – in–depth training
- Understanding supported employment
- Job–readiness training
- Understanding the difference between supported and customized employment
- Understanding how to fund employment services (Page 198)

Goal 2: VR Supported Employment providers will increase knowledge and skills on the provision of supported employment services, including greater understanding and focus on development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, customized employment, and appropriate fading of supports. (Page 211)

With the employment service changes, VR has collaborated with IIDC and Griffin and Hammis to provide additional training and technical assistance to Community Rehabilitation Providers and VR in the area of Discovery statewide. The training focused on Discovery, which is an individualized information gathering process that will guide employment services for the consumer. The training provided a framework to develop and implement a person-centered employment plan. While Discovery is important for many consumers, it is critical for consumers with the most significant disabilities and has an impact on their supported employment needs. Interagency collaboration will aim to increase the quality of SE services, including customized employment, and ensure appropriate extended services are appropriately utilized when necessary for long-term supports. (Page 212)

## Braiding/Blending Resources

- Wagner Peyser staff and labor exchange services are co-located in WorkOne centers, thus Title I and III programs are already completely coordinated.
- Indiana has had tremendous outcomes for both the WorkINDiana and HIRE programs.
- VR staff are community based, sharing office space with TANF and WorkONE, but also meeting their clients in the community to ensure accessibility of services.
- The state is braiding TANF funding with other state and federal dollars to assist with funding the JAG, HIRE, WorkINDiana and Serve Indiana programs. (Page 24)

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### Section 188/Section 188 Guide

DWD will develop marketing materials made available through a broad range of media, (i.e., online, print, and social media), to promote universal access and equal opportunity for adults and youth with disabilities. The marketing materials will include positive images of people with disabilities and the types of available services, assistance, and accommodations provided in the WorkOne offices. Additionally, DWD will continue to enhance the Job Seekers with Disabilities website, <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2416.htm>, to include resources for both job seekers and employers. (Page 84)

7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; Yes (Page 88)

DWD will conduct training for One-stop office staff, (including youth staff), to better understand the different types of disabilities, how to handle issues of disclosure and disability identification with sensitivity at program intake, and how to determine the most effective mix of services and referrals to make when a disability is identified. These trainings will be presented by subject matter experts and include such topics as: federal, state, and local disability policies; identifying barriers/hidden disabilities; disability awareness and etiquette; website accessibility; providing reasonable accommodations; assistive technology accommodations and resources; Section 503 for federal contractors; and simulation training. VR, Mental Health Centers, and the Department of Correction will also be invited to attend these events and asked to present on relevant topics. Disability Resource Coordinators sustained through Indiana's Disability Employment Initiative (IN-DEI) grant will be utilized as subject matter experts in the field and also assist with training staff on serving individuals with disabilities. Best practices will be identified by these coordinators and shared with the WDBs for implementation when appropriate. (Page 84)

### DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

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### Other State Programs/Pilots that Support Competitive Integrated Employment

- STRATEGY 1.4: Ensure the culture of the One Stop system promotes knowledge transfer across partner programs, such that staff embraces the “no wrong door” philosophy and is capable of providing information on services across programs and making appropriate referrals.
  - Provide training to current staff on services across programs
  - Develop cross training materials that can be used in the future on new hires
  - In Region 11, DWD and VR are working on a Pilot to have a subject matter expert on WorkOne services in the VR office and to have a subject expert on VR services in the WorkOne office. Common referrals and communication channels are being established between the offices and staff training is being conducted so the entire VR or WorkOne office will be cross trained. (Page 42)

Additional suggestions regarding services to youth with disabilities included looking at best practices from a School-to-work pilot project utilizing career coaches in schools and providing work experiences prior to a student’s exit from school.

VR Response: VR continues to facilitate a Statewide Transition Workgroup and will address these recommendations with the group. VR has implemented modifications to the VR employment service model and Discovery services. One of the changes is increased access to work experiences by all VR consumers, including youth. Discussions are already underway between the VR Director and the DWD Youth program directors. Both parties are very interested in better collaboration on programs such as Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG). (Page 158)

Training is provided through a variety of modalities, including statewide symposiums, regional trainings, webinars, and in-person workshops. VR continues to collaborate with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) in coordination of joint trainings to better serve shared consumers as well. In 2015, VR and DWD determined a need for cross-training and identification of subject-matter experts in each of the DWD WorkOne offices and the VR area offices statewide. A pilot group of subject matter experts came together for initial training in July 2015 and this group has been meeting regularly to work collaboratively in joint efforts to better serve consumers.

VR maintains the ability to communicate with VR consumers in their preferred mode of communication in a variety of ways. VR staff access and coordinate foreign language translation, ASL communication, Communication Access Real Time (CART), etc. whenever needed. To ensure communication services are available despite a shortage of some providers (i.e. ASL interpreters, CART providers), VR has increased utilization of remote interpreting services. Publications and brochures are available in large print and Spanish versions. VR has VR Counselors that cover population-specific caseloads including individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, individuals with low vision, and individuals with a traumatic brain injury. VR seeks candidates with some fluency in ASL for Counselor positions covering a caseload of consumers with hearing loss. Virtual ASL training was piloted in 2015 for interested staff as well. (Page 185)

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### Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

The Commission also suggested that further exploration is necessary on the provision of work experience services to students, including those working toward a High School diploma. Financial literacy and self-disclosure are also important issues for individuals with disabilities and VR is encouraged to ensure resources are in place to meet these needs. (Page 185)

- Educating school personnel including special education teachers, guidance counselors and transition coordinators about services offered through WIOA partners, including WorkOne services. (Page 190)

### Benefits

#### **BENEFITS COUNSELING**

VR should continue to support benefits counseling as this is a key concern for families. It was recommended that benefits counseling resources and knowledge be shared across WIOA core partners. This could be achieved through collaboration with the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Grants, through education and training of WIOA partners, and be exploring the availability of benefits counseling in the local Work One centers.

VR Response: VR plans to continue to support benefits counseling through the funding of the Benefits Information Network (BIN), and agrees that counseling on the impact of working on benefits and available federal and state work incentives is critical in helping consumers to make informed choices about working and in working toward self-sufficiency. VR will include discussion on the importance of benefits counseling in conversations with WIOA partners.

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Through a contract, the Indiana Institute of Disability and Community provides training and consultation to all employment services providers, including mental health centers and VR staff regarding employment for people with disabilities, including a focus on mental health. There are approximately 25 CMHCs across the State that are community rehabilitation providers. DMHA continues to promote employment for persons with mental illness by including employment and career planning as measures in consumer services reviews. VR Leadership meets quarterly with the Mental Health Employment Council to discuss new initiatives and identify how initiatives, such as the recent Employment Service Model Revisions, impact CMHC's and consumers with mental illness. CMHC employment staff also serve on the Employment Service workgroup.

Social Security Administration (SSA): VR collaborates with SSA on Ticket-To-Work. VR continues to support the Indiana's Benefits Information Network (BIN) to ensure that beneficiaries receive appropriate benefits planning and education on utilizing work incentives to work toward self-sufficiency. (Page 162)

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VR has provided education and outreach regarding Indiana's Medicaid buy-in program (called M.E.D. Works) to increase access to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities receiving Medicaid. Through the VR-funded Benefits Information Network (BIN), VR consumers also receive information about M.E.D. Works and how this program can enable them to both work and maintain their needed Medicaid benefits. The BIN process also educates VR consumers to make overall informed choices about working, providing education not only about the impact on Medicaid, but also the impact on other federal and state benefits, and the use of federal and state work incentives to assist in achieving gainful employment. (Page 176)

The percentage of non-institutionalized persons, aged 21 to 64 years with a disability, who were receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits in 2013 was 17.7% in Indiana and 18.9% for the U.S.

Nationally, in December 2012, of the 8,262,877 individuals who received federally administered payments from the SSI program, 1,156,188 were eligible based on age (65 or older), 67,725 were eligible based on blindness, and 7,038,964 were eligible based on disability. In Indiana, of the 124,998 individuals who received SSI, 873 were eligible based on blindness and 118,655 were eligible based on disability. (Page 188)

Indiana has a Benefits Information Network (BIN) of certified liaisons that assists individuals in assessing the impact of employment on benefits. During the year July 2014 – June 2015, 1,394 BIN plans were completed. The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) at Indiana University conducted eight trainings with 184 Certified BIN liaisons and 14 certified Community Work Incentive Counselors. Indiana VR purchases this assessment of benefits through the trained liaisons. (Page 190)

## School to Work Transition

Vocational Rehabilitation is an engaged partner to increase educational access to job-seekers that may need VR services and supports to be successful in other state and federal programs. VR is able to provide services to assist with barriers stemming from an individual's disability that assists in access to existing programs or aids in successfully completing a program. VR is working with State programs, like JAG and local educational agencies, to identify ways to collaborate to serve student and youth populations through pre-employment transition services. Project SEARCH is a VR program that is a worksite-based school-to-work program that provides employment and education opportunities for students with disabilities transitioning from high school. The program benefits employers by increasing workforce diversity and reducing recruitment and training costs. Many employers experience improved job retention, enhanced community image and increased customer satisfaction. Additionally, the Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program (<http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4901.htm>) provides entrepreneurial opportunities for legally blind clients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). These blind entrepreneurs manage a wide variety of food-service operations, including cafeterias, coffee shops, vending locations, and highway area vending sites. Through this program, blind individuals receive training and opportunities to become productive, tax-paying citizens and independent business owners. (Page 19)

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Additional suggestions regarding services to youth with disabilities included looking at best practices from a School-to-work pilot project utilizing career coaches in schools and providing work experiences prior to a student's exit from school.

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VR has provided training on VR and its services to the Cadres and is attending the regularly scheduled cadre meetings to continue the joint collaboration. For more information please see: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/cadre-leaders>. Through IIDC and a study entitled Effects of Embedded Employment Resources on the Employment Outcomes of Transition-age Youth, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, (Grant H133A130028), VR is working with IIDC through the five-year research project examining the effectiveness of a team approach to providing students with disabilities (those who have an IEP) with employment coaching and resources prior to leaving high school. These sites are referred to as the "Indiana School-to-Work Collaborative." At the five designated sites across the state, career coaches are working with students and families, their Transition IEP teams, and a VR Counselor to ensure students have internship opportunities before they leave school. The collaborative site features the following benefits for participating students: collaboration of schools, VR, and community rehabilitation providers; single point of contact to be a liaison between VR and school personnel; personal student profile; immersed internship; student empowerment training; benefits planning; and family training. The outcomes of this research will provide data, information, and best practices that will continue to shape transition services, including pre-employment transition services for Indiana. For more information, please see: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/indiana-school-to-work-collaborative> (Page 168)

The IPE will include pre-employment transition services when appropriate for transition students. The VR counselor will collaborate with the school staff to enable for a seamless transition to life after high school. Additionally VR is piloting having 3 dedicated VR Counselors for several Marion Co high schools to focus strictly on transition students having a caseload that is 100% transition. After evaluating the effectiveness of this pilot VR will consider expansion into other area offices. (Page 168)

VR counselors and/or area supervisors are involved in local transition councils if they exist in the community. Councils are made up of local stakeholders who are involved in the transition from school to work and adult life. Councils could include students/family, school personnel, service providers, etc. In addition, VR is responsible for providing written information to students and their families regarding adult services. This written information is available in both English and Spanish. (Page 170)

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### Data Collection

DWD and VR are in the process of building separate case management systems to meet their unique needs, but the agencies are working together to determine how the systems, once fully built, can interface. While DWD is in the beginning stages of working with a newly procured vendor, VR is almost 2 years into the process. VR's system is under a larger umbrella of the Case Management for Social Services within Indiana's Family Social Services Administration (FSSA). The purpose of the overarching FSSA system is to oversee and provide appropriate and timely services to all FSSA consumers being served in various programs. Additionally, the consolidated system shall enhance system integration, data integrity, and remove legacy systems. The VR portion of the project started February of 2014 and is presently gathering the current and future business state and processes. The VR portion requires improved efficiency to enhance the existing mobile and paperless work environment of VR field staff. Furthermore, VR will closely work with DWD to ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing occurs to align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience. The ultimate goal is to have the Core programs working seamlessly together. (Page 59)

While Indiana's formal comprehensive statewide needs assessment is conducted every three years, data is gathered on a continuous basis. It is a joint effort of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and the Commission on Rehabilitation Services (CRS). The Commission provides ongoing input, especially in the acquisition of satisfaction data. It also provides input into the development and content of the final report. Commission members have an opportunity to review and offer comments prior to the release of the triennial needs assessment. Indiana's 2017 comprehensive statewide needs assessment reflects a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data addressing the state's overall vocational rehabilitation needs. The data collection techniques varied as well. They included review of demographic data for Indiana, feedback from the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, input from providers, VR staff, Workforce Development staff, WIOA partners, advocates, and consumers. (Page 187)

VR has reviewed the new performance accountability measures and begun discussions on how to capture new data elements in order to report on the new measures. The recent revisions to the VR Employment Services model were designed to improve the quality of employment outcomes, such as increasing wages, hours worked, and retention. It is expected that VR performance on these qualitative factors will begin to increase as a result. VR is in process of contracting with an entity to ensure appropriate data collection and evaluation of employment service revisions. (Page 217)

### Small Business/Entrepreneurship

**Small Business Administration (SBA):** As consumers explore small business ventures, VR utilizes the resources available through local SBA facilities. SBA has specialized staff that frequently work with VR consumers on developing business plans. Consumers also participate in classes through SBA. There is a renewed and strengthened relationship with SCORE, the nation's largest network of free, expert business mentors. Discussions have begun on increasing and strengthening the resources available for VR counselors when it comes to providing support to consumers who would like to begin a small business or become self-employed. (Page 164)

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- Direct experience as an employer, as a small business owner or operator, or in self-employment, or other experience in human resources, recruitment, or experience in supervising employees, training, or other activities that provide experience in competitive integrated employment environments.(Page 182)

## Career Pathways

No disability specific information regarding this element.

## Employment Networks

WDBs, through the IN-DEI grant, may continue to operate as Employment Networks (EN) and either offer benefits counseling in-house or work with their local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) representative to provide benefits counseling to Social Security beneficiaries receiving SSI/SSDI. WDBs not currently operating as an EN will receive information and training about the benefits of the Ticket to Work Program and how to become an active EN.(Page 85)

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\* All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of February 23, 2017

Find your local state plans here: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/index.html>