

Understanding the State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment



**Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
(BRS)**

**Department of Rehabilitation Services
(DORS)**

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History of VR



- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) dates back to World War I when services were provided to help wounded soldiers adjust to life after combat.
- In 1920, vocational rehabilitation was enacted to include services to civilians with physical disabilities.
- Amendments in 1943, 1954, 1965, 1973, 1986, 1992, and 1998 brought adjustments to the VR act; the public adapted its thinking and the government refined its capabilities to assist people with disabilities.
- Important changes included adding services for consumers with mental illness and mental retardation, agencies for people with blindness and low vision, de-institutionalization and community inclusion, competitive employment, informed consumer choice, and partnerships with agencies, community providers and businesses.
- The VR program has matured to help people with disabilities find jobs in a challenging economic era.

Federal Regulations



Title I, Section 101, of the Rehabilitation Act, as Amended, governs the Vocational Rehabilitation Program: *The purpose of this title is to assist States in operating statewide comprehensive, coordinated, effective, efficient, and accountable programs of vocational rehabilitation.*

Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act governs the Supported Employment Program: *The purpose of this part is to create and expand job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market by engaging the talent and leadership of private industry as partners in the rehabilitation process, to identify competitive job and career opportunities and the skills needed to perform such jobs, to create practical job and career readiness and training programs, and to provide job placements and career advancement.*

Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)



- The VR program is administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) of the federal Department of Education.
- RSA provides funds to each state to administer the VR and SE programs.
- RSA also determines the rules, regulations, and standards of achievement each state has to attain.
- There are numerous reports that states have to submit to RSA.
- The State Plan is one of these reports.

Purpose/Timeline of the State Plan



- RSA: “to be eligible to participate in programs under Title I, a state shall submit to the Commissioner of RSA a State Plan for VR services that meets the requirements of this section.” – *per RSA regulations*
- The State Plan enables the state to report goals, special plans and additional information related to the VR and SE programs.
- The State Plan is the “contract” for each state to run the VR and SE programs for the federal government.
- The State Plan is submitted annually in July to be approved for the following federal fiscal year – October 1 through September 30.

Components of the State Plan



- The State Plan includes a number of sections:
 - Lobbying Certifications
 - State Signatures and State Approval
 - Preprints - Assurances that state is compliant with federal regulations; instructions from the Rehabilitation Act define specific areas or information to be reported in the State Plan.
 - Attachments – Specific “chapters” that address the topics identified in the Preprints.
 - ✦ Some attachments must be reported annually; others are reported only when changes occur related to specific topics.
 - ✦ Some attachments report plans for the coming year; other attachments report outcomes of the previous fiscal year.
 - ✦ Some topics are covered in more than one attachment.

Attachments to be Updated Annually



The following attachments must be updated annually:

- **Attachment 4.2(c)** – Input from the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) & agency response to recommendations.
- **Attachment 4.10** – Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) reports recruitment, hiring standards and staff development.
- **Attachment 4.11(b)** – Annual Estimates of the number of individuals eligible for services and the anticipated costs.

Attachments to be Updated Annually



- **Attachment 4.11(c) (3)** – Description of Order of Selection (only if agency is implementing an Order of Selection) when state cannot serve all eligible consumers and has to prioritize provision of services based on severity of disability.
- **Attachment 4.11(c) (4)** – Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI – B funds describes how money will be spent for supported employment services.
- **Attachment 4.11(e) (2)** – Report of Progress evaluates the agency’s outcomes in achieving goals in previous State Plan; assesses outcomes of standards and indicators; and reports on innovation and expansion activities.

Attachments to be Updated As Needed



The current administration of the VR and SE programs may review the status of the programs and determine when changes to the following attachments will be updated:

- **Attachment 4.7(b) (3)** – Request for Waiver of Statewideness indicates when a state cannot provide services in all political subdivisions of the state.
- **Attachment 4.8(b) (1)** – Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System
- **Attachment 4.8(b) (2)** – Coordination with Education Officials

Attachments to be Updated As Needed



- **Attachment 4.8(b) (3)** – Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations
- **Attachment 4.8(b) (4)** – Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services
- **Attachment 4.11(a)** – Statewide Assessment, usually conducted every three years, identifies rehabilitation needs of consumers and the need to improve community rehabilitation programs.

Attachments to be Updated As Needed



- **Attachment 4.11(c) (1)** – State Goals and Priorities the agency targets to attain each year.
- **Attachment 4.11(d)** – State Strategies identifies the methods to expand/improve services as listed in the goals and priorities.
- **Attachment 6.3** – Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services

Consumer Input/Review of State Plan



- Consumers may review the currently-approved State Plan online at www.ct.gov/brs anytime.
- The draft of the next State Plan will be available for review online prior to the Public Meetings scheduled **April 8 & 9, 2013**.
- Consumers may attend the Public Meetings to comment on the State Plan.
- Written comments may be submitted via postal mail, e-mail or fax by **May 1, 2013**.

Public Meetings/Written Comments



- April 8, 4:00 – 6:00 PM
 - BRS Office, 1057 Broad Street, Bridgeport

- April 9, 4:00 – 6:00 PM
 - The NEAT Center, 33 Coventry Street, Hartford

- Written Comments
 - E-mail: evelyn.knight@ct.gov
 - Fax: 860-424-4850
 - Postal Mail: Amy Porter, Acting Director, BRS, 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford, CT 06106

Additional Information



- BRS Website: www.ct.gov/brs
- RSA Website: <http://rsa.ed.gov>