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Employment First State Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)

Supported employment services are the primary emphasis of the VRBS and CRP relationship and were the focus of the needs assessment. Issues identified to improve supported employment services include:

1) Expansion of services to rural and remote areas by the continued certification of private providers who meet VRBS’ qualification levels for job assistance and supported employment services
2) Expansion of mental health providers as CRP’s to serve those with severe and persistent mental illness
3) Planning for the needs of consumers requiring higher level of long-term supports was identified through participation with the Supported Employment Leadership Network (the employment first network of Montana. (Page 152) Title I

Customized Employment

2017 Qtr. 3: Guidance was given to all VRBS business team member to make contact with two businesses monthly to provide information and assist with issues such as the untapped pool of resources offered by persons with disabilities, customized employment and VRBS resources. (Page 172) Title I

Braiding/Blending Resources

Montana, as a small state with limited workforce program funds and a significant small-business climate (97% of all private businesses have fewer than 50 employees), faces unique challenges and is committed to ensuring its workforce system meets the needs of the state’s businesses and workers, today and in the future. Such challenges demand that WIOA core and other partners effectively leverage partnerships and collaborate in service delivery efforts. These efforts allow the state to ensure that customer expectations and needs are understood; that service offerings and locations meet those needs without duplication; that data evaluation tools and processes are in place; and that the system continually evolves and improves on its own. To support these efforts, Montana continues to work together across provider and program lines to develop a seamless, demand-driven workforce service delivery system comprised of public and private organizations, businesses, local, state and federal employment and training programs, secondary, post-secondary and adult education programs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services, and other human capital support agencies. (Page 64) Title I

Montana’s State Workforce Innovation Board continues to prioritize service coordination with core partners throughout Montana. In addition to Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation representation on the board, programs continue to work on program integration and braiding services. Adult Education aligned its providers to coincide with the districts outlined in the state plan to further integrate services, in addition, the board weighed in on workforce portions of each provider application submitted through Adult Education’s RFP process. The Board also included
### Montana (MT) WIOA Matrix

provisions under its One-Stop Certification requiring the One-Stop Operator continue updating the WIOA Committee on its progress coordinating services with core partners and work on additional coordination efforts throughout the state. (Page 91) Title I

### DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) are funded through Wagner-Peyser and are located at each Job Service office. These coordinators assist individuals with barriers with a variety of employment-related services and serve as a resource to the workforce community. The DRCs also develop linkages with and collaborate on an ongoing basis with businesses to facilitate job placement for persons with barriers to employment. The DRCs assist anyone that encounters additional barriers to securing employment, such as individuals with physical or mental disabilities, learning disabilities, ex-felons, the aging workforce, youth at risk and veterans. Disability Resource Coordinators work with partner agencies routinely to garner mutual support and share information through Community Management Teams, interagency and community organizations. The DRCs identify gaps in service and create working groups to recognize individuals who may benefit from their services. The DRCs, in collaboration with service providers, organize Resource Fairs, provide training opportunities to customers and the business community, grow relationships with public and private schools to assist with continual learning opportunities. (Page 61) Title I

### Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

### School to Work Transition

7. VRBS are provided pursuant to an individualized plan for employment (IPE) which is developed jointly by the rehabilitation counselor and the eligible individual. In those situations where referral has been made to campus disability support services, the appropriate disability services staff may also be involved in helping to develop the IPE. 8. The VRBS’ rehabilitation counselor and the MUS campus disability support services staff will respect the individual’s right and responsibility to fully participate in all decisions regarding his or her vocational future. The IPE shall be developed and implemented in a manner that allows the individual an opportunity to exercise informed choice in selecting an employment outcome, the specific vocational rehabilitation services that are to be provided, the entity that will provide those services, and the methods that will be used to procure the vocational rehabilitation services. (Page 130) Title I

While not part of the MOU with the OPI, VRBS commits to the development and approval of an IPE before each eligible student able to be served under the order of selection leaves the school setting. Should Montana come out of order of selection, VRBS is committed to development and approval of an IPE before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting. (Page 131) Title I

The OPI shall assist school districts to inform VRBS of students with disabilities who are on an IEP and may be in need of assistance through VRBS. The notice to VRBS shall occur no later
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than the first IEP at which transition services are considered in order for VRBS to participate in the future development of the student’s IEP. For students enrolling closer to graduation or age 21, school districts are urged to inform VRBS as soon as those students are identified.

For all IEP meetings subsequent to the first meeting, the OPI shall encourage school districts to schedule IEP meetings for eligible students with disabilities in a timely manner, and to include notice to VRBS and the invitation for the VRBS counselor to participate subject to parental approval. Development of vocational goals and objectives shall occur in collaboration with the IEP team.

For the first IEP meeting following the initial notice to VRBS, the OPI shall encourage school districts to inform VRBS of the meeting in advance to allow sufficient time for VRBS to acquire the necessary diagnostic data to determine the student’s eligibility. The notice to VRBS should include an invitation to the VRBS counselor to participate, from then on, in transition planning within the IEP process. VRBS participation in IEP meetings is subject to parental approval. (Page 131) Title I

The following are sections of the MOU with the Office of Public Instruction that deal with financial responsibilities of each agencies and related matters.

The OPI shall assist local school districts with coordination of vocationally related services with VRBS for eligible students. Coordination should commence in the early stages of transition. Vocationally-related service coordination and corresponding agency responsibilities should be identified in the IEP and included on the student’s IPE when appropriate.

VRBS will provide assistive technology services relevant to functions outside those assistive technology services required to access the educational program. (Page 132) Title I

The primary method of improving and expanding VR services to students with disabilities have been described elsewhere in this document. The main method has been contracting for Pre-ETS services with school districts. There also have been additional contracts with programs like Montana Youth Transitions, Montana Youth Leadership Forum, Moving On, Project Search, Easter Seals volunteer experience program, Montana Center for Inclusive Education’s Virtual college peer mentoring program, and exploring specialized Pre-ETS collaboration with the tribal VR programs located in Montana.

In addition, VRBS counselors have been encouraged to take applications with students with disabilities at a younger age and provide IPE services that are focused on vocational and career exploration rather than a specific vocational goal. (Page 164) Title I

Career Pathways

Braiding funds with other core partners for conferences and trainings focused on supporting career pathways will be the manner in which leadership dollars will align with the work of our core partners. This collaboration across core partner agencies will evolve to meet the needs of
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WIOA implementation and sustainability. Secondly, the state will support the eligible providers’ ability to integrate and sustain career pathways in their instructional practice. Funds will be available to support regional meetings with workforce and one-stop partners to help AE programs identify the components of job-driven training that needs to be incorporated into their curriculum. Regional professional development will make use of leadership dollars to assist programs in learning how to become responsive to local labor market demands. Thirdly, the state will use funds to develop templates and identify resources that support a systemic approach to career pathways; technical assistance will be made available for providers on the use of state developed resources that will inform their pathway implementation. (Page 41) Title I

WIOA youth providers coordinate services with Vocational Rehabilitation whenever the opportunity is presented. Youth with disabilities have benefited from services provided through both programs. Now with the emphasis on career pathways and ultimately employment there is need for more collaboration and coordination between the WIOA youth program and Vocational-Rehabilitation to ensure youth are competitively seek and obtain jobs with real pay with livable wages. (Page 83) Title I

### Apprenticeship

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

### Work Incentives and Benefits

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

### Employer/Business

VRBS coordinates with businesses through several avenues, including new initiatives that are in the planning stage, all of which are designed to enhance efforts to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services and transition services, including pre-employment transition services.

These initiatives include:

- A standalone VRBS Business Services website for businesses to use to learn about the services we have to offer
- Coordination with Montana Workforce Centers to input and collect data on Business Services. This allows VRBS to collaborate with the Workforce Centers and document ongoing relationships with business and ensure deliverables and services are provided.
- Improved knowledge of Labor Market Information and how to incorporate this information into Business Services practices
- Business Services Team members are Windmills curriculum trainers. This training is used as an employer-employee awareness program specifically addressing attitudinal barriers. (Page 135) Title I
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VRBS believes that WIOA provides significant guidance on what constitutes 21st century VR practice. There are three new pillars to VR practice that counselors need to develop skills in:

- skills to address the evolving needs of employers and labor force to meet the demands of a changing society and work place.

- skills to assist the persons with the most significant disabilities find jobs in competitive integrated settings.

- skills to work youth and high school students with disabilities to be prepared to competitively enter the world of work and post-secondary education. (Page 145) Title I

### Data Collection

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

### 511

2017 Qtr. 2: Individuals working for a 14(c) employer who choose to pursue competitive integrated employment by signing the CCIR validation form are referred to VRBS. VRBS then makes contact with those individuals and initiates the process to provide VR services. (Page 174) Title I

### Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

The State of Montana offers services to individuals with disabilities through the Job Service offices across the state. The workforce system is continually developing new and fostering ongoing partnerships to achieve seamless, comprehensive and integrated access to services and expanding the system’s capacity to serve customers and businesses with disabilities.

Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) are funded through Wagner-Peyser and are located at each Job Service office. These coordinators assist individuals with barriers with a variety of employment-related services and serve as a resource to the workforce community. The DRCs also develop linkages with and collaborate on an ongoing basis with businesses to facilitate job placement for persons with barriers to employment. The DRCs assist anyone that encounters additional barriers to securing employment, such as individuals with physical or mental disabilities, learning disabilities, ex-felons, the aging workforce, youth at risk and veterans. Disability Resource Coordinators work with partner agencies routinely to garner mutual support and share information through Community Management Teams, interagency and community organizations. The DRCs identify gaps in service and create working groups to recognize individuals who may benefit from their services. The DRCs, in collaboration with service providers, organize Resource Fairs, provide training opportunities to customers and the business community, grow relationships with public and private schools to assist with continual learning opportunities. DRCs also attend training annually to receive new information and collaborate on the best ways to support their targeted populations. This training has been done in conjunction with Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services and the Developmental Disabilities Bureau. Montana is a single-area planning state; therefore the state of Montana designed its one-stop...
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system to best meet the workforce needs of the state. As part of the one-stop certification, the
SWIB certified the comprehensive one-stop and the affiliate centers. Part of the criteria for
system certification was that the comprehensive one-stop and all its affiliate centers delivered
services in an integrated and accessible way to ensure that all sites can serve all customers,
regardless of ability. (Page 61) Title I

Montana’s one-stop service delivery system will comply with provisions of the American’s with
Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of
facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. As part
of Montana’s one-stop operator application process, it will request that all applicants submit
information on its facility’s ADA accessibility to better assess barriers to services and better
serve persons with disabilities. (Page 62) Title I

All professional development will be located in accessible facilities and necessary adaptive
accommodations will be made to make the content of workshop accessible to all participants
(e.g., large print, Braille, speech to text software, adaptive technology). (Page 122) Title I

Vets

Veterans and eligible persons will receive employment, training and job placement services at
the Montana Job Service Centers like other Montana Job Service Center customers.

However, veterans and eligible persons will receive priority of service over non-veterans when it
comes to receiving employment, training, and job placement services.

All veterans, spouses, and caregivers who enter a Job Service Centers that house a Disabled
Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist will be screened for eligibility to determine if the
veteran and other eligible persons qualify for DVOP services.

DVOPs will work one on one with eligible veterans and eligible persons to provide training in
job placement and employment skills to include, but not limited to, resume writing and review,
interview concepts and skills, and searching for employment. (Pages 205-206) Title IV

Montana currently does not employ LVER staff.

DVOPs are charged with providing case management and individualized careers services to
young veterans aged 18-24, eligible spouses, and veterans with Significant Barriers to
Employment (SBEs) as outlined in Veterans Program Letter most current guidance, which
include: • A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C §
4211(1) and (3); special disabled and disabled veterans are those who: 1) are entitled to
compensation (or who, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to
compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or, 2) were
discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability; (Page 206)
Title IV

DVOPs provide a range of services including career planning and counseling, comprehensive
assessments, individual employment plan development, short-term pre-vocational services, and
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Other career services within the Montana Job Service Centers. These services include but are not limited to:

- Outreach to locate veterans in need of intensive services;
- Comprehensive Assessment, including a documented plan of service (IEP);
- Counseling and career/vocational guidance;
- Referral of veterans to supportive or remedial services;
- Promoting Vocational Rehab and WIOA services;
- Referral of veterans to job focused and outcome-driven training or certification;
- Job development;
- Development of VA funded Special Incentive and OJT;
- Review all open case files of current participants with an SBE in a priority category and perform case management duties; and
- Referral of veterans to employment opportunities. (Page 206) Title IV

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) programs are administered by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (MTDLI) and are co-located and fully integrated within the Montana Job Service Centers. JVSG funds six FTE including Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialists (DVOP) and a Veteran Intensive Service Coordinator. Customers entering the Job Service Centers are screened for eligibility and referred to JVSG staff as appropriate. In most cases, JVSG clients are co-enrolled in Title I-B programs. (Page 207) Title IV

The JVSG and workforce center staff participates in state and local area training sessions and initiatives centered around sectors and career pathways. JVSG and workforce center staff utilize local labor market information as a tool when eligible veterans and persons are making job-driven training decisions. Through the complete training process, the DVOP specialists, WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff will work in conjunction with the business service team to assist eligible veterans and persons to identify employment opportunities through the state labor exchange. The tools in which we measure the services provided include but not limited to:

- Interviewing of Job Service Center staff
- Monitoring MWorks (Montana case management system)
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•Review of program files and documentation

•Customer surveys

•Site visits

•Accompanying DVET during federal audits

•Quarterly Managers Report

•Regional Director meetings (Page 210) Title IV

Mental Health

VRBS presently has cooperative agreements with all of the six Section 121 projects (Flathead Reservation, Fort Belknap Reservation, Fort Peck Reservation, Rocky Boy’s Reservation, Northern Cheyenne Reservation and the Blackfeet Reservation) located in Montana. The purpose of these agreements is to establish procedures to assure continued coordination between the 121 projects and VRBS. These agreements are implemented for the sole purpose of enhancing, to the greatest extent possible, the delivery of rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities living in the state of Montana and residing on or near the six reservations that currently have a tribal vocational rehabilitation project.

This cooperative agreement has provisions that include:

1. To make available the required supported employment/follow-along services from community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that are certified mental health providers. Follow-along services may be provided through community based psychiatric rehabilitation and support, and through case management services.

2. To serve persons identified as eligible for mental health service under Medicaid or the Mental Health Service Plan.

3. To strengthen supported employment services to Montana citizens eligible for vocational rehabilitation’s supported employment services and for community mental health services funded by the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division.

   131. To provide cross-training and technical assistance between our agencies.

   132. To establish and evaluate annual goals for our interagency work towards coordinated vocational and support services. (Page 126-127) Title I

Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities are important stakeholders in providing supported employment services. Their contributions are described later as they have their own sections
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Enrolled CRPs: VRBS works with a number of community based organizations across the state. Many are enrolled as extended support service providers to assure quality in service delivery for consumers. VRBS has enrolled programs in mental health services, developmental disabilities, as well as other disability organizations to provide these services at the local level. (Pages 134-135)

VRBS has a negotiated cooperative agreement with the Addictive & Mental Disorders Division. The cooperative agreement provides guidance for: cross-training and technical assistance between our agencies, establishment and evaluation of annual goals for interagency work towards coordinated vocational and support services, and makes available the required supported employment/extended support/follow-along services from enrolled community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) and certified mental health providers. (Pages 137-138) Title I

Quality of Supported Employment Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services (VRBS) enrolls providers who will be making supported employment time limited services available. The enrollment process requires that providers have met a set of standards described in administrative rules. This enrollment process ensures that the providers maintain the necessary education, skills, and degree of professional expertise to provide a level of service commensurate with VRBS work service standard. VRBS values its priority partners who have met the required standards. Supported employment providers evaluated by the developmental disability system or mental health system represent the majority of our providers. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and Rehabilitation Services Accreditation System (RSAS) are also utilized by providers. Other providers are individuals who have been selected to provide services for a limited number of consumers in a rural area where there are no established providers. (Pages 176-177) Title I

RTW/SAW

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

*All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of June 30, 2019

Find your local state plans here:

https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/index.html