



Virginia (VA) WIOA Matrix

Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program (EFSLMP)

(10) Supporting Virginia's Employment First initiative and implementation of the Department of Justice Settlement agreement by collaborating with the Department for Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to establish staff positions specializing in caseloads of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to enhance their employment. (Page 286)

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(11) Providing IPAD Pros for use by Rehabilitation Engineers and Assistive Technology Specialists in a "tele-rehab" environment which allows them to provide more effective on-site services to VR consumers needing these services and to interface more effectively with rehabilitation and assistive technology staff at WWRC. (Page 333)

Customized Employment

(6) DARS, working closely with the VCU Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports and Job Retention, identified the need for training job coaches in basics responsibilities that would be reasonable in terms of time away from the job. VCU responded with the following:

- a. Supported Employment Web-based Certificate Series (ACRE-certified);
- b. Supported Competitive Employment for Individuals with Mental Illness (ACRE-certified);
- c. Customized Employment; and
- d. Promoting an active network of inter-agency and inter-organizational professionals working with mutual supported employment consumers, with an emphasis on increasing linkages with rehabilitation engineering and technology experts and enhancing current linkages with employers, consumers, the education community and family members; (Page 258)

DARS is actively engaged at both the state and local level in the Workforce Development System. DARS is represented on the state Career Pathways Workgroup which advises the Governor's Office and Workforce Board on the Workforce System issues and participates on the WIOA implementation team. A memorandum of understanding is in place with each Local

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Workforce Development Board and DARS works closely with the American Job Centers to assure access to individuals with disabilities. The VR program currently is co-located as a One-Stop partner in Charlottesville, Roanoke, Martinsville, Danville and South Boston. DARS also has a physical presence in other Workforce Board AJC's. DARS is directly involved with both the state Workforce partners and local AJC's in the Department of Labor Disability Employment Initiative grant and is lead on an RSA Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities grant. In the coming year, DARS will support training on career counseling, motivational interviewing as well as Customized Employment for our workforce partners.

No mechanism has been identified to track jointly enrolled Title I and VR clients. DARS is currently in the process of "on-boarding" VR RSA 911 information to the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS) to create a process to identify jointly enrolled clients. (Page 272)

(12) Providing training and implementing seven (one per District) teams to pilot and implement Customized Employment (CE) across Virginia. This strategy is based on needs assessment and focus group recommendations from DARS Partnerships with Transcend, Inc. and George Washington University. By November 1, 2016, DARS will select and train key VR Counselors and Evaluators, AT Specialists, Business Placement and Self-Employment staff, and Partnering Employment Specialists, Behavioral Specialists, and Facilities Personnel in key concepts to implement CE approaches to DARS clients exiting institutions, sheltered workshops, high schools and adults for whom traditional supported employment services have not yielded successful outcomes. DARS will serve 20 or more clients with diverse backgrounds in order to assimilate Customized Employment best practices into our menu of services for these targeted populations. Options for self-employment will also be explored under this approach. (Page 286)

Provide training and implement seven (one per District) teams to pilot and implement Customized Employment across Virginia.

Educate our VR counselors, vocational evaluators, consumers, and their parents (as applicable) on the current and future labor market, the availability of competitively-waged jobs and the skills needed to obtain those jobs.

Implement the Career Pathways grant to include the use of motivational interviewing techniques with our VR consumers. (Page 289)

The time limited supported employment services funded with federal/state VR Case service dollars include:

1. Vocational Assessment, job development, job placement, job coach training services, and training for blind, vision impaired, or deafblind individuals with most significant disabilities, including youth, who require more extensive supports than traditional VR services. The goal in providing SE services is competitive integrated employment.
2. Support services such as adaptive equipment and assistive technology devices, interpreter services for persons with dual-sensory impairments, and other approved VR services needed to sustain the individual during the time limited phase of supported employment.

VR sponsorship for time limited SE services occurs when the individual has competitive integrated employment, including customized employment, and their VR case has been closed.

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Indication that it is time to end the time-limited SE phase occurs when the individual and the employer are satisfied with the individual's job performance, when the SE services have been provided, and when job coach intervention time is less than 20 percent of the individual's working hours over a 30 to 60-day period.

An individual's VR case is closed when competitive integrated employment is performed for the established hours per week for a period of ninety days after the transition from the time-limited phase to the extended services phase, as specified on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). (Page 307)

Braiding/Blending Resources

The successful execution of this plan requires Virginia to commit to the professional development of workforce practitioners, and to the braiding and management of financial resources in new ways. The Commonwealth is committed to developing staff to capitalize on investments in technology, and to realize the benefits from a common agenda with workforce system partners. Careful investments in human and financial resources ultimately reflect value to customers and to their communities across the state. (Page 78)

Implement "Integrated Resource" team service delivery strategy for multiple-barrier customers

- Coordinate workforce partners around and employment/training goal for an individual customer, with no modification to provider service models;
- Enhance cross program collaboration and service alignment by braiding and leveraging partner resources, funding and services;
- Develop and integrated career plan that aligns with service goals;
- Conduct partner cross-training for strategy implementation;
- Design plan to record best practices for broader dissemination across workforce system partners;
- Embed practices into procedures; and
- Apply CPI. (Page 84)

Section 188/Section 188 Guide

Virginia is fortunate to have a long standing collaborative relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and other key state partners. This partnership history facilitated the leveraging and coordination of existing and added resources provided via the six DOL Workforce Disability Initiatives, the latest of which are the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grants. Whereas, significant strides have been made to ensure our One-Stop Service Delivery System is accessible to all job seekers, including those with disabilities and other challenges to employment, we are committed to continuous quality improvement. These efforts are focused on physical, programmatic and communication access. We will continue these efforts and build on our existing infrastructure to encourage shared ownership; foster systems integration through cross-agency collaboration at all levels; and design access to services from a customer's perspective. (Page 154)

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Expected outcomes are the following: a revised ADA Accessibility guidelines and one-stop center certification process that incorporates the WIOA Section 188 Disability Reference Guide checklist for program and physical accessibility; system standards for accessible devices and software located in workforce centers to facilitate consistency; review of all policies and guidance to ensure alignment and consistency; a schedule for cross- agency training for survey providers, end users, one-stop operators and partner staff. The efforts of this Team will improve compliance and enhance communication, coordination and professional development across Virginia's workforce system. (Page 156)

This administrative guidance document provides a reasonable guarantee that all of Virginia's WIOA Title I financially assisted programs, activities and recipients comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements stipulated under Section 188 of the WIOA. (Page 171)

DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

Virginia is fortunate to have a long standing collaborative relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and other key state partners. This partnership history facilitated the leveraging and coordination of existing and added resources provided via the six DOL Workforce Disability Initiatives, the latest of which are the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grants. Whereas, significant strides have been made to ensure our One-Stop Service Delivery System is accessible to all job seekers, including those with disabilities and other challenges to employment, we are committed to continuous quality improvement. These efforts are focused on physical, programmatic and communication access. We will continue these efforts and build on our existing infrastructure to encourage shared ownership; foster systems integration through cross-agency collaboration at all levels; and design access to services from a customer's perspective. (Page 154)

The following are examples of local level practices implemented to enhance access for job seekers with disabilities made possible by leveraging the resources from the DOL Disability grants and state level cross agency partnerships:

Installed Universal Computer Workstations with Assistive Technology devices and software and conducted staff trainings in pilot LWDBAs; expanded the web-based Common Screening Tool to better identify job seekers with disabilities, track customer flow and service referrals. (The data indicated an on average a 15% increase of self-identification where this tool was piloted); incorporated Disability Resources and disseminated announcements for various activities that would benefit individuals with disabilities, such as: disability trainings and IRS free tax assistance and site locations, dedicated a page to post information about disability resources on the Virginia's Workforce Development website, Elevate Virginia; integrated DEI strategies by adding four modules into Virginia's Workforce Development Systems Course, which is a requirement for all front-line staff co-located at the Centers to complete. (The optional modules are Welcoming All Customers/Universal Strategies, Asset Development, Integrated Resource Teams with a Person Centered Planning approach and Mystery Shopper); coordinated local/statewide trainings (on line, in person and at state conferences) for One-Stop staff and partners and also utilized resources through the Mid-Atlantic ADA Business Technical Assistance Center. Some of the topics covered were: ADA Accessibility requirements, Disability Etiquette, Access for All - Welcoming Customers at workforce centers and accommodations; implemented Social Security (SSA) - Ticket To Work Program to expand employment opportunities for SSA beneficiaries in 6 LWDB areas;

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facilitated certification trainings for Work Incentives Specialist Advocates who advise beneficiaries on work incentives; promoted asset development and financial capability strategies to enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency, including financial literacy training, the use of individual development accounts, tax and work incentives, and other strategies for encouraging economic advancement; and trained and provided technical assistance to businesses/employers about the use of effective hiring practices and job accommodations, including Assistive Technology trainings in collaboration with Virginia Assistive Technology System and Mid-Atlantic ADA Business Technical Assistance Center.

As a result, DEI Round I efforts and collaborative workforce partnerships, Virginia statewide data from October 2010 through March 2014, indicated participants with disabilities active with WIA (now WIOA) intensive services increased from 1.8% to 4.9%. (Page 155)

3.4 Provide 7 Disability Resource Coordinators/Disability Program Navigators to increase access to programs and services for vocational rehabilitation consumers. DARS currently provides three Disability Resource Coordinators to two local American Job Centers (AJCs) as a part of DOL Disability Employment Initiative Round IV grant project efforts in collaboration with the VCCS/Workforce Services Division (Title I Administrator). In addition, through an Innovation and Expansion project, DARS has co-located a previous Disability Program Navigator as a VR Counselor housed in an AJC and providing VR services. Also, three workforce areas previously participating in DOL DPN/DEI grant efforts have retained three DARS staff to provide services to individuals with disabilities in AJCs. As a result DEI Round I efforts and collaborative workforce partnerships, Virginia statewide data from October 2010 through March 2014, indicated participants with disabilities active with WIA (now WIOA) intensive services increased from 1.8% to 4.9%. (Page 294)

Other State Programs/Pilots that Support Competitive Integrated Employment

Increase accessibility of services for customers

- Ensure physical and programmatic accessibility for individuals with disabilities;
- Pilot web-based approaches to identifying eligibility and enrollment in programs;
- Pilot virtual workshops for some services, e.g. interviewing strategies, “dress for success”, exposure to the “real world of work”;
- Replicate and scale-up effective virtual services; and
- Apply CPI.

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Over the past seven years, Virginia has successfully piloted many versions of intake, screening, or assessment tools that can be commonly deployed across all programs and in all localities. The Commonwealth has refined this process enough to adapt it statewide, and partner agencies are now negotiating costs and operational considerations. Before the end of calendar year 2016, Virginia expects to see a common screening tool deployed statewide, which will greatly reduce the administrative burden on our customers and enable workforce development staff to better track the outcomes of customers. Partners are committed to solutions that consider the needs of individuals with disabilities, including those who use screen readers. (Page 87-88)

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There are a number of successful pilot efforts underway utilizing a common Client Needs Assessment or Common Screening Tool. Partners utilizing this approach have found it to be an effective and efficient approach to evaluate the needs of the client and determining eligibility for other partner program services. In one pilot, to better identify job seekers with disabilities, use of the tool led to 15% of those served, on average, self-identifying as having a disability, which is similar to the rates of disability among the general working-age population. This has led to increased enrollment of job seekers with disabilities into Title I programs, as well as better access to services delivered by the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired. (Page 147)

To improve access and track customer referrals, DOL disability grant leadership and state level partners led and funded a collaborative effort to develop and pilot a Common Screening Tool in selected LWDBs. This tool was enhanced to include questions for job seekers to self-identify disabilities, when entering Workforce Centers.

An Executive Management Committee was created to provide guidance and oversight for DOL disability grants. It is composed of LWDB Executive Directors, state level Workforce Development Services, Departments of Vocational Rehabilitation, Education, Social Services, and other disability/workforce partners. This body has provided recommendations for state policy, leadership direction and project implementation that garnered cross agency buy in to improve accessibility for One-Stop service delivery.

Installed Universal Computer Workstations with Assistive Technology devices and software and conducted staff trainings in pilot LWDBAs; expanded the web-based Common Screening Tool to better identify job seekers with disabilities, track customer flow and service referrals. (The data indicated an on average a 15% increase of self-identification where this tool was piloted); incorporated Disability Resources and disseminated announcements for various activities that would benefit individuals with disabilities, such as: disability trainings and IRS free tax assistance and site locations, dedicated a page to post information about disability resources on the Virginia's Workforce Development website, Elevate Virginia; integrated DEI strategies by adding four

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modules into Virginia's Workforce Development Systems Course, which is a requirement for all front-line staff co-located at the Centers to complete. (The optional modules are Welcoming All Customers/Universal Strategies, Asset Development, Integrated Resource Teams with a Person Centered Planning approach and Mystery Shopper); coordinated local/statewide trainings (on line, in person and at state conferences) for One-Stop staff and partners and also utilized resources through the Mid-Atlantic ADA Business Technical Assistance Center. Some of the topics covered were: ADA Accessibility requirements, Disability Etiquette, Access for All - Welcoming Customers at workforce centers and accommodations; implemented Social Security (SSA) - Ticket To Work Program to expand employment opportunities for SSA beneficiaries in 6 LWDB areas; facilitated certification trainings for Work Incentives Specialist Advocates who advise beneficiaries on work incentives; promoted asset development and financial capability strategies to enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency, including financial literacy training, the use of individual development accounts, tax and work incentives, and other strategies for encouraging economic advancement; and trained and provided technical assistance to businesses/employers about the use of effective hiring practices and job accommodations, including Assistive Technology trainings in collaboration with Virginia Assistive Technology System and Mid-Atlantic ADA Business Technical Assistance Center. (Page 155)

Innovation and Expansion Activities Designed to Expand and Improve Services Include:

1. Enhancing services to consumers with Autism by expanding the use of hand-held technology for their use, providing staff consultants with expertise in Autism, continuing the Autism Speaks Comprehensive Assessment and Service Pilot in two current locations and adding two new locations, continuing utilization of Autism Spectrum Disorder Specialists to manage and integrate the Autism Speaks Comprehensive Integrated Service model.
2. Collaborating with the Virginia Assistive Technology Region Sites at George Mason University and Old Dominion University to mentor job coaches in the use of assistive technology and provide assistive technology at work training and presentations to our workforce partners at the American Job Centers.
3. Creating new Project SEARCH sites in the Commonwealth to benefit the employment of transition age youth with Autism. Planned new sites will be in Loudoun County and Lynchburg.
4. Increasing the use of Aztec learning software to enhance the career readiness certificate attainment for VR consumers.
5. Enhancing services to transition age youth by developing opportunities to provide funding for innovative ideas to address pre-employment transition services, looking at partnerships between VR, Employment Service Organizations and local secondary schools.
6. Supporting a training program at the Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) in collaboration with the Virginia Manufacturing Association to prepare youth in transition for jobs in the manufacturing industry.
7. Expanding the development of employment opportunities for VR consumers by enhancing the coordination of business development activities, utilizing local and statewide labor market information in vocational evaluation and planning, identifying employment opportunities with federal contractors, and collaborating with State Economic Development offices and personnel.

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8. Continuing with a pilot using the Career Index System, including labor market information, the GPS assessment and automated “Sara” to enhance contact and case management support for VR consumers in targeted areas and programs. This project is to be integrated with DARS Maximus/SSA Ticket hand-off pilot.
9. Providing additional driver’s education instruction at WWRC to work in the Life Skills program and integrate into transition services. (Page 285)
12. Providing training and implementing seven (one per District) teams to pilot and implement Customized Employment (CE) across Virginia. This strategy is based on needs assessment and focus group recommendations from DARS Partnerships with Transcen, Inc. and George Washington University. By November 1, 2016, DARS will select and train key VR Counselors and Evaluators, AT Specialists, Business Placement and Self-Employment staff, and Partnering Employment Specialists, Behavioral Specialists, and Facilities Personnel in key concepts to implement CE approaches to DARS clients exiting institutions, sheltered workshops, high schools and adults for whom traditional supported employment services have not yielded successful outcomes. DARS will serve 20 or more clients with diverse backgrounds in order to assimilate Customized Employment best practices into our menu of services for these targeted populations. Options for self-employment will also be explored under this approach. (Page 286)

Priority 1: Preparing VR consumers for the current and future labor market.

Strategies: Prepare consumers for industry-recognized certification/licensure, including the Career Readiness Certificate.

Support consumers who require postsecondary education, at the community college or four year college level, to achieve their employment goal.

Provide training and implement seven (one per District) teams to pilot and implement Customized Employment across Virginia.

Educate our VR counselors, vocational evaluators, consumers, and their parents (as applicable) on the current and future labor market, the availability of competitively-waged jobs and the skills needed to obtain those jobs.

Implement the Career Pathways grant to include the use of motivational interviewing techniques with our VR consumers. (Page 289)

3.7 Increase the number of work incentive authorizations to 600. During this reporting period there were 2,568 total WISA authorizations. These services were provided through over 40 different WISAs around the state, which was a significant increase which allowed DARS to significantly increase the number of authorizations. In tracking closures related to these services, approximately 74% of the cases have been closed successfully. This growth in WISA authorizations has resulted in an opportunity to partner with the Social Security Administration on a proof of concept pilot for obtaining Benefit Planning Query’s for DARS clients. Previously, this process had to be completed through the local SSA field offices and took over four weeks. Now the turnaround is 3 business days using a secure email exchange with SSA.

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3.8 Implement a pilot program to enhance the reassignment “hand-off” process for the Partnership Plus Employment Network Partners. During this reporting period, there were 86 Ticket to Work handoffs to our Partnership Plus Employment Networks in Virginia and these groups received over \$930,000 in Ticket to Work revenue. There were an additional 24 handoffs over this reporting period to Employment Networks not affiliated with DARS Partnership plus agreements. Also during this reporting period, the Ticket to Work handoff process has been streamlined and reduced to 3 to 5 business days. (Page 295)

6.4 Continue program development efforts to support enhanced employment outcomes for consumers with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) providing 70 clients in four regions and WWRC with access to customized ASD case services and supports. Through this project, DARS deployed high intensity comprehensive service pilots across 13 field offices providing direct services to VR consumers via a team-based model that includes designated autism subject matter experts (ASME), Assistive Technology Experts, and agency vendors of Supported Employment, Community Support Services, and Therapeutic Behavior Services. To date, Innovation and Expansion funding supported the provision of paid services via dedicated Autism Case Dollars for approximately 61 VR consumers, continued funding for 3 DARS Autism Subject Matter Expert Staff Consultants via temporary assignments with a new ASME slated for development in Charlottesville before April. A fifth Autism Subject Matter Expert Staff Consultant was hired in Portsmouth in January, 2016 with the position. Other outputs tracked during this rating period (July 1, 2005 –present) include 70 VR clients with Autism and 27 VRCs participated in the pilot program. The pilot also engaged 27 Coaches (job and life–skills), 3 TBS providers (3 PBSF, 1 LABA), and 4 AT specialists. Additionally, during this rating period: 12 AT devices were in use by ESO HHT loan recipients across the 4 pilot areas and approximately 50 clients received HHT supports to include assessments, device loans, training, and coaching supports to promote use in home, community and workplace environments. All sites reported increases in local community service provider resources to include new vendors of Autism Centered TBS, CSS, HHT and job coaching supports. Preliminary outcome data related to the autism pilots from an October 2015 evaluation is very positive with an 88.5% successful closure rate for 131 clients and positive reviews from providers, individuals with Autism, and their family members. (Page 297)

7.2 Expand WWRC’s medical outreach to increase access for potential VR consumers with an emphasis in ‘return to work’. WWRC continued to pilot the use of a specialized VR Counselor position to serve a medical caseload and to coordinate continued therapy services for clients who are close to completing acute rehabilitation but who will need additional services and recovery before returning to the workforce. The majority of this caseload participates in post–acute services offered on Rothrock Hall at WWRC. The specialized VR Counselor position is housed on Rothrock Hall and works closely with WWRC therapy and nursing departments who serve the medical rehab unit. This VR counselor has developed relationships with area hospitals/rehab centers and other medical service providers that refer clients who are recuperating from new disabilities such as traumatic brain injuries, strokes, and spinal cord injuries; this keeps community partners and referral sources continuously aware of the Agency mission and services. After programming is completed at the center, clients are usually prepared to return to previous employment, to attend vocational training at the center, or to work with vocational counselors in their home field offices to engage in vocational services. This specialty VR Counselor caseload position also serves as a statewide consultant to other DRS Counselors to provide information and facilitate appropriate referrals to WWRC. During FFY 2015, WWRC formalized the pilot into program status based on demonstrated outcomes. Formal metrics have been established to continue to monitor the

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effectiveness of this program, with opportunities for refinement and growth. During the last two fiscal years, the number of medical cases ending with employment has remained steady. It is anticipated that the number obtaining employment may decrease slightly in the next year due to a decrease in referrals/applicants resulting from order of selection. (Page 298)

(2) Enhancing services to consumers with Autism by expanding the use of hand-held technology, providing staff consultants with expertise in Autism, continuing the Autism Speaks Comprehensive Assessment and Services Pilot, and utilizing Autism Spectrum Disorder Specialists to manage and integrate the Autism Speaks Comprehensive Integrated Service Model.

(3) Collaborating with the Virginia Assistive Technology Regional Sites at George Mason University and Old Dominion University to mentor job coaches in the use of assistive technology and providing loaner assistive technology devices to ESOs for use with VR consumers. (Page 302)

Measure: During FFY 2016, the chief rehabilitation engineer will conduct and/or arrange training on new and improved technology, including emerging technologies identified through the Rehabilitation Services Administration grant to implement a pilot project through the Disability Innovation Fund – Automated Personalization Computing Project (APCP), for the rehabilitation technology staff. (Page 357)

Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

On October 1, 2014, VCCS was awarded Workforce Investment Act, Workforce Innovation funds in the amount of \$11,196,152 by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration to implement the Working Families Success Network Model with 6 American Job Center (also known as One-Stop Center) sites in Virginia for 1800 participants. The model of bundled service delivery comprises three services:

1. Workforce and education services resulting in career advancement: education and training, employability skills, job placement;
2. Income and work supports: access to student financial aid, public benefits, free tax preparation;
3. Financial services and asset building: financial education, financial coaching.

A Coach will be available at each of the sites to coordinate the services. As a study project, services will be determined with a randomized control process and to those who consent to participate starting October 1, 2015 in Workforce Development Areas 3-Western Virginia, 6-Piedmont, 8-South Central, 11-Northern Virginia, 16-Hampton Roads, and 17-West Piedmont. Services will be delivered through September 30, 2018. (Page 110)

Virginia's Workforce Development Systems Course, which is a requirement for all front-line staff co-located at the Centers to complete. (The optional modules are Welcoming All Customers/Universal Strategies, Asset Development, Integrated Resource Teams with a Person Centered Planning approach and Mystery Shopper); coordinated local/statewide trainings (on line, in person and at state conferences) for One-Stop staff and partners and also utilized resources through the Mid-Atlantic ADA Business Technical Assistance Center. Some of the topics covered were: ADA Accessibility requirements, Disability Etiquette, Access for All - Welcoming

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Customers at workforce centers and accommodations; implemented Social Security (SSA) - Ticket To Work Program to expand employment opportunities for SSA beneficiaries in 6 LWDB areas; facilitated certification trainings for Work Incentives Specialist Advocates who advise beneficiaries on work incentives; promoted asset development and financial capability strategies to enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency, including financial literacy training, the use of individual development accounts, tax and work incentives, and other strategies for encouraging economic advancement; and trained and provided technical assistance to businesses/employers about the use of effective hiring practices and job accommodations, including Assistive Technology trainings in collaboration with Virginia Assistive Technology System and Mid-Atlantic ADA Business Technical Assistance Center. (Page 155)

Benefits

School personnel represented the largest number of respondents (50%), followed by: Supported Employment Vendors–ESO’s (23.6%), Community Service Boards (17%), Centers for Independent Living (4.7%) Advocates (4.7%), individuals with a disability (3.8%), parents of children with disabilities (1.9%), and Brain Injury Organization Members (1%).

Respondents rated consumers’ barriers to employment. Transportation emerged as the number one “very significant” barrier to employment with a 73% agreement followed by: lack of jobs (61%), financial support for services (60%), housing (40%), lack of marketable job skills (35%), financial or benefits disincentives (33%), inadequate training opportunities (28%), lack of networking opportunities (28%), lack of service providers (26%), family influence (21%), and consumers unrealistic goals (16%).

Approximately, 89% of DARS consumers are most significantly disabled. DARS supplements its Title VI Supported Employment funds with Title I funds to ensure that every consumer who needs Supported Employment services receive this service. (Page 270)

Two percent of the respondents gave DARS an excellent rating regarding students’ experience with DARS. Twelve percent rated DARS as “good”, 9% “fair” and 13% responded “unsatisfactory”. The services identified as most needed were: job coaching (80%), internships (66%), job placement services (74%), skills training (66%), job seeking skills training (61%), vocational evaluation (57%), independent living skills training (54%), guidance and counseling from a vocational rehabilitation counselor (53%), college education (38%), assistive technology (38%), benefits planning (36%), physical restoration (8%) and mental restoration (7%). Fifty eight percent of the respondents stated that students did not have the skills to obtain employment in the community. Thirty percent believed the students did have the training for community employment and twelve percent did not answer the question. (Page 273)

(4) Assure a full range of choices are available in order to meet the vocational needs of consumers requiring supported employment services. Virginia uses all supported employment models, including the individual placement model, the enclave model, the entrepreneurial model and mobile work crews. Individual placement is the most widely used, and generally offers higher wage rates, better benefits and more flexibility in meeting the needs of customers and employers in an integrated work setting. The group models are important options that provide for the constant presence of the Employment Specialist at the job site to support customers who need intensive supervision in order to maintain employment. (Page 283-284)

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DARS requires that each of Virginia's ESOs vendored to provide VR services be nationally accredited through the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission (CARF). CARF accreditation provides a host of benefits to DARS as a state-funding source, as well as to DARS consumers, and taxpayers. In addition to assuring accountability and consistent quality levels, national accreditation allows DARS to focus on program expansion, improvement and accountability.

DARS currently purchase services through 87 ESOs throughout the state. During FY 2015, these organizations provided supported employment services over 3,000 individuals, including youth with the most significant disabilities. (Page 303)

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) provides services and supports to individuals who have developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and mental health concerns, also known as behavioral health in Virginia. Services to these individuals are provided by regional and local Community Services Boards (CSBs). DBVI will establish or reestablish collaborative relationships with Virginia DBHDS and CSBs to include participating in interagency workgroups with the DBHDS Employment Specialist and the Intellectual Disability (ID)/Developmental Disability (DD) CSB Case Managers with the goal of providing information related to allowable employment activities including Virginia's Employment First initiative, Medicaid Waiver programs, and the provision of supported and extended support services. Collaboration with DBHDS also provides information on services and resources that support pre-employment transition programs and positive employment outcomes. The DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will work with the DBHDS Employment Specialist and the ID/DD CSB Case Managers to specifically ensure that issues related to work benefits, supports, and available resources are addressed. (Page 333)

Lack of transportation, affordable housing, marketable work skills and training were all identified as major barriers to employment for individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind in Virginia;

- The Supported Employment model is not frequently used, and when it is used, it is not typically the standard SE model;
 - A large majority of individuals served receive SSA benefits and fear of benefit loss affects their return-to-work behavior; and
 - Independent living skills are a major need of individuals served. The Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI) meets this need for a small percentage of individuals served, but many people would like to see VRCBVI expand its reach and provide low vision services. (Page 343)
1. Any individuals, including all minor caretakers, under 16 years of age;
 2. Any individual at least 16, but no more than 19 years of age, who is enrolled full-time in elementary or secondary school, including vocational or technical school programs. The vocational or technical school must be equivalent to secondary school;
 3. Any individual unable to participate because of a temporary medical condition that prevents entry into at least 20 hours per week of employment or training, as determined by a medical professional;

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4. Any individual who is incapacitated, as determined by receipt of Social Security Disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income;
5. Any individual 60 years of age or older;
6. Any individual who is the sole care giver of another member of the household who is incapacitated, and whose presence is essential for the care of the member on a substantially continuous basis, shall be exempt from participation in VIEW. Incapacity is determined by receipt of Social Security Disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income. The sole other condition under which an individual may be determined incapacitated is by a written medical statement from a physician; and
7. A parent or caretaker of a child under 12 months of age who personally provides care for the child. (Page 506)

School to Work Transition

To enhance and facilitate job-readiness skills and career planning for students to make a successful transition from school to work and to greater independence, students will be referred to DBVI Workforce Specialists and to Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) (also known in Virginia as Employment Services Organizations (ESOs)). Workforce Specialists will complement pre-employment transition services by delivering workplace readiness training to establish skills necessary for entry into career pathways, competitive integrated employment, and by coordinating with schools and networking with employers to establish paid and unpaid internships, including apprenticeships, specifically matched to the student's needs, skills, interests, abilities, and informed choice. Transition services purchased from CRPs may also include On-The-Job support and extended support services for students and youth needing additional supports in the work experience setting or on the job. (Page 331)

Data Collection

System-wide Data Collection and Reporting

Virginia does not currently have the capability to get a system-wide, global view of workforce data across the various programs and agency. Data is still largely confined to programmatic siloes, and - with a few notable exceptions - agency staff is reticent about sharing data with partner agencies. WIOA has given the Commonwealth the opportunity to adopt standards data collection systems and portals, and establish protocols by which data and information can be shared responsibly. These protocols will be developed collaboratively over the coming months. (Page 119)

Commonwealth of Virginia Process for Identifying Regions:

Reference: VBWD Policy 200-06, Designation of Regions and Planning Requirements, <http://www.elevatevirginia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Policy-200-06-Designation-of-Regions-and-Planning-Requirements-FINAL-Signed.pdf>

Virginia (VA) WIOA Matrix

In order to identify regions, WIOA requires the state to identify factors to be used, which, when applying, may or may not align to current local workforce development areas. In Virginia, the factors were used to promote a collaborative process whereby the data collection and analysis of the factors for determination of regions are shared between state and local workforce partners. Virginia utilized the following factors in determining regions:

1. Single Labor Market;
2. Common Economic Development Area;
3. Federal and Non-Federal Resources to Carry Out WIOA Activities;
4. Population Centers;
5. Commuting Patterns;
6. Industrial Composition and Sector Alignment;
7. Community College Regions.

Utilizing these seven factors, various regional alignments may be considered and proposed by a number of workforce system stakeholders such as state policymakers, State and Local Board members, state and local workforce staff, partner program staff, business and industry partners and workforce and education associations. In order for Virginia to consider and designate regions, a formal proposal shall be submitted to the Virginia Board of Workforce Development that includes a recommendation for region designation, a rationale for the region designation recommended using the seven factors, and a description of why the regional alignment proposed is in the best interests of the state, business and industry, and workers and job seekers. (Page 167)

DARS' policies require that for students with disabilities who

- i. are receiving special education services from a public school, and
- ii. also are determined eligible for VR services (and able to be served if DARS is on an order of selection), the Individualized Plan for Employment shall be completed and signed within 90 days of the eligibility determination and before the student leaves the school setting.

DARS continues to be a stakeholder in the review of data that DOE collects to report to the Office on Special Education Programs (OSEP) to support and accomplish respective post school and employment outcomes required by the federal government and to provide meaningful data collection by each agency. (Page 251)

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Virginia (VA) WIOA Matrix

Additional DARS and DOE collaborative activities include co-chairing the Virginia Interagency Transition Council (VITC) and the regional Virginia Transition Practitioners Councils (TPC). TPC provides a forum for transition practitioners and other interested stakeholders from school divisions, adult agencies, and community partners to engage in professional development activities, networking opportunities, and collaborative efforts that enhance the implementation of quality transition services for secondary school students with disabilities. The VITC is comprised of representatives from 14 state agencies who have leadership roles and transition as part of their responsibility in serving youth with disabilities. The Council works to stay abreast of current transition information, to identify gaps in resources, and avoid duplication of transition services. VITC has set a priority to improve communication between the state, regional, and local transition councils. It is anticipated that information will be shared with and by VITC through the regional and local Councils. This flow of communication allows for improved responses to identified needs, as well as recommendations for future efforts. (Page 253)

Data collection efforts solicited input from a broad spectrum of individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind, service providers, DBVI staff, and some businesses. (Page 342)

The needs assessment approach was designed to elicit quantitative and qualitative data about the needs of persons who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind. Focus group and key informant interview activities yielded qualitative data that may be used to complement and lend depth to the findings of the survey efforts and the analysis of extant data. The use of multiple data collection strategies, both quantitative and qualitative, facilitates data collection that captures both the breadth and the depth of concerns relevant to individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or vision impaired in Virginia. (Page 343)

Measure: The DBVI/DARS project team will work with staff from the American Institutes for Research (AIR, the planned project evaluator) to develop and implement the project evaluation design and data collection plan.

Measures: Other first-year activities will include working with the George Washington University (GWU) Center for Rehabilitation Counseling to develop and implement career pathways-focused career counseling training for VR counselors and other workforce professionals that incorporates use of labor market information and motivational interviewing techniques. (Page 353)

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Small Business/Entrepreneurship

No specific disability related information found.

Career Pathways

Across Virginia's workforce system, partner agencies are engaged in operationalizing several workforce initiatives stemming from grants obtained from the federal government for specific workforce innovations. These grants include:

- The Disability Employment Initiative Grants (The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, the Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia's Community College System, and five Local Workforce Development Boards)
- The Veterans' Demonstration Grant (Virginia's Community College System, the Virginia Employment Commission, and the Department of Veterans' Services)
- Local Apprenticeship Grants (Shenandoah Valley Workforce Region, the Department of Labor and Industry, and Virginia's Community College System)
- The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services and the Department of the Blind and Vision Impaired jointly received a RSA funded CPID grant The grant collaborates with multiple workforce partners including adult education and two local workforce boards, other DOL grants and the Virginia Manufacturers Association to enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. project goals include helping individuals with disabilities acquire marketable skills and credentials that enable them to secure competitive integrated employment in high-demand, high-quality occupations; enhancing the capacity of existing career pathways programs in Virginia to effectively serve individuals with disabilities; (Page 88)

Manufacturers Association to enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. project goals include helping individuals with disabilities acquire marketable skills and credentials that enable them to secure competitive integrated employment in high-demand, high-quality occupations; enhancing the capacity of existing career pathways programs in Virginia to effectively serve individuals with disabilities; enhancing access to and use of existing career pathways in selected occupational clusters (including advanced manufacturing) by individuals with disabilities. (Page 98)

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Virginia (VA) WIOA Matrix

DARS is actively engaged at both the state and local level in the Workforce Development System. DARS is represented on the state Career Pathways Workgroup which advises the Governor's Office and Workforce Board on the Workforce System issues and participates on the WIOA implementation team. A memorandum of understanding is in place with each Local Workforce Development Board and DARS works closely with the American Job Centers to assure access to individuals with disabilities. The VR program currently is co-located as a One-Stop partner in Charlottesville, Roanoke, Martinsville, Danville and South Boston. DARS also has a physical presence in other Workforce Board AJC's. DARS is directly involved with both the state Workforce partners and local AJC's in the Department of Labor Disability Employment Initiative grant and is lead on an RSA Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities grant. In the coming year, DARS will support training on career counseling, motivational interviewing as well as Customized Employment for our workforce partners. (Page 272)

Provide training and implement seven (one per District) teams to pilot and implement Customized Employment across Virginia.

Educate our VR counselors, vocational evaluators, consumers, and their parents (as applicable) on the current and future labor market, the availability of competitively-waged jobs and the skills needed to obtain those jobs.

Implement the Career Pathways grant to include the use of motivational interviewing techniques with our VR consumers.

Implement the five year Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (CPID) model demonstration program to create new career pathways and/or use existing career pathways in high-demand occupations. (Page 289)

WWRC has formalized its evolving partnership with the DARS Business Development Managers to connect classrooms to workplace standards and expectations and modify curriculum to increase the likelihood of successful placements for training graduates, with long-term retention opportunities. This has resulted in the development of several collaborative workforce initiatives with industry professional organizations and corporate networks directly benefitting VR consumer employment goals. The Hershey model is one example of this, with other corporate bodies expressing interest in replication within their organizations. The DARS partnership with the Hershey apprenticeship program offered individuals with disabilities a six-month work experience on the production line. During the apprenticeship, DARS clients could access any needed supports from WWRC to help them complete the program as long as they were able to perform the required duties at the end of the six months. During FFY 2015, an evolving partnership with CVS Health resulted in the set-up of a mock store within WWRC Materials Handling Training Program to prepare VR consumers for direct employment and career pathways within the CVS Health System across the Commonwealth of Virginia. CVS Health donated all supplies and equipment for the mock store and worked with WWRC Instructors to refine the curriculum and develop community internships to prepare students to work in the CVS Health System. (Page 298)

To enhance and facilitate job-readiness skills and career planning for students to make a successful transition from school to work and to greater independence, students will be referred to DBVI Workforce Specialists and to Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) (also known in Virginia as Employment Services Organizations (ESOs)). Workforce Specialists will complement

Virginia (VA) WIOA Matrix

pre-employment transition services by delivering workplace readiness training to establish skills necessary for entry into career pathways, competitive integrated employment, and by coordinating with schools and networking with employers to establish paid and unpaid internships, including apprenticeships, specifically matched to the student's needs, skills, interests, abilities, and informed choice. Transition services purchased from CRPs may also include On-The-Job support and extended support services for students and youth needing additional supports in the work experience setting or on the job. (Page 331)

DBVI will conduct a monthly training program designed to ensure that new and seasoned VRCs and Regional Managers have a 21st Century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities. To facilitate this learning, DBVI will continue its Video Teleconferencing-based program entitled, "Making a Difference" (MAD), which is conducted on a monthly basis by trainers, internal and external to the agency. Topics include a broad range of subjects including, but not limited to, the use of vocational evaluations, job placement, rehabilitation technology, vocational counseling, the Business Enterprise program, Social Security and Ticket to Work program, Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired changes and summer programs, update information regarding Workforce Development activities, utilization of Career Pathways, Medicaid Waivers, Supported Employment, review of the VR eligibility process, ethics, conflict management, self-employment, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. During FFY 2016, (Page 339)

1. Expanding and enhancing workforce development activities to develop and maintain effective working relationships with Virginia business and industry at the local, regional, and state level to develop partnerships that facilitate industry recognized credential attainment, skill development, and entry into career pathways for eligible individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind leading to competitive integrated employment. (Page 348)

Goals 1 and 2 of DBVI's six goals identifies strategies and measures that apply to methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind.

Goal 1. Expanding and enhancing workforce development activities to develop and maintain effective working relationships with Virginia business and industry at the local, regional, and state level to develop partnerships that facilitate industry recognized credential attainment, skill development, and entry into career pathways for eligible individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind leading to competitive integrated employment.

Strategy 1.1: To fully engage personnel and financial resources of DBVI's newly established Workforce Unit to implement business support and outreach services. Personnel in the Workforce Unit include one Workforce Coordinator, four Regional Workforce Specialists, and one Director of Workforce/Vocational Rehabilitation. (Page 354)

Strategy 1.3: To establish and enhance entry into career pathways, DBVI will utilize personnel and funds associated Virginia's Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities Grant which was jointly awarded DBVI and the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) in 2015. DBVI will:

- Help individuals with disabilities acquire marketable skills and credentials that enable them to secure competitive integrated employment in high-demand, high-quality occupations;

Virginia (VA) WIOA Matrix

- Enhance the capacity of existing career pathways programs in Virginia to effectively serve individuals with disabilities;
- Enhance access to and use of existing career pathways in selected occupational clusters (including advanced manufacturing) by individuals with disabilities; and
- Strengthen the alignment of Virginia’s VR programs with the other core programs authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and other Federally–funded career pathways initiatives providing self–advocacy skills training that is critical to the achievement of individuals’ personal and vocational goals. (Page 355)

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- help individuals with disabilities acquire marketable skills and credentials that enable them to secure competitive integrated employment in high–demand, high–quality occupations;
- enhance the capacity of existing career pathways programs in Virginia to effectively serve individuals with disabilities;
- enhance access to and use of existing career pathways in selected occupational clusters (including advanced manufacturing) by individuals with disabilities; and
- strengthen the alignment of Virginia’s VR programs with the other core programs authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and other Federally–funded career pathways initiatives providing self–advocacy skills training that is critical to the achievement of individuals’ personal and vocational goals.

Measures: Other first–year activities will include working with the George Washington University (GWU) Center for Rehabilitation Counseling to develop and implement career pathways–focused career counseling training for VR counselors and other workforce professionals that incorporates use of labor market information and motivational interviewing techniques. (Page 362)

Employment Networks

3.5 Enter into an Administrative Employment Network Agreement with two Employment Networks to determine the feasibility of this model for funding long term employment supports. During this reporting period, there were administrative Employment Network (EN) agreements established with two different groups so that potential EN partners in Virginia would have options when considering participation in Partnership Plus. This has resulted in seven new administrative EN agreements that will support DARS ticket holders after case closure from VR. Preliminary indication is that the administrative EN option seems to be a viable option for long term employment supports for partners that do not have the volume of tickets or administrative infrastructure to support the ticket to work program. (Page 295)

* 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>